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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 5, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER 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 3, 2017, 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.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR I

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, this year is the 100th anniversary of World War I. April 6 of 1917 was the beginning of it all, when Congress voted to authorize military force.

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced a resolution, H. Con. Res. 41, that will not only remember World War I, but also honor those veterans who served. While those brave people are no longer with us, we must never forget those who defended and protected freedom.

Many of us in Congress, as well as citizens all over this country, are relatives of World War I veterans. Many like myself had a grandparent who fought for this Nation. Many lost their relatives to this war, while many relatives returned from war forever changed. Over 116,000 were killed, over 200,000 wounded, and over 70,000 suffered the effects of inhaling chlorine gas dispelled by German military.

My grandfather was one of the 70,000, and he, like many, could not cope with the effects of gas-damaged lungs and the psychological burden of war. At the age of 34 in 1926, he committed suicide. My father, an only child, was only 13. I am not unique in this situation, as many families tragically suffered the same fate. That is why we must continue to remember and honor World War I veterans and their families.

I want to thank Colonel Charles Bowery, Jr., executive director, U.S. Army Center of Military History, and his staff for the many months of work organizing this national remembrance.

This week across the country, we will begin a yearlong celebration marking the 100th anniversary of World War I. This Friday, the North Carolina Museum of History will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark a year celebrating those who served from North Carolina. My wife and I will be in attendance.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind Congress that on April 10, 11, and 12, PBS will be airing a three-part series titled ''The Great Night'' at 9 p.m. eastern standard time. I think it will be a very informative television program on the history of our country, but also the history of World War I.

In returning to this resolution, Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the United States Army for taking the lead in educating the American people about World War I and those who gave so much during it.

I hope my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring H. Con. Res. 41.

RISE UP MAY 1

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, if Donald Trump is going to be successful as a President—successful from his point of view; not the point of view of the American people, or history, or the rest of the world, or the point of view of people who like peace and freedom, but from his point of view—then he is going to have to rely on fear.

He got elected by creating fear about immigrants, Mexicans, and Latinos, calling us rapists and criminals. He got elected by creating fear about President Obama, the Blacks, thugs, and big cities.

He got elected by creating fear among Americans about the big, scary world out there with threats from ISIS, al-Qaida, and Mexico. But for some reason, he left out things like the fear of Russia or his buddy and friend, Putin.

And if President Trump is going to enact his agenda of deportations, building a wall, and making it impossible for people to come to the United States with visas, he needs to use fear as well. For example, he feels he needs to publish a list every week of the crimes that were committed by immigrants to scare Americans into fearing our community.

And Trump needs to use fear in another very important way. He needs to scare the immigrant community.

Why?

Because he knows he doesn't have the money, the manpower, or the time to drive 11 million men, women, and children who are undocumented out of this country. He doesn't have enough jails, ICE agents, or airplanes to deport

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11 million people. That is the population about as big as the State of Illinois, and such a max exodus will not be easy.

So what do they do?

They use fear. Trump has to make immigrants scared to leave their houses. Trump has to make parents scared to take their kids to school. Trump has to make doctors' offices, courthouses, police stations, and fire departments places where immigrants are afraid to go.

Trump has to make sure that undocumented immigrants who are raising children—most of whom are American citizens—in families who have lived in the U.S. on average for more than a dozen years, and who own homes, cars, and businesses, he has to make them so afraid that they want to leave this country.

It is a Presidency and a Presidential policy agenda that relies on fear and bullying to achieve success—or what people who surround Trump define as success, at any rate.

How do Americans respond to fear? Do we hide in our homes and isolate ourselves and run?

No, that is not what people do in the United States of America, and we never will. We stand up and we stand together and confront fear.

So on May 1, millions of Americans are going to stand up. We are going to stand together and we are going to rise up.

May 1 is an international day to recognize the contributions of working people, and it is observed as Labor Day in much of the world. This year, it will be a day to honor working people of all types, but there will be a special emphasis this year on immigrants working and living in the United States.

In 42 cities in 33 States, from Milwaukee to Seattle, to LA, to Chicago, to Boston, cities and towns will hold activities, marches, rallies, and workshops to lift up immigrant communities and demonstrate the solidarity between Americans and immigrants.

This is a campaign to galvanize broad support for immigrants, so this is not going to just be a Latino thing or an immigrant thing. Churches, mosques, and congregations are going to rise up. Unions, students, teachers, and working men and women are going to rise up on May 1.

Let's be clear, when we marched for women in massive numbers the day after the inauguration, it was not just women marching. When we came to the airports to stand up for American values and against Trump's Muslim ban, it was not just Muslims standing up for American values. It was a lot of the rest of us, too.

So if you care about justice, rise up with us on May 1. If you think a man should be able to use a men's bathroom, even if his birth certificate says he was born a woman, rise up with us. If you think global warming is a thing and science is a thing and the planet Earth is a thing to be protected, then go to riseupmay1.org to get more info about what is planned in your city or your State.

This will be a day for all Americans to demonstrate our resistance to the mass deportation, mass discrimination, and mass deception policies of our President.

The way you deal with fear is to stand up with your friends and allies and demonstrate your strength in numbers. That is why I am going to rise up on May 1.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to welcome the graduating class of 2017 from Inter-American Magnet School in the city of Chicago and the parents who are accompanying the students and the teachers. A special welcome to my grandson, Luis Andres Figueroa Gutierrez, who is with them this morning at our Capitol.

MINERS' PENSIONS

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

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, time is running out to do right by our miners, their families, and their widows.

At the end of the month, the benefits they worked their lives for will expire. For families across West Virginia, that would be nothing short of devastating—families like Teresa Anderson of McDowell County. Her father, Donald Richardson, worked his whole life in the mines of West Virginia.

Teresa shared with me what these benefits meant to her father and to her mother, Mary.

Here is what she wrote:

''I remember from a young age listening to him tell me and my brothers stories about the mines and teaching us about his United Mine Workers benefits and to let no one take advantage of this most precious insurance that he fought and worked so hard for.

''He would say, when I'm gone, you need to still protect these benefits that we worked for. This is how your mother will make it when I'm no longer here to provide for her.''

Mr. Speaker, Donald is no longer with us. He passed away back in 2012. Now his wife, Mary, and his daughter, Teresa, are asking us to keep his promise, to keep our promise, the promise the Federal Government made to our miners more than 70 years ago.

I urge my colleagues to act and to protect these vital benefits.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot let the clock run out on our miners and their families. They kept up their end of the bargain. Now it is time for us to do the same.

HONORING MRS. DOLORES WILLIAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Mrs. Dolores S. Williams, a community matriarch.

Her life was a true Brooklyn story. Born in Newport News, Virginia, on February 14, 1933, she came to New York City with her family as a young girl as part of the Northern migration from the South in search of opportunity.

Growing up in Bedford-Stuyvesant Brooklyn, Dolores graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School and married Jacob A. Williams in 1951 and raised three children: Cheryl Elise, Jacob Conrad, and Celeste Elena.

Dolores was a staunch believer in education and was actively involved in her children's school and with issues in her community.

She also practiced what she preached. She returned to school and received a bachelor of arts in education from Brooklyn College at the age of 40. She found success as an educational sales representative for Random House publishing company, inspired by a desire to support the education of all children.

Dolores returned to the classroom, earning a master of science degree in special education from Hunter College, which she used to pursue her passion by working with developmentally challenged children in her beloved Bedford-Stuyvesant.

She was a woman of high distinction and a real New Yorker, a real Brooklynite, survived by three children and nine grandchildren who will never forget her kindness and love.

I, too, was very fortunate in my youth to have been a part of the extended family of the Williams. I befriended their youngest daughter, Celeste, and we grew up together in the quintessential village that raised its children in the Prospect-Lefferts community in Brooklyn, where we were neighbors. Mrs. Williams and her family embraced me and reinforced the values of my home and family. She shared the expectations of becoming highly educated and well-rounded young adults, always encouraging through conversations filled with laughter.

□ 1015

Her support and encouragement helped me in my formative years to focus on my educational goals and lifelong aspirations.

To my dearest Cheryle, Conrad, and Celeste, I extend my deepest, most profound condolences. Now that she has returned to her ancestors, let us always remember her timeless pursuit of public service, her profound respect for education and lifelong learning, and her love for family and community.

She is now in the arms of God. Well done, Dolores Williams. Rest now in peace.

HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF AMBASSADOR CLAYTON YEUTTER

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in memory of Ambassador Clayton Yeutter, a native of Eustis, Nebraska, who recently passed away after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

Mr. Yeutter was a true statesman, who generously shared his time and expertise throughout his very remarkable career. On top of his numerous professional accomplishments, Mr. Yeutter was known as a humble, kind, and respected leader who never lost sight of his commitment to rural America.

No one understood the importance of trade to American agriculture better than he did, and his work has benefited generations of, incidentally, Nebraska agriculture producers as well as others across the country.

Mr. Yeutter grew up on a cattle and corn operation in central Nebraska during the Great Depression. He attended the University of Nebraska, where he earned a bachelor's degree in animal husbandry and, later, a juris doctorate and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics.

After serving in the Air Force in the 1950s and returning home to work on his farm, he got his start in politics as chief of staff for Nebraska Governor Norbert Tiemann in the mid-1960s. Soon he was named director of the Nebraska Mission to Colombia, which led him to the USDA and decades of distinguished public service.

His extensive resume included serving as U.S. Trade Representative under President Ronald Reagan and Agriculture Secretary under President George H.W. Bush. He also ran the Chicago Mercantile Exchange for 8 years and served as chairman of the Republican National Committee.

As we mourn the loss of this influential Nebraskan, I extend my condolences to Mr. Yeutter's wife, Cristena, and his children, grandchildren, and great-granddaughter as well.

I yield to my colleague from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Congressman ADRIAN SMITH, for yielding, and I thank him, more importantly, for honoring the life and memory of our mutual good friend Clayton Yeutter.

In my desk in my office there is a letter, and it was written to me by Clayton Yeutter, former Secretary of Agriculture, a couple of years ago. Of course, we all receive a lot of letters, but sometimes you get one that you just want to keep close to you.

Clayton Yeutter was a gentleman, he was a farmer from Nebraska, and he was a true statesman. In that letter, he basically kindly and gently encouraged me in public service. He was the ideal public servant. He expressed his sentiments to me personally, but in his public life, with a great nobility, a great yearning and care for our country, he committed himself in multiple ways to serving our institutions of governance. But he never forgot his humble roots back in Nebraska.

So I simply want to say: Well done, good, faithful servant Clayton Yeutter, my friend.

I thank the gentleman for honoring Ambassador Yeutter's life.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I can't say enough to honor such a true giant in public service as Secretary Yeutter, Ambassador Yeutter. The list goes on of his many titles, an incredible man, but his humility did so much for our country.

WOMEN ARE CASUALTIES OF INACTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the topic of casualties of inaction, casualties of inaction, Mr. Speaker, because there are some things that we can do if we would but only act. There are some circumstances that we can change if we would but only act. So today, I want to talk for just a moment about some of the casualties of inaction.

Mr. Speaker, a recent report has indicated that women are casualties of inaction when it comes to their earning power in the United States of America, the greatest country in the world. Mr. Speaker, the report seems to indicate that women earn about 80 cents for every dollar a man earns—about 80 cents for every dollar a man earns.

Mr. Speaker, this is an abomination. It is something that a great nation should not tolerate, and it is something that we can change if we but only have the willpower to do so.

Women earn about $40,742 if they work year-round on a full-time job. Men earn about $51,212 working full-time, year-round. This is about $10,470 difference.

Mr. Speaker, women should not be a casualty of $10,000-plus in their annual salaries. This is something we can change.

But when we look closer at these numbers, Mr. Speaker, we realize that Asian women earn about 85 cents for every dollar a man earns, Black women earn about 63 cents for every dollar a man earns, and Latinas earn about 54 cents for ever dollar a man earns.

Well, what does this really mean in terms of what they can do if they have the equality of opportunity to receive proper pay? Here is what it means:

If this gender gap were eliminated, women would have enough money for approximately 15 more months of child care per year. So children are suffering. This inaction is impacting children. Children are casualties of our inaction.

Women would have approximately 1.2 years of tuition and fees for a 4-year public university, or they would have the full cost of tuition and fees for a 2-year community college—casualties of inaction.

Women would have 78 more weeks of food for a family; so families, literally, can suffer from a lack of food. Food on the table is important in the richest country in the world. Women should not earn less such that their families would suffer.

Women would have 7 more months of mortgage and utility payment.

Women would have 11 more months of rent.

Women should not find themselves making less than what men make in the richest country in the world, in a country where we have the technology, the know-how, and the ability to make a change. They should not have this circumstance.

We can change this circumstance if we so desire. We but only have to have the will. The way is there to make sure women are treated equally in this great society.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we ought to have task forces that are looking into this, not just for today or tomorrow, but to look into it until there is a solution that is available. Until we have the solution, we should not stop taking the action necessary to make a change in the lives of women.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, we ought not allow the people who have made it possible for every man to breathe the breath of life to be treated unfairly, because every man alive owes his very existence to some woman who is willing to suffer the pains of labor so that we could breathe the breath of life.

EMPOWER SYRIAN PEOPLE AND REMOVE ASSAD

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

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn yesterday's deadly chemical attack in Syria.

Early yesterday morning, while most people were asleep in the rebel-held city of Khan Shaykhun, airstrikes hit, carrying what is suspected to be poisonous gas. These airstrikes are believed to be the work of the Syrian Government or its ally, Russia.

According to the AP, at least 72, if not up to 100 people, including at least 10 children, were killed and hundreds more injured. Entire families were found dead in their homes, and healthcare workers who rushed to help others were also overcome by the poison. A second airstrike hit near a hospital where victims were being treated.

The Assad regime's continued use of chemical weapons on its own people, innocent families, and children is despicable, and this is not the first time. Besides these unspeakable, horrific acts against innocent people since the Syrian civil war began 6 years ago, more than 11 million Syrians—half of the country's prewar population—have been displaced from their homes.

The urgency of this situation cannot be denied. We can no longer ignore the

continued abuse and killing of the Syrian people. We must take meaningful action to empower the Syrian people and remove Assad from power.

MORE COMPETITION NEEDED IN BROADBAND COMMUNICATIONS

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

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern with the recent FCC decision that strips Charter Communications of the requirement to provide broadband in a competitive manner.

When Charter merged with Time Warner, there was a regulatory review, and the requirement was that Charter would actually provide broadband in areas that would improve competition. Just yesterday, the Chairman revoked that regulatory decision and said that Charter doesn't have to provide broadband in an area where some other competitor is providing broadband.

Now, why does this matter? Americans already pay three to four times more for access to the internet than our European counterparts, and that is absurd. We invented the internet. We built the technology that fuels the internet. We should have the cheapest prices.

So why don't we have cheaper prices? It is because four or five monopolies basically provide the internet service for everyone. You have Verizon, AT&T, Comcast.

What is the solution? We need more competition.

But what is this FCC Chairman doing? He is having policies that are going to lead to less competition, basically carving up the map of this country and saying: You can only provide service here. Don't compete with anyone else.

Let's just carve up the map so every ISP provides service in a particular area and you don't have competition. And who suffers? The consumers.

And, by the way, it is not just the consumers in my district in Silicon Valley. It is consumers in rural America who are paying the highest prices for internet service.

Mr. Speaker, we need an FCC that is going to promote competition, that is going to go after monopolies, that is going to put American citizens ahead of corporate profits. If anything, we need a country that is going to have universal broadband, universal internet access.

Just like we talk about having a universal right to health care, just like we talk about a universal right to college, we can't live in a society where everyone can't have access to the internet. The jobs of the future are going to require it, and it ought to be a bipartisan issue to have universal access to the internet at the cheapest prices, cheaper than any other country, not five or six times more expensive than other countries, given that all of the technology was developed here in the United States.

And one final point. Noah Smith and Heather Boushey and others have talked about what really will create the jobs of the future, and they have written about having universities and colleges spread out across this country. Abraham Lincoln did it with the land grants in the 1860s.

We need college towns across America, and if we did that, if we expanded our universities, if we expanded research, if we expanded broadband in a competitive place, we could create the jobs of the future all across this great country.

OPIOID AND DRUG ADDICTION CRISIS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the story of a young man from my district whose tragic passing underscores one of the biggest issues facing our community and facing our Nation.

Carlos Castellanos of Falls Township, Bucks County, graduated from Pennsbury High School. He always loved sharing his talents and love of music by playing the guitar and drums at school and also for local church groups. However, like so many around the Nation, Carlos got involved with drugs during his time at school and even spent some time in jail. But with the strength and support of his family, he began receiving treatment, and his life improved.

□ 1030

He helped others by volunteering at a recovery house. He brought people suffering in similar situations into treatment programs.

In early December, Carlos walked his mother, Pamela, down the aisle for her wedding. He was getting ready to go back to school. He had a steady job, and he had a girlfriend. It would seem to so many that Carlos' battle with addiction was heading in the right direction—a needed point of hope in a war that has caused so much devastation.

Then on December 23, just 2 days before Christmas, two police detectives showed up at Pamela's door to tell her the devastating news that no mother can prepare for: Carlos had overdosed on a drug laced with fentanyl, and he was unable to be saved.

Mr. Speaker, Carlos' life and his death cast light on the fact that addiction is nothing short of a chronic disease.

I share this story with Members of this Chamber because last week Carlos' mother, Pamela, visited the White House to share her family's personal experience as the President established the Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, a worthy effort that deserves our support.

The fact is our Nation's opioid crisis transcends politics, and so must our response. I applaud the President's executive order to investigate the roots of this epidemic and outline tangible actions we can take to fight back.

Any response to this challenge must treat the whole person, not just the addiction. We must focus on the underlying issues driving people to seek opioids, while increasing the accessibility and affordability for prevention, for education, for treatment, and for recovery of this disease.

As Pamela shared, every life is a precious life, and every life is worthy of being reclaimed. I agree. I believe everyone in this Chamber agrees as well.

Let's get to work together to support these brave families that need our help.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the University of South Carolina Gamecocks basketball team.

It was the thrill of a lifetime to attend the NCAA women's basketball national championship game last Sunday at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas.

The Gamecocks have electrified Columbia and the entire State of South Carolina. We are all incredibly proud of what these coaches and players have achieved.

For head coach Dawn Staley, winning the national championship is the latest in a string of achievements that she has accumulated in her lifetime and in South Carolina over the last 9 years.

Under her leadership, the Gamecocks have made the NCAA tournament 6 years in a row and went on to the Final Four in 2015.

This year, they finally got over the hump and are national champions. Her coaching staff have done an impressive job, and I congratulate each of them.

The team Coach Staley has built is an incredible group of young women from South Carolina and around the country. A'ja Wilson, a junior from Hopkins, South Carolina, won the Most Outstanding Player Award of the Final Four and was named to the All-SEC first team this season.

Wilson was joined on the All-SEC first team by senior Alaina Coates from Irmo, South Carolina. Unfortunately, Coates missed the NCAA tournament with an ankle injury and has concluded a fantastic career with the Gamecocks.

In addition to making the All-SEC first team this year, she did so last year as well and was All-SEC second team her first 2 years in the program. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she has as much success in the future as she has had with the Gamecocks.

The Gamecocks finished 2017 with a 33–4 record and won their third consecutive Southeastern Conference Championship en route to this national championship. The Gamecocks have developed an incredible fan base. They have led the Nation in attendance for women's basketball over the last several years.

In addition to their success on the court, these coaches and players are role models off the court. I especially want to acknowledge assistant coach Nikki McCray-Penson. Diagnosed with cancer 3 years ago, she has been a real inspiration to many.

Throughout her treatment, she remained totally committed to the team and never missed a day of work. Thankfully, she is now cancer free.

I also want to congratulate the Gamecocks men's team. After winning their first NCAA tournament game in 43 years, they reached the Final Four for the first time in their program's history.

Having both men and women from the same school reach the Final Four is pretty uncommon. Coach Frank Martin and his assistants are building a tremendous program. Although they came up five points short of a victory in the semi-championship game, they proved themselves a team of champions.

Mr. Speaker, although representing the University of South Carolina in this august body is a singular honor for me, I feel certain that these 2017 NCAA Final Four appearances by these young men and women are the beginnings of many more to come. Coach Frank Martin and Coach Dawn Staley are truly a dynamic duo.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the University of South Carolina Gamecocks basketball team. It was the thrill of a lifetime to attend the NCAA women's basketball national championship game last Sunday at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas. Gamecocks have electrified Columbia and the entire state of South Carolina, and we are all incredibly proud of what these coaches and players have achieved.

For Head Coach Dawn Staley, winning the national championship is the latest in a string of achievements that she has accumulated in her lifetime and in South Carolina over the last nine seasons. Under her leadership, the Gamecocks have made the NCAA Tournament six years in a row and went to the final four in 2015. This year, they finally got over the hump and are national champions. Her coaching staff, Lisa Boyer, Nikki McCray-Penson, Fred Chmiel, Melanie Balcomb, Cynthia Jordan, Freddy Ready, Ariana Moore, Hudson Jacobs, Marcella Shorty, Katie Fowler have done an impressive job, and I congratulate each of them.

The team Coach Staley has built is an incredible group of young women from South Carolina and around the country. A'ja Wilson, a Junior from Hopkins, South Carolina, won the Most Outstanding Player of the Final Four award and was named to the All-SEC First Team this season. Wilson was joined on the All-SEC First Team by Senior Alaina Coates from Irmo, South Carolina. Unfortunately Coates missed the NCAA tournament with an ankle injury and has concluded a fantastic career with the Gamecocks. In addition to making All-SEC First team this year, she did so last season as well, and was All-SEC Second team in her first two years in the program. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she has as much success in the future as she has had with the Gamecocks.

The full roster of this championship team includes Victoria Patrick, Bianca Cuevas-Moore, Kaela Davis, Doniyah Cliney, Allisha Gray, Araion Bradshaw, Tiffany Davis, Mikiah Herbert Harrigan, A'ja Wilson, Alexis Jennings, Alaina Coates, and Tyasha Harris.

The Gamecocks finished 2017 with a 33–4 record and won their third consecutive Southeastern Conference Championship en route to this national championship. The Gamecocks have developed an incredible fan base. They have led the nation in attendance for women's basketball over the last several years. In addition to their success on the court, these coaches and players are role models off the court. I especially want to acknowledge Assistant Coach Nikki McCray-Penson. Diagnosed with cancer three years ago, she has been a real inspiration to many. Throughout her treatment she remained totally committed to the team, and never missed a day of work. Thankfully, she is now cancer free.

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Coach Frank Martin, his assistants and staff consisting, of Matt Figger, Perry Clark, Bruce Shingler, Andy Assaley, Scott Greenawalt, Doug Edwards, Mark Rodger, Jay Gibbons, Dushawn Davis, Jarett Gerald, Brian Steele, Ryan McIntyre recruited and molded an incredible group of young men including TeMarcus Blanton, Tommy Corchiani, PJ Dozier, Rakym Felder, Hassani Gravett, Khadim Gueye, Evan Hinson, Kory Holden, Jarrell Holliman, Sedee Keita, Maik Kotsar, Justin McKie, Duane Notice, John Ragin, Christian Schmitt, Chris Silva, Sindarius Thornwell, Ran Tut are building a tremendous program.

Although they came up five points short of a victory in the semi-championship game they proved themselves a team of champions.

Mr. Speaker, although representing the University of South Carolina in this august body is a singular honor for me, I feel certain that these 2017 NCAA Final Four appearances by these young men and women are the beginnings of many more to come. Coach Frank Martin and Coach Dawn Staley are truly a dynamic duo.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S WISDOM

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, Congress is fundamentally a deliberative institution. Deliberations take time, and they are often messy. In fact, the bigger the issue, the messier the deliberations.

The designers of our Constitution wanted a great, big, ugly debate every time a decision was being made. They wanted the subject held up to every conceivable light and every voice in the country to be heard.

This is certainly true of the effort to replace the collapsing bureaucracy of ObamaCare with the patient-centered marketplace that we have long promised.

These deliberations must continue until they bear fruit because there is no excuse for failure. ObamaCare is only getting worse.

Last year's average 25 percent premium increase is likely to be followed by even bigger increases this year. The flight of healthcare providers from the system is only going to accelerate. The rapid expansion of Medicaid, which could exceed defense spending by next year, is not only fiscally unsustainable, it doesn't even guarantee care.

Dwindling Medicaid providers and lengthening waiting lists means that many Medicaid patients have no recourse but to flood emergency rooms.

The original Medicaid population, the elderly, the blind, the disabled, who were only reimbursed an average 57 cents on the dollar, are pushed to the back of every line by able-bodied ObamaCare expansion patients who are reimbursed at 90 percent.

The American Health Care Act is far from perfect. I have argued vigorously for a comprehensive bill rather than the current piecemeal approach that we are following.

Now, I lost that debate, but I haven't lost sight of the ultimate goal: to restore our healthcare system as the best in the world.

I could list a lot of things that could be made better by the current bill, and perhaps they will be in our extended negotiations, but those who expect perfection in our legislation fundamentally misunderstand our system.

Congress was never designed to make perfect law. It was designed to make the best law that is acceptable to the most people. And it is pretty good at that when we let it be.

When the Constitutional Convention seemed hopelessly deadlocked, Benjamin Franklin declared that he didn't entirely approve of our Constitution, but he had learned, over the years, to doubt a little of his own infallibility and to recognize the limitations of making decisions with others.

He noted that when you assemble a group of people to benefit from their collective wisdom, you also had to accept their collective shortcomings and realize that a perfect product is never possible from such a process.

In another speech, he recalled being an apprentice tradesman trying to fit together two pieces of wood. It was often necessary, he said, to shave a little from one and then a little from the other until you had a joint that could hold together for centuries. In this same manner, he urged them to each join together in each part with some of our demands.

Compromise is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end. As long as that

end moves us forward toward better policy, more freedom, greater prosperity, whatever perfections the measure may include are often precisely what are required to bring it to fruition. I fear we are losing sight of these simple truths.

Ironically, factions within the House who are the most adamant in opposing ObamaCare have become, as a practical matter, its most effective defenders. I know they don't intend this to be, but the reality is that ObamaCare survives today solely because of their actions in this House.

Benjamin Franklin was right. In deliberations of this magnitude, it is essential that we each doubt a little of our own infallibility and that we each part with a few of our own demands, in order to join together and produce the reforms that our country depends on us to enact.

A political minority doesn't need to compromise. It has the luxury of standing solely on principle. But the majority, entrusted with making the actual decisions to guide our country to better days, must compromise if it is to make law that will hold together for the centuries.

Lincoln once reminded Congress that we can succeed only by concert. He said: It is not can any of us imagine better, but can we all do better. He urged us to rise to the occasion, to disenthrall ourselves, for only then could we save our country.

I hope that some of our colleagues will consider this advice during the Easter recess.

AWARD WINNERS FROM CITGO INNOVATION ACADEMY FOR ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL & MARINE SCIENCE AT MOODY HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Corpus Christi students from the CITGO Innovation Academy for Engineering, Environmental & Marine Science at Moody High School for winning two awards at the Marine Advanced Technology Education International Remotely Operated Vehicle competition recently held at NASA's Johnson Space Center's Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston, Texas.

This competition was the final round in a series of science fairs and challenges focusing on underwater technology that can adapt to harsh ocean and space environments.

The AquaBot Technicians robotics team won the Aloha Award for team spirit and friendliness. Natasha Sanchez was named the competition's MVP.

The CITGO Innovative Academy provides students training to become the next generation of science and technology professionals by offering upper level engineering, math, and science courses.

A thank you is due to CITGO for supporting STEM education in Corpus Christi and other areas where they operate.

PRAISING THE VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, since first being elected to Congress, I have been fighting for our veterans to get the care they were promised and earned.

After hearing veterans tell horror story after horror story of long wait times, canceled appointments, and having to travel miles to distant cities to get treatment, Congress got something right when they passed the Veterans Choice and Accountability Act in 2014.

It created the Veterans Choice Program that allows any veteran who is unable to obtain an appointment with the VA within 30 days or has to travel more than 40 miles to a VA facility for care to see a private doctor who can see them faster and closer to home.

Though the implementation of the Veterans Choice Program has not been without hiccups, it is proving very helpful for getting veterans faster, more quality care.

I hear time and again from veterans in the district that I represent that this is working for them.

Soon, in fact later today, the House will vote on H.R. 369, to eliminate the sunset of the Veterans Choice Program and ensure the program continues after August 7.

I encourage all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this bill to continue Veterans Choice. I look forward to continuing to hear the great successes it provides for our veterans and for our doctors.

THE COST OF DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, defense spending was $348 billion in 2002. Now it is well over $600 billion a year, and this total does not include the military construction budget which has totaled more than $181 billion over the last 10 years, and many billions more in supplemental appropriations. There is presently a request for another $30 billion supplemental appropriations for the military.

On top of all this, almost every year for the 29 years I have been here, there has been an end-of-the-year omnibus appropriations bill which always contains even more for the Defense Department.

□ 1045

I have always believed that national defense is one the most important, most legitimate functions of the Federal Government. But I am also a fiscal conservative.

With our Nation $20 trillion in debt and many trillions more in unfunded future Social Security and pensions liability in the years ahead, we desperately need some fiscal conservatives in the Pentagon.

I realize that the easiest thing in the world to do is to spend other people's money; and you can never satisfy any government's appetite for money or land. They always want more. But it is a myth to say or think that the Defense Department is underfunded when defense spending has doubled since 2002.

Yet, even though this spending has gone way up, most people around the country seem to believe it has gone way down. We hear some saying the military has been decimated or has undergone drastic cuts. This has been a masterful public relations job, I assume, by the Pentagon, working with defense contractors and think tanks funded by the defense industry.

Last year, we spent $177.5 billion for new equipment, tanks, planes, weapons of all sorts. Most of this equipment does not wear out after just 1 year, yet we keep spending similar amounts on new equipment every year.

I mentioned that the military construction funds are in a separate bill, not in the regular Defense Department appropriations bill. The $181 billion we have appropriated over the last 10 years in this bill means you probably cannot find any military base in the world without new construction going on, and much more that is only 3 or 4 years old or even newer.

We have a $20 trillion national debt. Last week, I read in The Washington Times that the estimate now is that we will be $91 trillion in debt 30 years from now. Obviously, if we allow that much debt, we will be printing so much money that our Social Security and military and civil service pensions will be worth very little.

In the biography, ''Bonhoeffer,'' about the famous theologian, by Eric Metaxas, it says that, in 1921, the currency exchange rate was 75 German marks to the dollar. The next year, it was 400 marks to the dollar. Then inflation really took off, and, by early 1923, it was 7,000 to 1.

Metaxas wrote: ''The resultant economic turmoil would make the bleak conditions of a few months earlier look like the good old days.''

By August, a dollar was worth 1 million marks. The book says: ''By the end of 1923, things had become impossible. In October, Dietrich wrote that every meal cost 1 billion marks.''

Germany, in the early 1920s, was one of the most educated countries in the world. It is hard to imagine what could happen here in the United States if we continue to spend money we do not have and run trillions more into debt.

With the exception of a brief downturn in 1958, President Eisenhower gave the Nation 8 years of peace and prosperity and balanced budgets, and he looks better with the passage of time. He spent most of his career in the military and loved and respected that institution.

But in a new book called ''Ike's Bluff,'' by Evan Thomas, is this very interesting observation: ''Eisenhower

was, in effect, his own Secretary of Defense.'' When Defense Secretary Neil McElroy warned him that further budget cuts could harm national security, Eisenhower acerbically replied: If you go to any military installation in the world where the American flag is flying and tell the Commander that Ike says he'll give him an extra star for his shoulder if he cuts his budget, there'll be such a rush to cut costs that you'll have to get out of the way.''

He would periodically sigh to Andy Goodpaster, his Chief of Staff, ''God help the Nation when it has a President who doesn't know as much about the military as I do.''

As we all know, Eisenhower made a famous statement in his farewell address warning against the excesses of the military-industrial complex. I think, Mr. Speaker, he would be shocked at how far we have gone down that road against which he warned us.

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 49 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

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

God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Concerns about budget, taxes, immigration, among others, reveal the considerable divisions both in Congress and among the American populace as well. Meanwhile, advocacy groups of many persuasions, from the National Down Syndrome Society to the Small Arts and Crafts Association, visit the offices of Members all over Capitol Hill.

As opinions and emotions surge loudly and with little indication of easy solution, we take this quiet moment to ask Your blessing upon the Members of this people's House.

We thank You again that we have a Nation steadied by the Constitution, and that our participative form of government, difficult as it is, continues to model for the world the values of freedom rooted in a respect for all Your children.

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

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 Arkansas (Mr. HILL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HILL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

> I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

WELCOMING BRANDON MARTZ

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Brandon Martz and his family from Jackson County to our Nation's Capitol.

They are here with the help of the Dream Foundation, which fulfills dreams for terminally ill young people and adults. Brandon is 18 years old and has been battling Duchenne muscular dystrophy since he was a toddler.

One of the things we talked about today in my office was the 21st Century Cures Act and the need to expedite the development of new cures by prioritizing medical research and streamlining the FDA approval process.

Signed into law in December of last year, this landmark initiative will bring hope for patients and families suffering from some of the worst diseases and hopefully fulfill many dreams.

Mr. Speaker, it was an honor to spend time with Brandon, his brother, and his parents today and play a part in helping Brandon's dream become a reality.

I hope their time in Washington offers an opportunity to create many lasting memories together as a family and fulfill many dreams.

REMEMBERING RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERVISOR JOHN J. BENOIT

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, Riverside County supervisor John J. Benoit served his community with duty, honor, and integrity.

Last year, Supervisor Benoit passed away in December 2016 after battling pancreatic cancer. His legacy of service to his constituents lives on throughout my district.

Supervisor Benoit dedicated his life to the safety of our community as a police officer for the Corona Police Department, and then as a commander in the California Highway Patrol. He served as a board member for the Desert Sands Unified School District, as a California assemblyman and State senator, and most recently as supervisor of Riverside County.

I was honored to work with Supervisor Benoit. His dedication, respect, and devotion to his constituents is exemplary and admirable.

My thoughts and prayers remain with his wife, Sheryl, and to their two children, Ben and Sarah.

On behalf of the people of California's 36th Congressional District, my wife, Monica, and my family, thank you sincerely for your service.

LET'S ACT NOW ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, my constituents and I are so blessed to live, to work, and to play in the paradise that is south Florida. But for our kids and our grandchildren to enjoy the same positive experiences that we have had, it is vital that we act now to combat climate change.

Creating a thoughtful dialogue on Capitol Hill about the harmful impact of climate change is essential for us to be able to take proactive action toward solving the challenges brought about by this real and growing threat.

Congress can no longer dispute the fact that sea level rise has been occurring steadily over the last 100 years. I have seen firsthand how our streets keep flooding from king tides, which impacts our constituents, businesses, tourism, and our economic livelihood.

There is positive progress emerging from south Florida. We have led on sea level rise proposals with the Miami-Dade County Sea Level Rise Task Force and the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we put partisan politics aside and tackle the inevitable threat of climate change.

BUILDING TRADES

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

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the San Diego Building and Construction Trades Council, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569, and applaud the leadership of their business manager, a proud marine, Tom Lemmon.

Yesterday, these patriots stood up for something much larger than themselves when they resisted the Trump administration's contempt for workers' rights, misogyny, racism, and Islamophobia.

It is in the best tradition of organized labor to stand for others' rights and against a system that attempts to exploit the most vulnerable in our society. They stood up against threats to organized labor. They stood up against separating immigrant families. They stood up for working families and the most vulnerable in our society.

Again, I congratulate Tom Lemmon, Gretchen Newsom, and Carol Kim, along with many others, for their courage to speak up and resist.

Their resistance is a great patriotic reminder to all of us to stand up for what we know is right.

PENDING CRISIS IN AFRICA

(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 today to bring attention to the impending crisis in Africa. More than 20 million people in Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, and Nigeria face starvation and famine, according to the U.N. Secretary-General.

At a time when the mainstream media and the Washington press corps is obsessed with President Trump, they remain silent when there is a mounting disaster that could make the Syrian refugee crisis look like child's play.

All four of these countries have weak or failing governments, and each is in the midst of a seemingly endless conflict perpetrated by evil terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram, al Shabaab, and al-Qaida.

Pouring the billions of needed dollars into the region will help stop the coming famine, but it will take American leadership working with partners in the region willing to take a stand to rid their continent of these terrorist threats.

I will continue to bring light to the imminent crisis in Africa, and I urge my colleagues to focus on this critical issue.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, in the 20th century, good-paying manufacturing jobs built the middle class in Rhode Island and across our country. But in recent decades, millions of these jobs have disappeared. Factories have been shuttered. Bad trade deals have moved American jobs to other countries.

It is time to rebuild American manufacturing. It is time to support making things in America again. That is why I have introduced H.R. 1672, the Make It In America Manufacturing Communities Act, a bipartisan bill that will help revitalize American manufacturing and promote the creation of good-paying jobs in our country.

This is a commonsense bill that incentivizes communities, together with the private sector, higher education, and other key stakeholders to work together to strengthen their manufacturing economies. It provides targeted investments and support to make regions and local communities competitive in manufacturing again—communities like those in my home State of Rhode Island, the birthplace of the American industrial revolution.

Mr. Speaker, let's put America back to work at good-paying jobs. Let's get this done and pass H.R. 1672. Let's work to export great American goods and not great American jobs.

SIKH FESTIVAL OF VAISAKHI

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and to raise national awareness of the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi. Next Friday, hundreds of thousands of Sikhs living across the United States will take part in the festival to celebrate these significant elements of their religion: the Sikh New Year, the spring harvest, and the creation of Khalsa, the fellowship of devout Sikhs created in 1699.

This year, on April 8, the East Coast Sikh Coordination Committee has organized a National Sikh Day Parade to mark this occasion.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with my fellow chairs on the Sikh Congressional Caucus, introduced H. Res. 189, which recognizes Vaisakhi's historic, cultural, and religious significance and its importance to the Sikh communities across the United States. Additionally, it expresses this body's respect for all communities and religions who celebrate the festival.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this measure in honor of Vaisakhi.

CLOSE THE FOREIGN MONEY LOOPHOLE

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, we know from our law enforcement and intelligence agencies that there was an effort by Russia to covertly influence our elections.

And we know that, according to Republican Intelligence Committee Chairman RICHARD BURR, Russia is both covertly and overtly trying to influence elections right now in France and in Germany.

What most folks may not know is that right now there is a loophole in our campaign finance laws that would allow foreigners to use their wealth to influence our elections, possibly including wealthy individuals aligned with Russian dictator Vladimir Putin and corporations controlled by Putin allies.

This is not a partisan issue. This is an American issue. There was more than $1 billion spent by outside groups in the 2016 election. It is virtually impossible to know where all this money is coming from.

While U.S. laws prohibit foreign money from being used in our elections, there is a loophole that could allow this money in. That is why I am introducing the Election Protection and Integrity Certification Act to close that loophole and keep money from Russia and other foreign sources out of our election system.

Mr. Speaker, our democracy is under attack and Democrats and Republicans need to join together to stop Russian influence in our elections. We need to close the foreign money loophole.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHIEF DEPUTY CLINT GREENWOOD

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life of Harris County Precinct 3 Assistant Chief Deputy Constable Clint Greenwood.

On Monday morning, Chief Deputy Greenwood was tragically murdered as he arrived to work at the Baytown, Texas, courthouse. Chief Deputy Greenwood was a respected and committed 30-year law enforcement veteran of the Houston area.

My heartfelt prayers go out to Chief Deputy Greenwood, his family, and the entire law enforcement community.

After yet another intentional killing of a Texas law enforcement officer, we must do more to end the continued violence and hate-filled rhetoric directed at our brave law enforcement officers. We hope for a quick apprehension of the evil perpetrators and an answer to why.

I stand in strong solidarity with the law enforcement community and offer my deepest condolences to all those impacted by the senseless murder of Chief Deputy Greenwood.

Rest in peace, Brother Clint Greenwood, and may God bless your family and all those who wear the uniform.

□ 1215

PUTIN'S ATTEMPT TO HIJACK DEMOCRACY NEEDS INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, from the North Atlantic to the North Pacific, to the Baltic Seas, the Russian people are standing up to Vladimir Putin and his decades of egregious corruption. The protests in Moscow are punctuated with chants that Putin is a thief. And, of course, the anticorruption protest leaders have been jailed. And our President, the United States President, the leader of the free world, says that he admires Putin's strongman ways.

Here is the rub that every American of every political persuasion should be concerned with, and that every American family, millions of whom have lost a soldier in defense of our democracy, should be concerned with: Putin is trying to discredit the exact democracy that millions of our brothers and sisters have died for. Putin is a thug and a street punk. His attempt to hijack our democracy needs an aggressive and honest, independent investigation.

HONORING ELBERT BENNETT

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Mr. Elbert Bennett for his service as president of the Kentucky Magistrates and Commissioners Association board of directors. Elbert, one of nine children, was born in Princeton, Kentucky. After graduating Caldwell County High School in 1967, he began working at The Times Leader newspaper in Caldwell County. He has accomplished much since starting at that newspaper.

Elbert held office in the Kentucky Young Farmers Association and was elected magistrate in 2002. Prior to this election, Elbert served 20 years on the Fredonia City Council. Elbert has been a lifelong cattle farmer, is the former president of the Fredonia Lions Club, and is an active member of the Cattlemen's Association.

Most recently, Elbert has given his time to the Wounded Warrior Project, cooking barbecue and hosting veterans on his farms. Elbert is widely known and respected as a barbecue cook, cooking for thousands at church events, Lions Club events and children's events.

In 2008, Elbert Bennett's peers elected him to the Kentucky Magistrates and Commissioners Association board of directors. He has held every office inside the State association, including sergeant-at-arms, secretary, treasurer, vice president, and president.

While president of KMCA, the association has had many legislative victories, including stabilizing essential 911 resources for cities and counties in Kentucky. One of Elbert's most notable accomplishments as president of KMCA is the association's annual children's shoe drive, which donates over 600 pairs of shoes annually to needy schoolchildren all across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

He was recently elected to the Kentucky Association of Counties executive board as second vice president, where he represents the magistrates and commissioners.

I cannot speak highly enough about Elbert Bennett and how his service has positively influenced the First District and the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a whole. I am honored to recognize Elbert Bennett today and the great work he does for the people of our State.

LET'S FIX THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT TOGETHER

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a sincere suggestion to our Republican colleagues who are working hard to come up with a replacement for the replacement plan on health care that didn't fly.

Let's fix the Affordable Care Act and work together in a bipartisan way. I have always said: the best legislation is always bipartisan. Drop your plans to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. Stop undermining this law, and work with Democrats to make the law work better.

That is what the majority of Americans want us to do. Millions of people now have health insurance, thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Insurance companies can no longer refuse to insure people with preexisting conditions, and essential health benefits like maternity care and mental health care are now provided.

We know that no law is perfect. We acknowledge that. So let's do our job and do what the American public want us to do: join together in a bipartisan way to make the Affordable Care Act work better.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS HARMING OUR HEALTH

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Earth Day 2017 provides an important opportunity to raise awareness of the consequences of President Trump's executive action abandoning meaningful progress on climate. Left unchecked, climate change will continue to harm the health and safety of our communities. That is why the American Public Health Association declared 2017 as the Year of Climate Change and Health.

Seasonal changes, higher temperature, droughts, and severe storms are leading to more heat-related illnesses and death, increased asthma attacks, and more severe allergies. The scientific evidence is clear: climate change endangers human health. The health harms of climate change led 11 medical societies to form the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health, which recently issued a report titled: ''Medical Alert! Climate Change Is Harming Our Health.''

One of the consortium doctors said: ''The worst-case scenarios of climate change really worry me. It would mean a level of human suffering we can hardly contemplate, much less respond to.''

Mr. Speaker, we can't allow that to happen. This problem demands immediate action, not denial, and certainly not delay.

NATIONAL RETIREMENT PLANNING WEEK

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the nearly 50 million baby boomers about to retire. It is National Retirement Planning Week, and before I get to the importance of this effort, let me say, there are no more important foundational programs that sustain our seniors and retirees than Medicare and Social Security. These earned benefits are critical, as nearly half of all baby boomers saved nothing for their retirement.

Thank you to Representative JOHN LARSON from Connecticut for introducing the Social Security 2100 Act, which protects and strengthens Social Security for decades to come. I have long been an advocate for protecting workers' pensions, and, sadly, more Americans than ever before are shouldering the burden of financing retirement alone.

That is why we need a national conversation on retirement planning, and Congress should lead it. Far too many seniors find Social Security is simply not enough to live on. America must preserve Social Security, protect retirement accounts and pensions, and work with our constituents to make sure they have the resources they need to have a dignified retirement.

Thank you to the National Retirement Planning Coalition, whose fantastic online resources are available to all Americans free of charge. Let's get to work for our retirees.

In closing, let me also say hardiest congratulations to Congressman STEVE STIVERS from the great State of Ohio, who has been just promoted to brigadier general in the Ohio National Guard. Onward, STEVE STIVERS. We are very proud of you on a bipartisan basis.

ELIMINATE SUNSET DATE OF VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

(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 today in support of H.R. 369, which will eliminate the sunset date of the Veterans Choice Program. The Choice Program gives the men and women who served this great Nation the ability to receive health care in their own home communities.

Instead of waiting for a VA appointment or traveling a long distance to a VA facility, our veterans can get services closer to home. The Choice Act states that the Department of Veterans Affairs is authorized to continue services until August 7, 2017, or until the funds provided under the Choice Act ran out, whatever occurs first.

There is still funding set aside for this program. Our veterans should be entitled to use it. That is why I support

H.R. 369, which would eliminate the expiration date on the Choice Act.

However, I do have serious concerns that I want to see addressed in the future with the third-party provider Health Net, which has provided less than satisfactory services to our veterans. We must give our veterans all that we can when they return home, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 369.

SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT TO CHANGE POLICY

(Mrs. MURPHY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on February 1, I introduced legislation to prohibit individuals whose primary role is political, like Steve Bannon, from serving on the National Security Council or its main subgroup, the Principals Committee. The bill has obtained 183 cosponsors and received significant public support. The majority of the American people clearly believe that our national security policymaking process should not be contaminated by partisan politics.

Today, the Trump administration responded to this message, removing Mr. Bannon from the NSC and the Principals Committee. I am incredibly proud of this development, which is clearly in the interest of our Nation's security.

Today is a victory for democracy because it proves that the people, when they speak up and speak out, can change policy for the better.

MAKE OUR GOVERNMENT SAFE ACT

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, today, President Trump finally saw what I recognized and what the American people knew months ago: someone like Steve Bannon should not hold a security clearance, no less serve on the National Security Council.

Bannon has made numerous inflammatory statements in support of overthrowing the United States Government. During an interview on August 22, 2016, Bannon referred to himself as ''Leninist,'' saying:

''Lenin wanted to destroy the state, and that's my goal too. I want to bring everything crashing down, and destroy all of today's establishment.''

That is what he said, Mr. Speaker. That is why I introduced the Make Our Government Safe Act, which would amend the National Security Act of 1947 to prevent anyone from serving on the National Security Council who has made the statements that Steve Bannon did about taking down the system.

My bill would prevent someone who has threatened to destroy the government from participating in or attending National Security Council meetings. And today I stand a little bit more reassured that Bannon will not be serving on the National Security Council.

Up next: remove him from the White House.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1219, SUPPORTING AMERICA'S INNOVATORS ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 7, 2017, THROUGH APRIL 24, 2017

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 242 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 242

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1219) to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. . On any legislative day during the period from April 7, 2017, through April 24, 2017—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar day for purposes of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 5. Each day during the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution shall not constitute a legislative day for purposes of clause 7 of rule XIII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying legislation. H.R. 1219, the Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017, will allow America's small businesses to thrive, creating jobs, developing incredible products and services, and growing our Nation's economy.

Starting a business, designing a product, developing a service, these projects often require upfront capital. For entrepreneurs and startups in this country, access to capital is one of the biggest hurdles they will face. Without it, they may not have the cash on hand for research and development, the funds to make payroll at the end of the month, or the raw material needed to start production.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1219 seeks to provide more sources of funding for our small businesses by raising the cap that requires a group of investors to register as an investment company. This change in the law is important. It allows angel funds, which are basically a pool of accredited investors, to permit up to 250 investors in one fund as opposed to the 100 permitted by current law.

As long as the fund does not exceed $10 million in capital commitments, it would be considered a qualified venture capital fund that is exempt from costly registration with the SEC.

Angel funds allow individuals who may not otherwise invest in startups to join together and direct their investment dollars to promising young companies. Without raising the cap on the size of these funds, we may be pushing potential investors out of the market.

Small businesses, in their earliest stages, often have nowhere to turn for credit. While banks have historically been a source of funds, in recent years, small business loans from banks have declined. That is where these groups of individual investors come in. In many cases, they are providing just enough cash to push businesses off the ground to the next level of funding; but by overregulating groups of angel investors, we are blocking significant sources of capital from ever reaching startups.

We need to wisely regulate in this country, and this legislation doesn't eliminate the need for larger investment funds to register with the SEC. It simply raises the cap for smaller groups of individuals to contribute a limited amount of funds to the American small business community. For businesses on the receiving end, these funds may be the difference between success and bankruptcy.

Thankfully, the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act has already raised the cap requiring companies to register with the SEC from 500 investors to 2,000 investors. By allowing small companies

to seek more individual investors, these businesses can expand the number of individuals who have a stake in the company's future, the number of individuals who will ensure the venture succeeds.

H.R. 1219 is a natural complement to the JOBS Act, allowing those potential investors to more easily join their resources to efficiently and successfully invest in America's small businesses. In fact, the current limit on the number of investors who can join together, set by the Investment Company Act of 1940, is a relic from nearly 80 years ago. In the past 80 years, our financial market and our economy have drastically changed. The barriers to entry for small businesses in many industries are lower than ever.

Just yesterday, I spent time with Etash Kalra. Etash is a young man from my district who won the Congressional App Challenge. Already, in high school, he takes computer science classes and codes smartphone apps. He even started a club to teach others programming.

He and students like him have many of the skills needed to start a small business. They have the ability to create software programs that consumers want and need. They may start small, they may start in high school, but they hold great potential.

Many individual investors may see that potential. This bill allows those investors to make a down payment on the future of these young entrepreneurs. Without growing the sources and amount of capital available to these businesses, we will end up stifling the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that our country is known for.

Our Nation is successful because Americans are innovators and hard workers. Those Americans who start businesses embody this spirit. We are not here asking for the government to help these people succeed. No, these individuals are fully capable of building businesses on their own. But we are here asking the government to step out of the way so that our fellow citizens can help American small businesses succeed.

This rule and the underlying legislation should not be controversial. Last Congress, similar legislation passed the Financial Services Committee by a vote of 57–2. It then passed the House by a vote of 388–9.

Yesterday, I came to the House floor and spoke about the importance of passing bipartisan bills. Many Americans see their Capital awash in partisanship and bickering. They suffer under poorly crafted policies, while politicians in D.C. fail to find consensus on legislation that would help. They wonder why politicians who talk about bipartisanship on the campaign trail can't come together in Washington to pass commonsense legislation.

The challenge before us is to find solutions to our Nation's problems that overlap the principles held by both parties. That is why this bill is refreshing. It stands as an exemplar of the sort of consensus-driven legislation that can earn America's trust.

Everyone can agree that innovative companies help the American economy grow and add to the quality of life in our Nation. Everyone recognizes how important access to capital is for small businesses.

This bill was reported out of the Financial Services Committee with overwhelming support. I ask now that the entire House support the rule and this underlying legislation.

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

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

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this is the 28th closed rule we are considering in Congress. Let me repeat that. This is the 28th closed rule that we are considering in this Congress. That means that 64 percent of the rules that the Republican leadership has brought to the floor this year have been completely closed, with no opportunity for Democrats or Republicans to offer their ideas to expand upon or improve the legislation.

Under a closed rule, you can't even offer an amendment to fix a typo. If somebody is in their office listening to the debate on this bill and has an idea on how to improve it, they are denied that opportunity to offer any amendments on the floor—in short, no amendments.

Mr. Speaker, this place is called the people's House. Maybe it should be called the Russia House because this is the way they legislate in Russia, completely closed, no opportunity for different ideas to be brought before the Congress and debated.

I have never, in all my years in Congress, experienced a more authoritarian approach to legislating than I have in this Congress. I have never encountered a more closed Congress than this Congress is.

This is not right, and it should not be considered normal. Not only Democrats should be outraged, but Republicans ought to be outraged as well.

You know, I wish my Republican friends had learned something from the collapse of their healthcare bill a few weeks ago. They rushed to the floor a bill cobbled together in the dark of night, filled with bribes and backroom deals. In fact, to strong-arm Members into voting for the bill and to correct for all the technical drafting errors that occurred thanks to their secretive process, there were not one, not two, not even three, but five—that is right, five—separate manager's amendments filed with the Rules Committee.

Now, let me explain that.

Only the people who wrote the bill were allowed to amend it. They wrote it so quickly, so sloppily, that they had to amend their amendments. I mean, this would be laughable if it weren't so tragic. And even after all of that, they were not able to piece together votes within their own Conference, and the bill imploded.

Well, it was a mess from beginning to end; and, to put it bluntly, the process was a disaster. Don't take it from me. Listen to Sean Hannity of FOX News. Now, don't adjust your television set. I am actually going to quote FOX News—and Sean Hannity, at that. I can't believe that he and I agree on something.

Here is what he said. According to a CNN report, he said: ''Now, this legislation was flawed from the beginning. It was created behind closed doors. Not one single Member saw the bill until it was rolled out. And that made it a disaster.''

That is Sean Hannity, one of President Trump's biggest cheerleaders, one of the biggest cheerleaders of my Republican friends. Here he is trashing the Republican health bill. And if that is not a wake-up call for Republicans, I don't know what is. You know, if Republicans are being criticized on their process by Sean Hannity, they have a serious problem.

Now we are reading that Republicans are again huddling in back rooms in the Capitol in an effort to resurrect their terrible plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act, strip important protections away from our constituents, and put insurance companies in charge of our health care. There it is on the front page of today's Washington Post: ''GOP Presses for New Health Plan.''

Now, I haven't been invited to any of these secret backroom negotiations, but from what we are hearing, it isn't good. It seems that things are not looking good for hospitals. MassDevice alerted us to the fact that: ''Hospital Stocks Fall as GOP Looks to Revive TrumpCare Bill.''

It appears as though Republicans are still working to make their bill even more devastating. Mother Jones reported: ''TrumpCare 2.0 Still Isn't Cruel Enough to Satisfy Conservatives.''

Yesterday, Tribune Media Wire wrote about: ''How the Revised TrumpCare Plan Could Hit Americans with Preexisting Conditions.''

I include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Mr. Speaker, an article that appears in today's New York Times about how the latest health proposal weakens coverage for preexisting conditions.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 4, 2017]

REPUBLICAN HEALTH PROPOSAL WOULD UNDERMINE COVERAGE FOR PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

(By Margot Sanger-Katz)

Throughout the debate to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, President Trump and Republican congressional leaders have insisted they would retain a crucial, popular part of the health law: the promise that people can buy insurance even if they've had illnesses in the past.

Their efforts foundered last month, when a House health bill had to be pulled from the floor after it failed to attract enough support. Late Monday night, word emerged that the White House and the group of conservative lawmakers known as the Freedom Caucus had discussed a proposal to revive the bill. But the proposed changes would effectively cast the Affordable Care Act's pre-existing conditions provision aside.

The terms, described by Representative Mark Meadows, Republican of North Carolina and the head of the Freedom Caucus, are something like this: States would have the option to jettison two major parts of the Affordable Care Act's insurance regulations. They could decide to opt out of provisions that require insurers to cover a standard, minimum package of benefits, known as the essential health benefits. And they could decide to do away with a rule that requires insurance companies to charge the same price to everyone who is the same age, a provision called community rating.

The proposal is not final, but Mr. Meadows told reporters after the meeting that his members would be interested in such a bill. To pass the House, any bill would need to find favor not just with the Freedom Caucus, but also with more moderate Republicans. It would also need to attract the support of nearly every Republican in the Senate to become law.

The ability to opt out of the benefit requirements could substantially reduce the value of insurance on the market. A patient with cancer might, for example, still be allowed to buy a plan, but it wouldn't do her much good if that plan was not required to cover chemotherapy drugs.

The second opt-out would make the insurance options for those with pre-existing conditions even more meaningless.

Technically, the deal would still prevent insurers from denying coverage to people with a history of illness. But without community rating, health plans would be free to charge those patients as much as they wanted. If both of the Obamacare provisions went away, the hypothetical cancer patient might be able to buy only a plan, without chemotherapy coverage, that costs many times more than a similar plan costs a healthy customer. Only cancer patients with extraordinary financial resources and little interest in the fine print would sign up.

There is a reason that many conservatives want to do away with these provisions. Because they help people with substantial health care needs buy relatively affordable coverage, they drive up the price of insurance for people who are healthy. An insurance market that did not include cancer care—or even any cancer patients—would be one where premiums for the remaining customers were much lower. The result might be a market that is much more affordable for people with a clean bill of health. But it would become largely inaccessible to anyone who really needs help paying for medical care.

We do not have to speculate to know what the world looks like without essential health benefits and community rating. It was how most state insurance markets worked before Obamacare. Back in 2009, most sick people who did not get insurance through work or a government program were excluded from coverage if they had a history of health problems like allergies or arthritis. Plans that did not cover pregnancy care or drug addiction treatment were widespread. (The data about individual market insurance premiums is a little spotty, but it appears that they were substantially lower in most states.)

One idea Republicans have about how to care for the sick was also in effect pre-Obamacare. Many states had ''high-risk pools,'' where people shut out of the traditional insurance markets could buy special plans with the help of state subsidies. The Freedom Caucus proposal is likely to include some money that states could use to set up such pools.

''The fundamental idea is that marginally sick people would pay with risk associated with their coverage,'' Mr. Meadows said Monday. ''Those that have, you know, premiums that would be driven up because of catastrophic illness or long-term illnesses, we've been dealing with that for a long time with high-risk pools.''

But insurance in the old high-risk pools tended to be expensive, and often came with long waiting periods or benefit limitations, even for the very sick.

The main difference between the policy environment in 2009 and today is that the federal government would now be offering tax credits to help healthy people buy what would probably be relatively skimpy plans. That would mean that more middle-income Americans would probably have health coverage than before the Affordable Care Act, since the combination of policies would tend to make insurance much more affordable for people who are young and healthy.

What states would choose to do with this set of options is hard to predict. Before Obamacare, few states required community rating of health plans. And few states required insurers to cover all of the benefits deemed essential under Obamacare, though most did require a few types of treatments to be covered. State governments would face a difficult choice: either take away the requirements, and leave sick patients without insurance options, or keep them and see people unable to afford coverage under the new subsidy system.

Under Obamacare, states can already waive many of the law's insurance rules if they can show that an alternative program would cover as many people with comprehensive coverage at a lower cost to the government. But that standard is difficult to meet. Mr. Meadows suggested that the waivers under discussion should be ''very easily granted'' to states.

The politics of health care in the United States have shifted since the Affordable Care Act was passed seven years ago. In recent months, the law has grown more popular, and the pre-existing conditions policy is among its best-known protections. That could create political pressure for states to keep the insurance rules, even if they are not required by law. But it is likely that at least some states might decide to eliminate them if they are made optional. Shifting norms about health insurance regulation may also affect the idea's reception in Congress.

Mr. Meadows said that the proposal presented to the Freedom Caucus would retain the pre-existing conditions policy. But that would be true in only the most literal sense. The mix of policies could allow insurance companies to charge sick people prices that few of them could pay. And it could allow them to exclude benefits that many healthy people need when they get sick. The result could be a world where people with pre-existing conditions would struggle to buy comprehensive health insurance—just like before Obamacare.

Thomas Kaplan contributed reporting.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I mean, preexisting conditions. Oh, my God. What are my friends thinking about?

And we are reading that essential health benefits are still on the chopping block.

You know, these are some of the main provisions of the ACA that people like, that people need, and that people deserve.

Protecting essential health benefits in people with preexisting conditions is our moral obligation. Taking these protections away from people would be cruel and unjust and immoral. I would say to my Republican friends: You don't have to do it.

But I guess we will have to wait and see until these secret negotiators emerge from their back rooms with details to share. And I will start getting ready for the next emergency Rules Committee. I am looking forward to that meeting because that will probably be the only time we will have to talk about the bill because I think it is probably too much to expect that my Republican friends would actually, this time around, hold a hearing. Maybe they will bypass a markup, but they will have to go to the Rules Committee in an emergency meeting, and we will probably look forward to another martial law rule.

But we are doing this bill today that no one has ever heard of. It was a noncontroversial suspension bill last year, but now we lift it up like it is the most important piece of business that we are facing in America today. You know, what about the urgent priorities facing our country?

I think it is clear that Speaker RYAN and the majority leader are grasping for filler legislation to keep us busy on the House floor so that the American people really don't see really how dysfunctional this majority really is.

Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART, a Member of the Republican Conference, said, and I think he said it best last week when he said: ''It's pretty evident that we don't have the votes among Republicans to do, in essence, anything that's real.''

Maybe that is why we are wasting our time this week on these bills instead of moving an infrastructure package or finishing the FY17 appropriations process, which should have been finalized last year.

I will remind my Republican colleagues that our government runs out of funding on April 28. That is 5 legislative days from now, since we are going on break at the end of this week. Now, maybe, again, this is a radical idea, but maybe we should be dealing with that today.

I am beginning to give up hope for regular order in the appropriations process under the Republican leadership, but I would have thought we would at least have some insight about a funding bill by now. Again, 5 legislative days from now, the government potentially could be shut down.

Maybe some of you think that the underlying legislation that this rule would allow us to consider, a bill to increase the number of companies that are exempted from certain SEC regulations, is vitally important. Maybe you are being inundated with calls about this issue. I don't know. Maybe your townhalls are overflowing with people

demanding this SEC suspension bill, but I am certain that no Member of this body could say with a straight face that this is somehow more important than keeping the entire Federal Government open.

For the life of me, I don't understand why we always have to get right up to the edge of the cliff, but here we are again. Today is just the latest example that the priorities of this Republican leadership do not serve the American people.

I would urge my colleagues to think about this as we spend time in our districts over the next 2 weeks. Maybe, when we get back, Congress can actually do its job and fund the government and focus on things that are important like a jobs bill or an infrastructure bill instead of more of the same Republican messaging bills.

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

□ 1245

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I have an inquiry for the Speaker, if I may. What is the title of this bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The Clerk has read the title of the bill. Would the gentleman like the Clerk to re-read the title of the bill?

Mr. BUCK. That is all right, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate it.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), my friend.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise, and I do feel like, to clarify, the bill title of H.R. 1219 is Supporting America's Innovators Act.

Our colleagues have seen time and time and time again that the other side has wanted to come to the floor and talk about everything other than what we are dealing with. But I do want to lay out, as one of the senior members of the committee, what has happened in Financial Services when we have dealt with this.

Last Congress, this exact bill passed 52–2 in the committee, with the ranking member supporting the bill. There were no dissenting minority views that were offered. And now, with this particular piece of legislation, H.R. 1219, there were no amendments even offered at the Rules Committee.

So which is it? My friends across the aisle complain when we don't do regular order. They complain if this had gone on suspension. I am kind of reminded of Groucho Marx in his movie, ''Horse Feathers.'' Whatever that is, I am against it. That seems to be their attitude.

But I do look forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle to make sure that they join me in supporting government funding when we are going to be dealing with that here shortly.

So on to our bill here, H.R. 1219, unless the opposition, the other side of the aisle, would like to continue to talk about a lot of nongermane things; I will keep bringing up Susan Rice and her illegally unmasking people if they would like to do that. We can continue with that conversation.

I would prefer to talk about H.R. 1219. So we know that small businesses and entrepreneurs are the heartbeat of the American economy, and access to financial capital is vital for entrepreneurs seeking startup money, or to operate, or to expand their businesses. However, gaining access to capital has remained an enduring challenge for small businesses.

The financial crisis and the Great Recession made the situation worse as capital became increasingly hard to access from institutional banks and various capital players. And while conditions have improved somewhat in the recent years, many entrepreneurs continue to struggle with accessing the capital that they need to compete and to grow.

In order to succeed, these companies need capital and credit, which is the lifeblood for growth, expansion, and job creation. Yet the government continues to construct arbitrary walls that cut them off from essential financing as smaller companies are caught in a sea of regulatory red tape created by Washington bureaucrats oftentimes.

As we had a similar bill yesterday, I made the point at that time as well. We know that 60 percent of all net new jobs that have been created here in the United States, 60 percent of all net new jobs that have been created here over the last 2 decades, have come from these small businesses.

Congress has made strides in tailoring the regulatory environment for these smaller companies—most notably when we passed, with strong bipartisan support, the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act, or JOBS Act, in 2012. That was a bipartisan bill that was signed by President Obama.

The JOBS Act's benefits are notable as more and more companies use its provisions to raise investment capital in both the public and the private markets. And the JOBS Act raised the cap on investors in a privately held company from 500 to 2,000 investors, but the limit on the number of investors acting as a coordinated group to invest in a company remained at 100, where it has been since 1940, some 77 years ago. I think it is about time that we update that.

As noted by Kevin Laws, of AngelList in his written testimony before the Capital Markets Subcommittee: ''With online fundraising and general solicitation becoming more common because of the JOBS Act, companies are bumping up against the limit more frequently. The current limit . . . now acts as a brake on the amount of money the company wanted to raise, leaving tens of millions of dollars on the table that did not go into startups.''

Well, H.R. 1219, the Supporting America's Innovators Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Representatives PATRICK MCHENRY and NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, would amend the cap currently contained in the Investment Company Act to allow 250 investors, instead of that 100, for a qualified venture capital fund, and, therefore, enhance angel investors' ability to provide important funding to our small businesses.

This bill is a very modest increase to the current exemption which has been in place for nearly 77 years, since 1940. Modernizing the cap is long overdue and reflects today's capital markets realities and the increasingly important role that angel investors play as they commit the funds necessary to help these small businesses grow.

The Securities and Exchange Commission continues to ignore the backlog of good ideas to spur capital formation recommended by entrepreneurs, small businesses, and market participants at the SEC's annual government-business forum on capital formation. So in the SEC's absence, Congress must act to promote market efficiency and capital formation. That is what we are here to do today, and I do think that that is an extremely important thing for us to do here in Congress.

I think that we can all agree that we support smart regulation that protects investors and maintains orderly and efficient markets.

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

Mr. BUCK. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HUIZENGA. I think we can all agree that we need to support smart regulation that protects investors and maintains orderly and efficient markets. But outdated, excessive, and unnecessary regulation where costs outweigh the benefits is just dumb regulation that overly burdens smaller companies.

So let's provide some regulatory relief by enacting this bipartisan bill that will ease the burdens on small businesses and job creators to help foster capital formation and get Americans back to work.

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

I am glad the gentleman from Michigan believes that closed rules are regular order—maybe in Russia, but that is not supposed to be the norm here in the people's House. We have an obligation to actually debate serious bills.

Right now, my Republican friends are behind closed doors somewhere in the Capitol debating healthcare legislation. And what I am against is this whole process. This is backwards. My Republican friends ought to be out in the open debating health care. They ought to be doing hearings. This is what I am objecting to.

In the scheme of things, this is a relatively minor piece of legislation, compared to my Republican friends' plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Yes, we should be debating Russia and all the ties that the Trump administration has with Russia. The question

used to be: Who in the administration has ties with Russia? Now the question is: Who in this administration doesn't have ties with Russia? Yes, those are important things we ought to be talking about. But, come on.

What we are objecting to is you bringing filler to the floor while, in secret, you are trying to dismantle health care in a way that we believe will harm millions and millions of Americans; that will take away their protections, those who have preexisting conditions; that will throw millions of people off of their insurance; that will take away essential health benefits. Yeah, that is important to us, and it is important to the American people.

What we are objecting to is a process where you debate these issues in secret and you bring stuff like this to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, this week, President Trump signed a bill to allow internet service providers to sell their customers' sensitive information. This information includes location, financial and health data, information about customers' children, Social Security numbers, web browsing history, app usage history, and the content of their customers' communications, such as emails and video chats.

Yet, amazingly, President Trump's tax return information is still off limits to the American people. Every President since Gerald Ford has disclosed his tax return information. These returns have provided a basic level of transparency that has helped to ensure the public's interest is placed first.

So the message from President Trump and the Republican Party is clear: It is okay for companies to profit off your medical and financial information, or information contained in your private emails, but the American voter is not allowed to know if the President has any conflicts of interest. That is right. Donald Trump's privacy matters, but your privacy doesn't.

Internet companies can auction off your private, personal information to the highest bidder. But information related to Donald Trump's business life must be kept secret.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better, and it is incumbent upon us, as the people's elected Representatives, to hold the executive branch accountable.

So I am going to ask people to vote ''no'' on the previous question. And if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative ESHOO's bill, which will require Presidents and major party nominees for the Presidency to release their tax returns.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this is a big deal. The American people have a right to know because the American people are concerned that this White House is on a collision course with corruption. It is time to let a little light shine on the President's tax returns so the American people know what his dealings have been and know what, quite frankly, they have been able to know about every other President and every other major party nominee.

I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) to discuss our proposal.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Massachusetts for yielding the time to me.

While I support the underlying bill, I want to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that this bipartisan legislation, the Presidential Tax Transparency Act, can be made in order for consideration and a vote.

The legislation is very simple. It is not pages and pages and pages. It simply states that there will be a requirement that the President of the United States, all future Presidents, and Presidential nominees of the major parties publicly disclose their tax returns. For decades, Republican and Democratic Presidents and Republican and Democratic candidates of both parties have voluntarily disclosed this information, but not this President.

Now, this tradition began in 1973, with President Richard Nixon who, while under audit by the IRS, publicly released his tax returns and submitted them for review by Congress because there was a mini scandal at that time regarding his claims of charitable giving. He released his tax returns and, shortly after, gave what became a famous speech: ''People have got to know whether or not their President is a crook. Well, I am not a crook.''

The Joint Committee on Taxation, at that time, ultimately found numerous errors in the President's return, and that he owed about a half a million dollars in back taxes, and he paid them.

Now, since then, every President has voluntarily released their tax returns. But this tradition is now being tested by a President who continues to hide his finances and faces an unprecedented number of potential conflicts of interest relating to his business empire.

Now, through his financial disclosure forms, we know that he has some 564 businesses around the world and inside the United States. This is a legitimate question being posed by the American people, and that is: If we don't know, whose interest is he operating under? Who is he there for?

Is he making decisions relative to trade that will benefit his business? We don't know. Why? Because a tax return is highly instructive. Tax returns disclose to whom you owe debt, what the debt is, where your businesses are, whether they are in the United States or in a foreign country, whether you have made charitable donations, whether you have paid taxes, whether you have avoided taxes, whether you have used loopholes, whether you have dollars in offshore areas. So this is an essential.

I want my Republican friends to think of something. This is not a partisan issue. This should concern you just as much as it concerns your constituents. The American people across the country, 74 percent, say that his tax returns should be disclosed.

□ 1300

We are now moving into an area of questions about national security.

Who is the President doing business with?

Whose interests come first? Is it the national security of the United States of America by the Commander in Chief, or is it for some Trump business?

These are very serious questions that you should want answered.

In a democracy—in a democracy—transparency is essential. They go hand in hand. We are not a banana republic. We don't have people in charge of the government that stand above the law or just disregard it.

In this case, it is not the law. It is a beautiful tradition that patriots on the Republican side and the Democratic side honored. Why did they honor it? I think they honored it because they wanted to honor the American people. That is what this effort is about.

Now, it is important to note that the President wasn't always opposed to this important transparency. As far back as 2011, he said that he would release his tax returns if he ran for President.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from California an additional 2 minutes.

Ms. ESHOO. In 2012, he criticized Mitt Romney for not releasing his returns until late in the campaign. In 2014, Mr. Trump told an Irish television network: ''If I decide to run for office, I'll produce my tax returns, absolutely.'' In 2016, he said repeatedly that he would release his returns ''over the next few months'' and ''before the election.'' It hasn't happened yet.

So all of these issues should concern all Members of Congress because, as I said a moment ago, transparency is essential in a democracy.

Mr. Speaker, this is the fourth time this year that I have offered the Presidential Tax Transparency Act as the previous question motion, and today I filed a discharge petition on the bill, which I encourage all of my colleagues to sign at the desk. If we defeat the previous question today or if we reach 218 Members of the House on the discharge petition, we can vote on this bipartisan legislation and ensure—underscore ''ensure''—that the President of the United States provides transparency for the American people now and in the future.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of an old Western movie, ''The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,'' and a line in that movie: ''When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.''

It turns out, Mr. Speaker, that this bill was marked up without any amendments on March 9, 2017, in the Senate Banking Committee and was favorably reported unanimously and without any amendments offered. It was also marked up on March 9, 2017, in the Financial Services Committee and was reported out with a 54–2 vote.

There were no amendments offered on this particular legislation, Mr. Speaker, in the Rules Committee; and, as a matter of practice, it is considered a closed rule because there were no amendments offered. So the idea that somehow this legislation has been hidden and that we are engaging in some sort of subterfuge is not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN), my good friend.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1219, the Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017. This is a bipartisan piece of legislation that has seen productive debate and almost no opposition when it was considered by the House Financial Services Committee. The House considered a very similar bill last July that received 388 votes here in the House in support.

Congressman PATRICK MCHENRY has been steadfast in his dedication to finding opportunities to update our securities laws so we can harness the true power of our capital markets. In recent memory, this started with the JOBS Act, which was very bipartisan and has been crucial to reinvigorating our capital markets. However, there is still more we can do.

The Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017 increases the limit on the number of individuals who can invest in certain venture capital funds before those funds must register with the SEC as investment companies under the Investment Company Act of 1940. Currently, the act limits the number of investors in an investment company fund to 100 if the fund is to be exempt from registration with the SEC. This registration is an extremely costly regulatory requirement that is not always appropriate.

The Chamber of Commerce describes this as a fix to what has come to be known as the ''99 investor problem,'' that is, the requirement that certain venture capital funds register with the SEC once they reach their 100th investor. Increasing this low threshold, originally set in the 1940s, would allow venture capital to continue to play the important role in the economy that it has in the past.

Unless Congress updates this threshold, startups, the driver of job creation and economic growth in our districts, will continue to be choked off from what should be easily accessible and affordable capital.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and to support this bipartisan legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to be clear so that my good friend from Colorado understands where I am coming from.

I don't really care about this bill. I think it is a noncontroversial bill that, quite frankly, probably could be approved by voice vote if it were brought up that way.

The point I am trying to make is that this is a relatively minor bill compared to some of the important issues that we need to deal with. It is troublesome to me that, on this bill, which my friend from Colorado said involved years of hearings and where the sponsor of the bill consulted with Democratic colleagues—I favor all of that. But what I am really outraged about is that, while we are talking about this relatively inconsequential bill and about how wonderful this process around this bill is, there are meetings going on in secret, right now, with my Republican colleagues, on dismantling health care in this country, conversations that might result in tens of millions of Americans losing their health insurance, conversations involving taking away essential benefits from insurance packages, conversations that would basically remove protections for people who have preexisting conditions.

All of this is going on in secret. We are reading about it in the press. I am sure my colleagues know about it because they are reading about it. Maybe they are proud of these secret meetings. I want to know where these secret meetings are.

I am simply saying to my friends on the other side of the aisle, on something as big as health care, you ought to be having these meetings out in the open. There ought to be hearings. You ought to bring in patients and patient advocate groups. You ought to bring in doctors, nurses, and heads of hospitals. You ought to bring in people who are going to be affected by any kind of changes you make in our healthcare policy.

Instead, it is being done behind closed doors, in secret, and I think the American people are outraged by that. That is one of the reasons why the bill you brought to the floor recently only had 17 percent support amongst the American people.

So what we are objecting to is the fact that we are not bringing to the floor matters that are urgent, like keeping the government running and like an infrastructure bill. We are also objecting to the fact that we are reading that my Republican friends are, once again, behind closed doors negotiating another healthcare bill that we think will do great damage to the health care of a lot of people in this country.

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

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, and I will close for our side.

Mr. Speaker, I want to alert my Republican colleagues to some recent polls that came out today. There is a poll that Qinnipiac did that said that Trump is more unpopular than Obama ever was, and, today, President Trump's approval rating is at 35 percent. That is down from 37 percent, and that is the lowest, I think, of any President this early on in his Presidency. I think the lowest rating ever was President George W. Bush. It was at 28 percent, but it took 8 years, two unpopular wars, and a staggering economy to get to that point. But with President Trump, we are already at 35 percent. The Gallup Poll says his approval is at 39 percent.

By the way, the Affordable Care Act, according to Kaiser, now polls at 55 percent approval rating, and the Republican Congress is about as low as President Trump is right now.

I am trying to think of the words to help my colleagues understand what these polls mean. I guess ''not good'' comes to mind, or ''very, very bad.'' I don't think, even if you tried, you could get poll numbers so low so early on in a new Congress or so early on in a new administration.

I would say to my friends the reason for this unpopularity is the way you are conducting business in our government, that the closed processes that are being used with regard to legislation I think are unprecedented. There has never been a more closed Congress than this one. You were pretty closed last session as well. This is a terrible pattern.

I agree with my friend, Mr. BUCK, on one thing he said. The gentleman said yesterday that good process produces good policy, but perhaps equally as important, good process helps instill faith in this institution. I agree with that. I could have said those remarks here today.

My question is: If that is the case, why are my Republican friends tolerating a process on healthcare reform that is now going on that is being done behind closed doors in some back room somewhere in this building with no input from patients or patient advocate groups or doctors or nurses or hospitals or anybody who has anything to do with health care? Why, on something so important, is the process so closed and so restrictive and so secretive?

I will tell you, just as this closed process led to a disastrous Republican healthcare bill recently, this continued closed process will lead to more disaster. This is not the way we should be doing the people's business. So we

strongly object to the way the Republicans are running this House and, in fact, the way the President is handling this issue as well.

It is always nice to see Vice President PENCE in the hallway when he is walking back and forth, but it would be better to see him in a public setting talking about what the administration's priorities are, not rushing from one back room to another back room to another back room trying to make secret deals to get more people to vote for something when they have no idea what is in the legislation. That is not the way of doing business. So we object to the process.

Again, I urge my colleagues to also vote ''no'' on the previous question so we can have an opportunity to see President Trump's tax returns. Every President since Gerald Ford has disclosed their tax returns, every major Presidential candidate, and every day we read in the newspaper about more and more potential conflicts of interest between the President and his family. I have to tell you, we are on a collision course with corruption. The President has promised to drain the swamp. He has created a cesspool, and it should be of concern to every single person in this Chamber, Democrat and Republican alike.

I don't think it is too much to ask for transparency when it comes to the person who is our Commander in Chief. I shudder to think if Hillary Clinton had won the Presidency and didn't release her tax returns, the outrage that would be coming from the other side of the aisle. I can't even imagine how much outrage would be coming from them.

Yet when Donald Trump hides his financial information from Congress and the American people, there is silence; people don't want to know. Well, the majority of people do. Poll after poll show the overwhelming majority of Americans want to know what is in his tax returns.

Why is this such a state secret? Why can't people see what they want to see and what they have been given with every other President?

So this is an opportunity to put this issue behind us, and if there is nothing controversial in his taxes, well, then this issue goes away and we can talk about something else. But maybe there is something he is hiding. Maybe there is something that we should be concerned about. Maybe there are conflicts of interest that might be constitutionally questionable. Maybe there are ties to Russia that would cause my colleagues on the other side of the aisle more concern.

This idea of hiding this has to stop. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question and vote ''no'' on the underlying rule.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend from Massachusetts quoting me yesterday, and I would love to just emphasize a few of the words that he said a moment ago: I also shudder to think if Hillary Clinton won the Presidency.

My friend was kind enough to focus his half hour on H.R. 1219, Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017. It is, in fact, a great piece of legislation, and I am proud to close now on that bill.

We have the opportunity today to improve access to capital for America's entrepreneurs and startups. The men and women who start companies in this Nation put everything on the line. They give of their time and their financial resources. They give of their weekends and evenings and vacations.

Our economy relies on the small businesses that these men and women create. Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy. They provide jobs and important products and services. They contribute to the life of their communities.

If we want to grow our economy, if we want to increase hiring, if we want to improve our quality of life, then we need to unleash America's entrepreneurs and startups. That is why we need to support this bill.

We must expand access to credit for small-business owners. We need to make it easier for angel investors to take a risk on young companies. We are not asking the American taxpayer to take a risk or spend any money on this. We are simply asking the Federal Government to allow angel investors to join together in larger groups to invest in promising young American companies.

I am encouraged that this bill represents a bipartisan effort to make small-business owners in this country more rewarding. When the cost of starting a small business is outweighed by the reward, our country will benefit from the resulting innovation and job creation. We simply need to give entrepreneurs the tools they need to succeed, and one of those tools is access to capital.

America's entrepreneurs and startups need H.R. 1219. Americans who want to work for small businesses need H.R. 1219. Americans who want to buy great products, access incredible services, and visit amazing websites all need H.R. 1219.

I thank Chief Deputy Whip MCHENRY for introducing this important bill, and I thank Chairman HENSARLING for bringing this legislation before us. I also thank Representative VELÁZQUEZ, Representative HOLLINGSWORTH, Representative SHERMAN, and Representative GOTTHEIMER for cosponsoring this legislation.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and vote ''yes'' on the bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 242 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

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

SEC. 6. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 305) to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 7. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 305.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend

the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION BANKRUPTCY ACT OF 2017

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1667) to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1667

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 ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATIONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 101 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting the following after paragraph (9):

''(9A) The term 'covered financial corporation' means any corporation incorporated or organized under any Federal or State law, other than a stockbroker, a commodity broker, or an entity of the kind specified in paragraph (2) or (3) of section 109(b), that is—

''(A) a bank holding company, as defined in section 2(a) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956; or

''(B) a corporation that exists for the primary purpose of owning, controlling and financing its subsidiaries, that has total consolidated assets of $50,000,000,000 or greater, and for which, in its most recently completed fiscal year—

''(i) annual gross revenues derived by the corporation and all of its subsidiaries from activities that are financial in nature (as defined in section 4(k) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956) and, if applicable, from the ownership or control of one or more insured depository institutions, represents 85 percent or more of the consolidated annual gross revenues of the corporation; or

''(ii) the consolidated assets of the corporation and all of its subsidiaries related to activities that are financial in nature (as defined in section 4(k) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956) and, if applicable, related to the ownership or control of one or more insured depository institutions, represents 85 percent or more of the consolidated assets of the corporation.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTERS.—Section 103 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) Subchapter V of chapter 11 of this title applies only in a case under chapter 11 concerning a covered financial corporation.''.

(c) WHO MAY BE A DEBTOR.—Section 109 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) a covered financial corporation.''; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking ''and'' before ''an uninsured State member bank'';

(B) by striking ''or'' before ''a corporation''; and

(C) by inserting '', or a covered financial corporation'' after ''Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991''.

(d) CONVERSION TO CHAPTER 7.—Section 1112 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) Notwithstanding section 109(b), the court may convert a case under subchapter V to a case under chapter 7 if—

''(1) a transfer approved under section 1185 has been consummated;

''(2) the court has ordered the appointment of a special trustee under section 1186; and

''(3) the court finds, after notice and a hearing, that conversion is in the best interest of the creditors and the estate.''.

(e)(1) Section 726(a)(1) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after ''first,'' the following: ''in payment of any unpaid fees, costs, and expenses of a special trustee appointed under section 1186, and then''.

(2) Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after paragraph (16) the following:

''(17) In a case under subchapter V, all payable fees, costs, and expenses of the special trustee have been paid or the plan provides for the payment of all such fees, costs, and expenses on the effective date of the plan.

''(18) In a case under subchapter V, confirmation of the plan is not likely to cause serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States.''.

(f) Section 322(b)(2) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking ''The'' and inserting ''In cases under subchapter V, the United States trustee shall recommend to the court, and in all other cases, the''.

SEC. 3. LIQUIDATION, REORGANIZATION, OR RECAPITALIZATION OF A COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATION.

Chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER V—LIQUIDATION, REORGANIZATION, OR RECAPITALIZATION OF A COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATION

''§ 1181. Inapplicability of other sections

''Sections 303 and 321(c) do not apply in a case under this subchapter concerning a covered financial corporation. Section 365 does not apply to a transfer under section 1185, 1187, or 1188.

''§ 1182. Definitions for this subchapter

''In this subchapter, the following definitions shall apply:

''(1) The term 'Board' means the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

''(2) The term 'bridge company' means a newly formed corporation to which property of the estate may be transferred under section 1185(a) and the equity securities of which may be transferred to a special trustee under section 1186(a).

''(3) The term 'capital structure debt' means all unsecured debt of the debtor for borrowed money for which the debtor is the primary obligor, other than a qualified financial contract and other than debt secured by a lien on property of the estate that is to be transferred to a bridge company pursuant to an order of the court under section 1185(a).

''(4) The term 'contractual right' means a contractual right of a kind defined in section 555, 556, 559, 560, or 561.

''(5) The term 'qualified financial contract' means any contract of a kind defined in paragraph (25), (38A), (47), or (53B) of section 101, section 741(7), or paragraph (4), (5), (11), or (13) of section 761.

''(6) The term 'special trustee' means the trustee of a trust formed under section 1186(a)(1).

''§ 1183. Commencement of a case concerning a covered financial corporation

''(a) A case under this subchapter concerning a covered financial corporation may be commenced by the filing of a petition with the court by the debtor under section 301 only if the debtor states to the best of its knowledge under penalty of perjury in the petition that it is a covered financial corporation.

''(b) The commencement of a case under subsection (a) constitutes an order for relief under this subchapter.

''(c) The members of the board of directors (or body performing similar functions) of a covered financial corporation shall have no liability to shareholders, creditors, or other parties in interest for a good faith filing of a petition to commence a case under this subchapter, or for any reasonable action taken in good faith in contemplation of such a petition or a transfer under section 1185 or section 1186, whether prior to or after commencement of the case.

''(d) Counsel to the debtor shall provide, to the greatest extent practicable without disclosing the identity of the potential debtor, sufficient confidential notice to the chief

judge of the court of appeals for the circuit embracing the district in which such counsel intends to file a petition to commence a case under this subchapter regarding the potential commencement of such case. The chief judge of such court shall randomly assign to preside over such case a bankruptcy judge selected from among the bankruptcy judges designated by the Chief Justice of the United States under section 298 of title 28.

"§ 1184. Regulators

''The Board, the Securities Exchange Commission, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency of the Department of the Treasury, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation may raise and may appear and be heard on any issue in any case or proceeding under this subchapter.

"§ 1185. Special transfer of property of the estate

''(a) On request of the trustee, and after notice and a hearing that shall occur not less than 24 hours after the order for relief, the court may order a transfer under this section of property of the estate, and the assignment of executory contracts, unexpired leases, and qualified financial contracts of the debtor, to a bridge company. Upon the entry of an order approving such transfer, any property transferred, and any executory contracts, unexpired leases, and qualified financial contracts assigned under such order shall no longer be property of the estate. Except as provided under this section, the provisions of section 363 shall apply to a transfer and assignment under this section.

''(b) Unless the court orders otherwise, notice of a request for an order under subsection (a) shall consist of electronic or telephonic notice of not less than 24 hours to—

''(1) the debtor;

''(2) the holders of the 20 largest secured claims against the debtor;

''(3) the holders of the 20 largest unsecured claims against the debtor;

''(4) counterparties to any debt, executory contract, unexpired lease, and qualified financial contract requested to be transferred under this section;

''(5) the Board;

''(6) the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

''(7) the Secretary of the Treasury and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency of the Treasury;

''(8) the Commodity Futures Trading Commission;

''(9) the Securities and Exchange Commission;

''(10) the United States trustee or bankruptcy administrator; and

''(11) each primary financial regulatory agency, as defined in section 2(12) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, with respect to any affiliate the equity securities of which are proposed to be transferred under this section.

''(c) The court may not order a transfer under this section unless the court determines, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that—

''(1) the transfer under this section is necessary to prevent serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States;

''(2) the transfer does not provide for the assumption of any capital structure debt by the bridge company;

''(3) the transfer does not provide for the transfer to the bridge company of any property of the estate that is subject to a lien securing a debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) of the debtor unless—

''(A)(i) the bridge company assumes such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract), including any claims arising in respect thereof that would not be allowed secured claims under section 506(a)(1) and after giving effect to such transfer, such property remains subject to the lien securing such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract); and

''(ii) the court has determined that assumption of such debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) by the bridge company is in the best interests of the estate; or

''(B) such property is being transferred to the bridge company in accordance with the provisions of section 363;

''(4) the transfer does not provide for the assumption by the bridge company of any debt, executory contract, unexpired lease or agreement (including a qualified financial contract) of the debtor secured by a lien on property of the estate unless the transfer provides for such property to be transferred to the bridge company in accordance with paragraph (3)(A) of this subsection;

''(5) the transfer does not provide for the transfer of the equity of the debtor;

''(6) the trustee has demonstrated that the bridge company is not likely to fail to meet the obligations of any debt, executory contract, qualified financial contract, or unexpired lease assumed and assigned to the bridge company;

''(7) the transfer provides for the transfer to a special trustee all of the equity securities in the bridge company and appointment of a special trustee in accordance with section 1186;

''(8) after giving effect to the transfer, adequate provision has been made for the fees, costs, and expenses of the estate and special trustee; and

''(9) the bridge company will have governing documents, and initial directors and senior officers, that are in the best interest of creditors and the estate.

''(d) Immediately before a transfer under this section, the bridge company that is the recipient of the transfer shall—

''(1) not have any property, executory contracts, unexpired leases, qualified financial contracts, or debts, other than any property acquired or executory contracts, unexpired leases, or debts assumed when acting as a transferee of a transfer under this section; and

''(2) have equity securities that are property of the estate, which may be sold or distributed in accordance with this title.

"§ 1186. Special trustee

''(a)(1) An order approving a transfer under section 1185 shall require the trustee to transfer to a qualified and independent special trustee, who is appointed by the court, all of the equity securities in the bridge company that is the recipient of a transfer under section 1185 to hold in trust for the sole benefit of the estate, subject to satisfaction of the special trustee's fees, costs, and expenses. The trust of which the special trustee is the trustee shall be a newly formed trust governed by a trust agreement approved by the court as in the best interests of the estate, and shall exist for the sole purpose of holding and administering, and shall be permitted to dispose of, the equity securities of the bridge company in accordance with the trust agreement.

''(2) In connection with the hearing to approve a transfer under section 1185, the trustee shall confirm to the court that the Board has been consulted regarding the identity of the proposed special trustee and advise the court of the results of such consultation.

''(b) The trust agreement governing the trust shall provide—

''(1) for the payment of the fees, costs, expenses, and indemnities of the special trustee from the assets of the debtor's estate;

''(2) that the special trustee provide—

''(A) quarterly reporting to the estate, which shall be filed with the court; and

''(B) information about the bridge company reasonably requested by a party in interest to prepare a disclosure statement for a plan providing for distribution of any securities of the bridge company if such information is necessary to prepare such disclosure statement;

''(3) that for as long as the equity securities of the bridge company are held by the trust, the special trustee shall file a notice with the court in connection with—

''(A) any change in a director or senior officer of the bridge company;

''(B) any modification to the governing documents of the bridge company; and

''(C) any material corporate action of the bridge company, including—

''(i) recapitalization;

''(ii) a material borrowing;

''(iii) termination of an intercompany debt or guarantee;

''(iv) a transfer of a substantial portion of the assets of the bridge company; or

''(v) the issuance or sale of any securities of the bridge company;

''(4) that any sale of any equity securities of the bridge company shall not be consummated until the special trustee consults with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Board regarding such sale and discloses the results of such consultation with the court;

''(5) that, subject to reserves for payments permitted under paragraph (1) provided for in the trust agreement, the proceeds of the sale of any equity securities of the bridge company by the special trustee be held in trust for the benefit of or transferred to the estate;

''(6) the process and guidelines for the replacement of the special trustee; and

''(7) that the property held in trust by the special trustee is subject to distribution in accordance with subsection (c).

''(c)(1) The special trustee shall distribute the assets held in trust—

''(A) if the court confirms a plan in the case, in accordance with the plan on the effective date of the plan; or

''(B) if the case is converted to a case under chapter 7, as ordered by the court.

''(2) As soon as practicable after a final distribution under paragraph (1), the office of the special trustee shall terminate, except as may be necessary to wind up and conclude the business and financial affairs of the trust.

''(d) After a transfer to the special trustee under this section, the special trustee shall be subject only to applicable nonbankruptcy law, and the actions and conduct of the special trustee shall no longer be subject to approval by the court in the case under this subchapter.

"§ 1187. Temporary and supplemental automatic stay; assumed debt

''(a)(1) A petition filed under section 1183 operates as a stay, applicable to all entities, of the termination, acceleration, or modification of any debt, contract, lease, or agreement of the kind described in paragraph (2), or of any right or obligation under any such debt, contract, lease, or agreement, solely because of—

''(A) a default by the debtor under any such debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(B) a provision in such debt, contract, lease, or agreement, or in applicable nonbankruptcy law, that is conditioned on—

''(i) the insolvency or financial condition of the debtor at any time before the closing of the case;

''(ii) the commencement of a case under this title concerning the debtor;

''(iii) the appointment of or taking possession by a trustee in a case under this title concerning the debtor or by a custodian before the commencement of the case; or

''(iv) a credit rating agency rating, or absence or withdrawal of a credit rating agency rating—

''(I) of the debtor at any time after the commencement of the case;

''(II) of an affiliate during the period from the commencement of the case until 48 hours after such order is entered;

''(III) of the bridge company while the trustee or the special trustee is a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of—

''(aa) the bridge company; or

''(bb) the affiliate, if all of the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185; or

''(IV) of an affiliate while the trustee or the special trustee is a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of—

''(aa) the bridge company; or

''(bb) the affiliate, if all of the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185.

''(2) A debt, contract, lease, or agreement described in this paragraph is—

''(A) any debt (other than capital structure debt), executory contract, or unexpired lease of the debtor (other than a qualified financial contract);

''(B) any agreement under which the debtor issued or is obligated for debt (other than capital structure debt);

''(C) any debt, executory contract, or unexpired lease of an affiliate (other than a qualified financial contract); or

''(D) any agreement under which an affiliate issued or is obligated for debt.

''(3) The stay under this subsection terminates—

''(A) for the benefit of the debtor, upon the earliest of—

''(i) 48 hours after the commencement of the case;

''(ii) assumption of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement by the bridge company under an order authorizing a transfer under section 1185;

''(iii) a final order of the court denying the request for a transfer under section 1185; or

''(iv) the time the case is dismissed; and

''(B) for the benefit of an affiliate, upon the earliest of—

''(i) the entry of an order authorizing a transfer under section 1185 in which the direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are not transferred under section 1185;

''(ii) a final order by the court denying the request for a transfer under section 1185;

''(iii) 48 hours after the commencement of the case if the court has not ordered a transfer under section 1185; or

''(iv) the time the case is dismissed.

''(4) Subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g) of section 362 apply to a stay under this subsection.

''(b) A debt, executory contract (other than a qualified financial contract), or unexpired lease of the debtor, or an agreement under which the debtor has issued or is obligated for any debt, may be assumed by a bridge company in a transfer under section 1185 notwithstanding any provision in an agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law that—

''(1) prohibits, restricts, or conditions the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(2) accelerates, terminates, or modifies, or permits a party other than the debtor to terminate or modify, the debt, contract, lease, or agreement on account of—

''(A) the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(B) a change in control of any party to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement.

''(c)(1) A debt, contract, lease, or agreement of the kind described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (a)(2) may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, and any right or obligation under such debt, contract, lease, or agreement may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, as to the bridge company solely because of a provision in the debt, contract, lease, or agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law—

''(A) of the kind described in subsection (a)(1)(B) as applied to the debtor;

''(B) that prohibits, restricts, or conditions the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(C) that accelerates, terminates, or modifies, or permits a party other than the debtor to terminate or modify, the debt, contract, lease or agreement on account of—

''(i) the assignment of the debt, contract, lease, or agreement; or

''(ii) a change in control of any party to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement.

''(2) If there is a default by the debtor under a provision other than the kind described in paragraph (1) in a debt, contract, lease or agreement of the kind described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (a)(2), the bridge company may assume such debt, contract, lease, or agreement only if the bridge company—

''(A) shall cure the default;

''(B) compensates, or provides adequate assurance in connection with a transfer under section 1185 that the bridge company will promptly compensate, a party other than the debtor to the debt, contract, lease, or agreement, for any actual pecuniary loss to the party resulting from the default; and

''(C) provides adequate assurance in connection with a transfer under section 1185 of future performance under the debt, contract, lease, or agreement, as determined by the court under section 1185(c)(4).

''§ 1188. Treatment of qualified financial contracts and affiliate contracts

''(a) Notwithstanding sections 362(b)(6), 362(b)(7), 362(b)(17), 362(b)(27), 362(o), 555, 556, 559, 560, and 561, a petition filed under section 1183 operates as a stay, during the period specified in section 1187(a)(3)(A), applicable to all entities, of the exercise of a contractual right—

''(1) to cause the modification, liquidation, termination, or acceleration of a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate;

''(2) to offset or net out any termination value, payment amount, or other transfer obligation arising under or in connection with a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate; or

''(3) under any security agreement or arrangement or other credit enhancement forming a part of or related to a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate.

''(b)(1) During the period specified in section 1187(a)(3)(A), the trustee or the affiliate shall perform all payment and delivery obligations under such qualified financial contract of the debtor or the affiliate, as the case may be, that become due after the commencement of the case. The stay provided under subsection (a) terminates as to a qualified financial contract of the debtor or an affiliate immediately upon the failure of the trustee or the affiliate, as the case may be, to perform any such obligation during such period.

''(2) Any failure by a counterparty to any qualified financial contract of the debtor or any affiliate to perform any payment or delivery obligation under such qualified financial contract, including during the pendency of the stay provided under subsection (a), shall constitute a breach of such qualified financial contract by the counterparty.

''(c) Subject to the court's approval, a qualified financial contract between an entity and the debtor may be assigned to or assumed by the bridge company in a transfer under, and in accordance with, section 1185 if and only if—

''(1) all qualified financial contracts between the entity and the debtor are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company in the transfer under section 1185;

''(2) all claims of the entity against the debtor in respect of any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor (other than any claim that, under the terms of the qualified financial contract, is subordinated to the claims of general unsecured creditors) are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company;

''(3) all claims of the debtor against the entity under any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor are assigned to and assumed by the bridge company; and

''(4) all property securing or any other credit enhancement furnished by the debtor for any qualified financial contract described in paragraph (1) or any claim described in paragraph (2) or (3) under any qualified financial contract between the entity and the debtor is assigned to and assumed by the bridge company.

''(d) Notwithstanding any provision of a qualified financial contract or of applicable nonbankruptcy law, a qualified financial contract of the debtor that is assumed or assigned in a transfer under section 1185 may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, after the entry of the order approving a transfer under section 1185, and any right or obligation under the qualified financial contract may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, after the entry of the order approving a transfer under section 1185 solely because of a condition described in section 1187(c)(1), other than a condition of the kind specified in section 1187(b) that occurs after property of the estate no longer includes a direct beneficial interest or an indirect beneficial interest through the special trustee, in more than 50 percent of the equity securities of the bridge company.

''(e) Notwithstanding any provision of any agreement or in applicable nonbankruptcy law, an agreement of an affiliate (including an executory contract, an unexpired lease, qualified financial contract, or an agreement under which the affiliate issued or is obligated for debt) and any right or obligation under such agreement may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified, solely because of a condition described in section 1187(c)(1), other than a condition of the kind specified in section 1187(b) that occurs after the bridge company is no longer a direct or indirect beneficial holder of more than 50 percent of the equity securities of the affiliate, at any time after the commencement of the case if—

''(1) all direct or indirect interests in the affiliate that are property of the estate are transferred under section 1185 to the bridge company within the period specified in subsection (a);

''(2) the bridge company assumes—

''(A) any guarantee or other credit enhancement issued by the debtor relating to the agreement of the affiliate; and

''(B) any obligations in respect of rights of setoff, netting arrangement, or debt of the debtor that directly arises out of or directly relates to the guarantee or credit enhancement; and

''(3) any property of the estate that directly serves as collateral for the guarantee

or credit enhancement is transferred to the bridge company.

"§ 1189. Licenses, permits, and registrations

''(a) Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable nonbankruptcy law, if a request is made under section 1185 for a transfer of property of the estate, any Federal, State, or local license, permit, or registration that the debtor or an affiliate had immediately before the commencement of the case and that is proposed to be transferred under section 1185 may not be accelerated, terminated, or modified at any time after the request solely on account of—

''(1) the insolvency or financial condition of the debtor at any time before the closing of the case;

''(2) the commencement of a case under this title concerning the debtor;

''(3) the appointment of or taking possession by a trustee in a case under this title concerning the debtor or by a custodian before the commencement of the case; or

''(4) a transfer under section 1185.

''(b) Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable nonbankruptcy law, any Federal, State, or local license, permit, or registration that the debtor had immediately before the commencement of the case that is included in a transfer under section 1185 shall be valid and all rights and obligations thereunder shall vest in the bridge company.

"§ 1190. Exemption from securities laws

''For purposes of section 1145, a security of the bridge company shall be deemed to be a security of a successor to the debtor under a plan if the court approves the disclosure statement for the plan as providing adequate information (as defined in section 1125(a)) about the bridge company and the security.

"§ 1191. Inapplicability of certain avoiding powers

''A transfer made or an obligation incurred by the debtor to an affiliate prior to or after the commencement of the case, including any obligation released by the debtor or the estate to or for the benefit of an affiliate, in contemplation of or in connection with a transfer under section 1185 is not avoidable under section 544, 547, 548(a)(1)(B), or 549, or under any similar nonbankruptcy law.

"§ 1192. Consideration of financial stability

''The court may consider the effect that any decision in connection with this subchapter may have on financial stability in the United States.''.

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE.

(a) AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 13.—Chapter 13 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 298. Judge for a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11

''(a)(1) Notwithstanding section 295, the Chief Justice of the United States shall designate not fewer than 10 bankruptcy judges to be available to hear a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11. Bankruptcy judges may request to be considered by the Chief Justice of the United States for such designation.

''(2) Notwithstanding section 155, a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11 shall be heard under section 157 by a bankruptcy judge designated under paragraph (1), who shall be randomly assigned to hear such case by the chief judge of the court of appeals for the circuit embracing the district in which the case is pending. To the greatest extent practicable, the approvals required under section 155 should be obtained.

''(3) If the bankruptcy judge assigned to hear a case under paragraph (2) is not assigned to the district in which the case is pending, the bankruptcy judge shall be temporarily assigned to the district.

''(b) A case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11, and all proceedings in the case, shall take place in the district in which the case is pending.

''(c) In this section, the term 'covered financial corporation' has the meaning given that term in section 101(9A) of title 11.''.

(b) AMENDMENT TO SECTION 1334 OF TITLE 28.—Section 1334 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) This section does not grant jurisdiction to the district court after a transfer pursuant to an order under section 1185 of title 11 of any proceeding related to a special trustee appointed, or to a bridge company formed, in connection with a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The table of sections of chapter 13 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''298. Judge for a case under subchapter V of chapter 11 of title 11.''.

(2) The table of subchapters of chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SUBCHAPTER V—LIQUIDATION, REORGANIZATION, OR RECAPITALIZATION OF A COVERED FINANCIAL CORPORATION

''1181. Inapplicability of other sections.
''1182. Definitions for this subchapter.
''1183. Commencement of a case concerning a covered financial corporation.
''1184. Regulators.
''1185. Special transfer of property of the estate.
''1186. Special trustee.
''1187. Temporary and supplemental automatic stay; assumed debt.
''1188. Treatment of qualified financial contracts and affiliate contracts.
''1189. Licenses, permits, and registrations.
''1190. Exemption from securities laws.
''1191. Inapplicability of certain avoiding powers.
''1192. Consideration of financial stability.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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. 1667, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

In 2008, our economy suffered one of the most significant financial crises in history. In the midst of the crisis and in response to a fear that some financial firms' failures could cause severe harm to the overall economy, the Federal Government provided extraordinary taxpayer-funded assistance in order to prevent certain financial firms' failures.

In the ensuing years, experts from the financial, regulatory, legal, and academic communities have examined how best to prevent another similar crisis from occurring and to eliminate the possibility of using taxpayer moneys to bail out failing firms.

The Judiciary Committee has advanced the review of this issue with the aim of crafting a solution that will better equip our bankruptcy laws to resolve failing firms, while also encouraging greater private counterparty diligence in order to reduce the likelihood of another financial crisis.

Among others things, this effort responded to provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act that called for an examination of how to improve the Bankruptcy Code in this area.

During the past two Congresses, the Judiciary Committee favorably reported the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act, legislation that improved the Bankruptcy Code to better facilitate the resolution of financial firms.

That legislation was the culmination of a bipartisan process that solicited and incorporated the views of a wide range of leading experts and relevant regulators. In both instances, the bill passed the House by a voice vote under suspension of the rules.

This Congress, Chairman MARINO of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law introduced the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act as H.R. 1667. Following its introduction, the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law conducted a hearing on the bill. H.R. 1667 is identical to previous legislation, with one minor change to refine the director liability protection provision. Last week, the Judiciary Committee approved the legislation by a unanimous voice vote.

The bill before us today is the product of a careful, deliberate, and thorough process, and reflects a diverse range of views from a variety of interested parties.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act makes several improvements to the Bankruptcy Code in order to enhance the prospect of an efficient resolution of a financial firm through the bankruptcy process.

The bill allows for a speedy transfer of the operating assets of a financial firm over the course of a weekend. This quick transfer allows the financial firm to continue to operate in the normal course, which preserves the value of the enterprise for the creditors of the bankruptcy without a significant impact on the firm's employees, suppliers, and customers.

The bill also requires expedited judicial review by a bankruptcy judge randomly chosen from a pool of judges designated in advance and selected by the Chief Justice for their experience, expertise, and willingness to preside over these complex cases. Furthermore, the legislation provides for key regulatory input throughout the process.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a bipartisan, balanced approach that increases transparency and

predictability in the resolution of a financial firm. Furthermore, it ensures that shareholders and creditors, not taxpayers, bear the losses related to the failure of a financial company.

I would like to thank Chairman MARINO, who chaired the hearing on this legislation and who is the lead sponsor of the bill. I am also pleased that Ranking Member CONYERS and Subcommittee Ranking Member CICILLINE joined in introducing this important legislation. I want to thank them and their staff for their efforts in developing this bill.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 1677, Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2017.

I commend Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law Chairman TOM MARINO and Ranking Member DAVID CICILLINE, as well as Judiciary Committee Chairman BOB GOODLATTE, for their leadership on this bill.

I support this legislation for several reasons. To begin with, H.R. 1667 addresses a real need recognized by regulatory agencies, bankruptcy experts, and the private sector that the bankruptcy law must be amended so that it can expeditiously restore trust in the financial marketplace as soon as possible after the collapse of a systemically significant financial institution.

This need is perhaps best illustrated by the collapse and subsequent bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in 2008. As a result of that firm's failure and the rampant uncertainty it generated, a worldwide freeze on the availability of credit quickly developed. This, in turn, triggered a near collapse of our Nation's economy and clearly revealed that current bankruptcy law is ill-equipped to deal with complex financial institutions in acute economic distress.

H.R. 1667 would establish a specialized form of bankruptcy relief specifically designed to facilitate the expeditious resolution of a large, systemically significant financial institution, such as Lehman Brothers, while minimizing its impact on the financial marketplace.

Under the bill, the debtor's operating subsidiaries would continue to function outside of bankruptcy, while the debtor's principal assets, such as its secured property, financial contracts, and the stock of its subsidiaries, would be transferred to a temporary ''bridge company.''

The bridge company, under the guidance of a trustee, would then liquidate these assets to pay the claims of the debtor's creditors. The bill would also temporarily prevent parties from exercising their rights in certain qualified financial contracts.

Each critical step of this process would be done under the supervision of a bankruptcy judge and subject to appeal.

Another reason I support this bill is that it appropriately recognizes the important role the Dodd-Frank Act has in the regulation of large financial institutions. Without doubt, the Great Recession was a direct result of the regulatory environment at the time. Fortunately, the Dodd-Frank Act has done much toward reinvigorating a regulatory system that makes the financial marketplace more accountable and more resilient.

In particular, title II of the Dodd-Frank Act establishes a mandatory resolution process to wind down large financial institutions, which is a critical enforcement tool for bank regulators to ensure compliance with the act's heightened regulatory requirement.

H.R. 1667 is an excellent complement to the Dodd-Frank Act's resolution process and will help facilitate the rapid administration of a debtor's assets in an orderly fashion that maximizes value and minimizes disruption to the financial marketplace.

Accordingly, I support this measure.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO), the chairman of the Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law Subcommittee and the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Ranking Member CONYERS, and my current new ranking member, Mr. CICILLINE, for their work on this important legislation. I further thank my colleague across the aisle, Congressman SCHNEIDER from Illinois, for helping us manage this.

This is a bipartisan bill that is better for having gone through the regular legislative order. It was a pleasure to work with such knowledgeable and professional colleagues.

In the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, Congress enacted the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. That legislation was intended to address, among other things, the potential failure of large financial institutions.

While the Dodd-Frank Act created a regulatory process for such an event, the act states that the preferred method of resolution for a financial institution is through the bankruptcy process.

However, the Dodd-Frank Act did not make any amendments to the Bankruptcy Code to account for the unique characteristics of a financial institution. The legislation before us today fills that void.

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is the product of years of study by industry, legal, and financial regulatory experts. It is also the result of bipartisan review over the course of four separate hearings before the Judiciary Committee.

The legislation includes several provisions that improve the ability of a financial institution to be resolved through the bankruptcy process. It allows for a speedy transfer of a financial firm's assets to a newly formed company. That company would continue the firm's operations for the benefit of its customers, employees, and creditors, and ensure the financial stability of the marketplace.

This quick transfer is overseen by and subject to the approval of an experienced bankruptcy judge, and includes due process protections for parties in interest.

□ 1330

The bill also creates an explicit role in the bankruptcy process for the key financial regulators. In addition, there are provisions that facilitate the transfer of derivative and similarly structured contracts to the newly formed company. This will improve the ability of the company to continue the financial institution's operations.

Finally, the legislation recognizes the factually and legally complicated questions presented by the resolution of a financial institution. To that end, the bill provides that specialized bankruptcy and appellate judges will be designated in advance to preside over these cases.

The bankruptcy process has long been favored as the primary mechanism for dealing with distressed and failing companies. This is due to its impartial nature, adherence to established precedent, judicial oversight, and grounding in the principles of due process and the rule of law. We are here today as part of an effort to structure a bankruptcy process that is better equipped to deal with the specific issues raised by failing financial firms.

I want to stress again the bipartisan support that went through this process—at the subcommittee level and at the full Committee on the Judiciary level chaired by Chairman GOODLATTE, my colleague on the other side of the aisle who is helping us manage this and the individuals in this House who realized what had to be done to protect the law abiding citizens of this country from a financial disaster.

As a sponsor of the bill, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important legislation.

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

I am pleased to note that H.R. 1667 is the product, indeed, of a very collaborative, inclusive, and deliberative process, which should be the norm, not the exception, when it comes to drafting legislation. It reflects thoughtful suggestions offered by Federal regulators and the Federal judiciary as well as leading bankruptcy practitioners and academics.

I support H.R. 1667, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a necessary reform to ensure that taxpayers will not be called on to rescue the next failing financial firm. The legislation relies on longstanding bankruptcy principles that will be applied in a predictable and transparent manner. The Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act is a bipartisan measure that enjoys broad support from outside experts, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important reform.

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1667, the ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2017.''

In 2008, the United States economy nearly collapsed as a direct result of lending practices in the housing market that were predatory, unsafe, and in many cases fraudulent.

Investments in toxic securities created a cycle of failure in the housing market: the declining health of the market undermined the value of these securities, which, in turn, devastated the housing market and caused the failure of several of the nation's largest financial institutions.

With the financial system in near collapse, large financial institutions were essentially able to ''blackmail'' the government because these banks were so large that there was no way to break them apart, as then-FDIC Chair Sheila Bair testified in 2009.

Although the true hardship caused by this widespread fraud is incalculable, we do know that it erased $10 trillion of household wealth and caused 8 million Americans to lose their jobs and 5 million Americans to lose their homes.

Rhode Island, my home state, was hit particularly hard by the recession. When I took office, the unemployment rate in Rhode Island hovered at 11.2%, the fifth highest in the country.

In the wake of this economic disaster, the Dodd-Frank Act was enacted to comprehensively reform the financial system.

Because of this law—which includes some of the strongest consumer protections passed since the Great Depression—the banking system is stronger; there is more transparency in consumer lending; and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) continues to serve as an important watchdog to protect Americans against predatory lending and fraud in the financial system.

Title I of Dodd-Frank provides stability in markets by requiring large financial institutions to have a ''living will'' to serve as a plan for the ''rapid and orderly resolution in the event of material financial distress or failure.''

Title II ends taxpayer bailouts of banks that are too big to fail by providing financial regulators with orderly liquidation authority where a bank's collapse ''would have serious adverse effects on financial stability in the United States'' and ''no viable private sector alternative is available.'' This process expressly requires a finding by the Secretary of the Treasury that the bankruptcy process would not be appropriate to resolve a distressed firm.

Leading commentators agree, however, that the U.S. bankruptcy process is not designed to accommodate the orderly resolution of a large financial institution that poses systemic risk to the entire economy.

H.R. 1667, the Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act,'' addresses this concern by establishing a ''single point of entry'' for the resolution of an insolvent financial institution with assets exceeding $50 billion. The goal of the bill is to establish a process where a distressed financial institution could voluntarily seek bankruptcy relief while its subsidiaries continue to operate.

But while I support H.R. 1667 and am an original cosponsor of this bill, make no mistake: I will strongly oppose any effort to combine this measure with a repeal of the Dodd-Frank Act, or any part of this law for that matter.

Since this law was enacted, the economic recovery has led to the creation of more than 15 million private sector jobs, a 60% increase in business lending, and record performance by the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

It is critical that we build on this progress through education, training, and other initiatives to promote economic opportunity. Too many Americans are still unemployed or working two or even three jobs just to get by while Wall Street has never been better.

We must also preserve and advance the protections established by the Dodd-Frank Act to ensure transparency and stability in the financial system while protecting consumers.

The National Bankruptcy Conference agrees with this assessment, and has previously instructed that the Dodd-Frank Act should ''continue to be available even if the Bankruptcy Code is amended to better address the resolution of SIFIs because the ability of U.S. regulators to assume full control of the resolution process to elicit the cooperation from non-U.S. regulators is an essential insurance policy against systemic risk and potential conflict and dysfunction among the multinational components of SIFIs.''

Moreover, should this legislation become law, Dodd-Frank provides a valuable backstop to bankruptcy through its Orderly Liquidation Authority, which empowers the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to act as a receiver for large financial institutions that are ''too big to fail.''

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1667, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 242; and adopting House Resolution 242, if ordered.

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

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1219, SUPPORTING AMERICA'S INNOVATORS ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 7, 2017, THROUGH APRIL 24, 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 242) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1219) to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company, and providing for proceedings during the period from April 7, 2017, through April 24, 2017, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 231, nays 182, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 217]

YEAS—231

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen

Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—182

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
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—16

Beatty
Bridenstine
Cárdenas
Chu, Judy
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Green, Al
Hoyer
Hunter
King (NY)
Larson (CT)
Lofgren
Lowey
McEachin
Slaughter
Stewart

□ 1358

Mr. SUOZZI change his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 217.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. 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 240, noes 181, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 218]

AYES—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—181

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
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—8

Beatty
Bridenstine
Davis, Danny
Hoyer
King (NY)
McEachin
Slaughter
Takano

□ 1405

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 218.

AMENDING THE VETERANS ACCESS, CHOICE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2014

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 544) to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 544

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MODIFICATION OF TERMINATION DATE FOR VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM.

Section 101(p)(2) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking '', or the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, whichever occurs first''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF REQUIREMENT TO ACT AS SECONDARY PAYER FOR CARE RELATING TO NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES AND RECOVERY OF COSTS FOR CERTAIN CARE UNDER CHOICE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101(e) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking ''OTHER HEALTH-CARE PLAN'' and inserting ''RESPONSIBILITY FOR COSTS OF CERTAIN CARE'';

(2) in paragraph (1), in the paragraph heading, by striking ''TO SECRETARY'' and inserting ''ON HEALTH-CARE PLANS'';

(3) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3);

(4) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (2); and

(5) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) RECOVERY OF COSTS FOR CERTAIN CARE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which an eligible veteran is furnished hospital care or medical services under this section for a non-service-connected disability described in subsection (a)(2) of section 1729 of title 38, United States Code, or for a condition for which recovery is authorized or with respect to which the United States is deemed to be a third party beneficiary under Public Law 87–693, commonly known as the 'Federal Medical Care Recovery Act' (42 U.S.C. 2651 et seq.), the Secretary shall recover or collect from a third party (as defined in subsection (i) of such section 1729) reasonable charges for such care or services to the extent that the veteran (or the provider of the care or services) would be eligible to receive payment for such care or services from such third party if the care or services had not been furnished by a department or agency of the United States.

''(B) USE OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts collected by the Secretary under subparagraph (A) shall be deposited in the Medical Community Care account of the Department. Amounts so deposited shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (1) of such section is amended by striking ''paragraph (4)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)''.

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE CERTAIN MEDICAL RECORDS OF VETERANS WHO RECEIVE NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE.

Section 7332(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(H)(i) To a non-Department entity (including private entities and other Federal agencies) that provides hospital care or medical services to veterans as authorized by the Secretary.

''(ii) An entity to which a record is disclosed under this subparagraph may not redisclose or use such record for a purpose other than that for which the disclosure was made.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add extraneous material into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 544. Congress created the Choice Program in 2014 to ensure that veterans waiting in line at the Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities across the country had an option of seeking care in their communities. Though Choice is far from perfect, 3 years later, more than a million veterans have used it to get care they needed faster and closer to home.

Choice has also led to a nationwide conversation about the importance of the VA healthcare system, the need for VA to be a better partner to community providers and hospitals everywhere, and the actions we must take to ensure that VA is well positioned to provide high-quality care to veterans for generations to come. As chairman, I am wholeheartedly committed to seeing that conversation through to a solution.

We are currently refining legislation that will provide a long-term path to make the VA healthcare system and VA's care in the community programs, including Choice, work better for veterans, for VA, for community providers, and for taxpayers alike. Our goal is to have that solution on the President's desk later this year.

However, Choice is expected to sunset just four short months from now on August 7, 2017. And when it does, the VA expects to have anywhere from $800 million to $1.2 billion left in the Choice fund.

Absent enactment of this bill or legislation like it, on August 8, those funds will no longer be available to help veterans get the care they need, with potentially tragic consequences.

During a full committee hearing last month, Secretary Shulkin testified:

''Without congressional action, veterans will have to face longer wait times for care.''

He went on to say that allowing Choice to sunset would be ''a disaster for American veterans.''

With the passage of this bill today, we can get one step closer to avoiding that disaster.

In anticipation of the program's expiration, VA has already started halting referrals to Choice for services, like maternity care and oncology care that typically require lengthy episodes of care. That means that veterans with cancer or veterans who are pregnant can no longer choose to take advantage of Choice care if they live far away from a VA medical facility or have to wait more than 30 days for the next VA appointment.

As if that wasn't bad enough, if Choice is not extended by the end of April, VA will have to stop sending referrals to Choice for many other services that veterans are relying on.

To prevent this, S. 544 would remove the August 7, 2017, sunset date from the Choice program. This will allow the program to continue working for veteran patients until all the money remaining in the veterans Choice fund—the money that Congress provided 3 years ago for this exact purpose—is fully expended.

It would also ensure that, as we move forward with ongoing efforts to create an enduring solution to the problems VA is facing, veterans are not cut off from potentially lifesaving or life-preserving care.

The bill would also eliminate the requirement for VA to act as the secondary payor for nonservice-connected care provided under Choice. This would bring Choice in line with VA's other care in the community programs and remove a pain point that, while well-intentioned, has impeded the provision of care for certain patients and challenged VA's ability to issue reimbursements to community providers in a timely consistent manner.

In addition, the bill would authorize VA to share medical record information with community providers who are jointly treating veteran patients. This would ensure that the clinicians caring for veterans, both in VA and community medical facilities, have all the information that they need to make well-informed treatment plans and provide the highest quality care.

Subsequent redisclosure of medical records information would be prohibited, meaning that personal patient information would be safeguarded from inappropriate disclosures.

As chairman, as a veteran, and as a doctor, I cannot think of anything more important that we can do today to help our Nation's veterans and pass this legislation out of the House of Representatives and swiftly deliver it to the President's desk for his signature.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing that by supporting this bill today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1415

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in strong support of S. 544 to eliminate the sunset on the Veterans Choice Program.

This bill will basically allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue spending previously appropriated resources in the Veterans Choice Program to provide direct and timely patient care to veterans. It allows the VA to charge a veteran's healthcare insurer for nonservice-connected care so that veterans aren't sent expensive medical bills, wasting time trying to figure out how to get them paid. Finally, it allows the VA to share medical information with community care providers so patient care is better coordinated.

This legislation is identical to H.R. 369, which passed unanimously in our Committee on Veterans' Affairs. It includes amendments offered by members of that committee.

I would like to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate and thank the chairman of the committee for the bipartisan way that he approached this. The issue of veterans care is a passionate issue for all of us.

The issue of the Choice Program arose out of the crisis in Phoenix and other places in 2014, and a sunset that needed to be addressed was handled in a professional manner. It brought all parties together. I think the chairman is going to get a unanimous vote. They have got one in the Senate.

I can see that, under less steady hands, where this may have bogged down, and I appreciate the chairman's sense of urgency in getting it to this point. It puts us in a good place. So thank you for that.

It also gives us the time we need to come to a bipartisan fix for the Choice Program. We know, under the Choice Program, veterans are still waiting too long to receive care. As we said, in 2014, we all supported the Choice Act because of the crisis. Throughout the country, veterans were waiting, and in some cases dying, because they were waiting for care. If we recall right, an honorable and decent man, the VA Secretary, resigned over this crisis. So this was an important issue that needed to be addressed. We passed the Choice Act so that veterans could get that care.

The Choice Program was created as a temporary fix, designed to end this summer or when the VA spent the $10 billion. As the chairman said, there is about $1 billion left in Choice. With veterans still in need of care, we cannot possibly allow that to go back without addressing where it needs to go. It would be a waste of money, a waste of time, and it would make veterans' wait times even higher.

The bill gives us time to rewrite the Choice Program. The bill will give us time to address all of the problems with Choice so that veterans' care is managed and coordinated with VA and community care providers and so that veterans do not have wait times. It will also make sure the money will continue to be spent on veterans' health care.

I look forward to working with the chairman. As I said earlier, his steady hand and visionary leadership has gotten us to this point. It will ensure that we can figure out what the next iteration of community-based care looks like, and we can come together, bring that to the floor, and get it passed.

For this reason, I would urge my colleagues to support this legislation so veterans can receive their care now while Congress continues to work to improve upon that.

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Ranking Member WALZ, for his kind words and his hard work on this legislation also.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the vice chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, while the Veterans Choice Program is by no means perfect—the chairman said this, as well as the ranking member—many of our men and women who wore our Nation's uniform rely on it for increased access to quality health care.

I strongly support S. 544 because veterans should have certainty that their care will continue, and I am optimistic that our efforts to reform and build upon the Choice Program will yield positive results going forward. The intentions and goals of the Choice Program are good, giving our true American heroes more choices and more focused care; but, clearly, some areas of the program need improvement. I hear that from my veterans.

We have already taken some solid steps to make the program work better for veterans, but not enough. We will have the opportunity to fix this in a bipartisan fashion; for example, one positive step: The eligibility rules initially stated that a veteran had to live 40 miles as the crow flies from the nearest VA facility. We changed it to 40 miles driving distance. That is just common sense; isn't it? I think it is. We have also made reforms to increase the number of non-VA providers who are allowed to participate in the program and expand eligibility to all enrolled veterans.

There is much work to be done, there is no question. The only way we can continue improving the Veterans Choice Program and ensure that veterans see no interruption to their health care is to eliminate the sunset date.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of S. 544.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER), my good friend and a friend of all veterans, our ranking member on the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to commend our chairman, Mr. ROE, and ranking member, Mr. WALZ, for their bipartisan efforts.

I rise to speak on S. 544, the bill that will eliminate the sunset on the Veterans Choice Program.

The Veterans Choice Program was a bipartisan effort to quickly help our veterans in need by ensuring they had access to quality health care after the crisis in Phoenix. However, it was a temporary program. It was not intended to last longer than a few years until Congress could have developed the future of VA community care. As many of my colleagues note, the Choice Program needs an update. This bill represents the first step of that process.

It is expected that the Veterans Choice fund will still have funding by August 2017, as noted, when the Choice Program is scheduled to sunset. This bill will ensure that our veterans will be able to use those resources, and it will ensure those who have long-term care through the Choice Program will not suddenly find themselves without care.

But, as we design a new program to replace the Choice Program, we must ensure that it is an effective and efficient system of care that follows the very best practices of American health care. Part of that is ensuring that these healthcare practitioners do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender, or sexual orientation.

The current Choice Program eliminated those protections to facilitate faster implementation, and while I am concerned of the regulatory burden these antidiscrimination measures could provide, I am committed to working with my colleagues across the aisle on a commonsense and reasonable compromise. We can make a program that not only provides effective and accessible care for our veterans, but also prevents discrimination in the workplace and upholds the finest ideals of the United States of America.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), my good friend, a veteran of both the Marine Corps and the Army, twice deployed to Iraq, and a very active member of the committee.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in support of legislation to remove the sunset date on the Veterans Choice Program and, in turn, bring continuity to our Nation's veterans currently receiving their health care in the community through the Choice Program. Although the program is not perfect, it did provide our Nation's veterans with an unprecedented choice in where they seek their health care and assisted the VA in reducing the appointment wait times backlog.

While my colleagues and I on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee work to streamline and reform the VA's in-community care programs, it is critical that we pass S. 544 to extend the Veterans Choice Program beyond the August 7 sunset date. This will provide help to veterans seeking long-term care through the Choice Program and help meet our Nation's obligations to our veterans who have sacrificed so much in defense of our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE for his leadership on this matter.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my privilege to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), my good friend and also a good friend of veterans, the vice ranking member of the full Committee on Veterans' Affairs,

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 544. This legislation ensures that the approximately $1 billion left in Choice funding is spent on the critical mission of providing veterans timely access to care.

It would be an abdication of our responsibility to veterans if we allowed this money to go back to the Treasury instead of going to those who need and deserve our support.

I appreciate the efforts from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for advancing this legislation.

The Choice Act was designed as a rapid response to the veteran wait time crisis, but its framework and implementation has been deeply flawed. Objective analyses found that it is not meaningfully reducing veterans' wait times, and its arbitrary standards have added a layer of confusion for both patients and providers.

There is bipartisan consensus that these concerns must be addressed when the Choice Act sunsets and the funding expires. We can and must do a better job of prioritizing and streamlining veterans' access to care in the community. We can and must do better than the existing Choice Act.

Now, the Choice Act was a temporary emergency measure to address an unacceptable crisis. Unfortunately, it contained language that undermined protections against workplace discrimination for Federal contractors. The next iteration of this law cannot subvert the rights of those who treat and serve our veterans.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs continues to be a vital tool for ensuring fairness and equality in the workplace. It should apply to everyone that does business with the Federal Government because the Federal Government cannot endorse discrimination of any kind.

I will fight to ensure that this committee and this Congress restores their commitment to equality and fairness as we develop a more streamlined and thoughtful method for connecting veterans with community care.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter echoing these concerns from the Human Rights Campaign, the National Women's Law Center, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the National Partnership for Women & Families.

APRIL 5, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We write to express our serious concerns about H.R. 369/S. 544, which would eliminate the sunset of the Veterans Choice Program. The Veterans Choice Program currently includes a provision exempting it from oversight by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). This has diminished civil rights protections when the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) enters into federal contracts for veterans' health care services. The Veterans Choice Program was always intended to be a temporary solution to ease the health care access crisis faced by the veterans receiving care through the VA. We fear that removing the sunset will open the door to extension of the program, including extending the provision that strips critical equal employment opportunity protections from the men and women serving our nation's veterans. OFCCP must have full jurisdiction to protect against employment discrimination and promote equal employment opportunities.

The antidiscrimination rules enforced by OFCCP ensure that federal contract dollars further equal employment opportunity and are not used to subsidize unlawful discrimination. OFCCP plays a unique and vital role in combating unlawful employment discrimination by federal contractors on the basis of sex, race, national origin, religion, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. It also enforces the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, or VEVRAA, which requires nondiscrimination and affirmative action for special and disabled veterans of any war, campaign, or expedition in which a campaign badge has been authorized. In addition, OFCCP guides contractors and subcontractors on affirmatively promoting equal opportunity in the workplace and promotes fair and nondiscriminatory federal contractor workplaces. Many of its regulations require contractors to take affirmative steps to expand the pool of individuals from which it recruits, and evaluate their own practices to identify and address conduct that limits equal employment opportunities for protected classes of workers. By conducting compliance audits and systemic investigations, through its data collection and investigative authority, OFCCP can aid contractors in identifying and resolving practices that limit equal employment opportunities, without relying solely on individuals who are willing to risk retaliation to challenge unfair employment practices. OFCCP's historic and current role in ensuring artificial barriers do not restrict employment based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or veteran status has improved opportunities for a wide range of workers across the country and has ensured that federal tax dollars do not subsidize discrimination.

Carving out the VA provider agreements from these antidiscrimination protections, affirmative action rules, and data reporting requirements has the effect of narrowing employment opportunities for women, people of color, people with disabilities, veterans, and LGBT individuals and removes critical tools for ending employment discrimination and harassment. Extending the provision that weakens these protections ultimately threatens harm not only to workers, but to those who depend on them for care.

There is no appreciable administrative burden that justifies continuing to suspend these protections and requirements. Federal contractors and subcontractors with less than 50 employees and $50,000 in contracts or subcontracts are not covered by OFCCP's affirmative action requirements. More than 94 percent of health care and social assistance firms had fewer than 50 employees in 2009. The larger providers, those with 50 or more employees and $50,000 or more in federal contracts, should be well-equipped to meet the minimal administrative obligations associated with maintaining an affirmative action plan.

The carve-out of VA contractors from the employment discrimination rules applicable to federal contractors not only has a detrimental impact on the workforces affected, but sends a disturbing message that ensuring fair treatment for women, people of color, LGBT people, veterans, and people with disabilities is unnecessary and inconsequential. It sets a precedent for future carve-outs and represents a step backward from equal opportunity. Any continuation of the Veterans Choice Program must ensure OFCCP jurisdiction to enforce the antidiscrimination rules and other equal employment opportunity protections for these providers.

For further information, please contact the Human Rights Campaign, the National Women's Law Center, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, or the National Partnership for Women and Families.

Sincerely,

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER.
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS.
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR WOMEN & FAMILIES.
HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I look forward to working with Ranking Member WALZ and our fellow committee members to strike the appropriate balance between ensuring protections that are in place to provide provider agreement authority from being unfairly utilized and reducing administrative burdens on small providers.

However, absent passage of this legislation today, veterans with serious need will not be able to get the care they need. Already, veterans who are pregnant or who have been diagnosed with cancer have been unable to take advantage of the increased access to care that the Choice Program provides.

I would also note that, since Choice granted VA provider agreement authority in the Choice Act 3 years ago, the committee has not heard a single instance where that authority has been improperly utilized or resulted in unfair labor practices.

Furthermore, the exclusion afforded in the Choice Act is no more generous than providers under Medicare or in TRICARE currently enjoy, and there is no reason why providers accepting veteran patients should have to deal with more administrative burdens than providers under Medicare and TRICARE. I can assure you, as a Medicare provider and a TRICARE provider, that is enough burden.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), my good friend and fellow classmate.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I certainly commend the chairman of the committee, Dr. ROE, for his leadership on this issue, as well as the ranking member for his leadership.

I rise in strong support of S. 544, which will extend the Veterans Access, Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act. This is an important bill. I have heard from constituents in the congressional district I serve that the Choice Program is working and Congress should extend its authorization and its funding.

The Choice Program was the first step in a long road to true transformation of the Veterans Administration. Veterans should get to choose the care and the facility serving them best. No veteran should ever been forced into waiting lines and other limitations.

Many Veterans Administration healthcare facilities do tremendous work, like the Lyons VA Hospital in Bernards Township, Somerset County, New Jersey, in the district I serve. But care through the VA should not be limited to VA facilities.

The extension of the Choice Program should be a down payment on other reforms. We should be expanding choice and eliminating geographic limitations, and I hope to work with Chairman ROE and his committee to do so.

Too many of our Nation's heroes have lost confidence in a desperately broken bureaucracy, and we have begun to reform that in 2014, and we continue today. Legislation like this bill is another step in restoring that trust and faith.

The brave men and women who have stepped forward to serve our Nation deserve our continued dedication to fixing the VA and ensuring they receive the services they have earned in our defense.

□ 1430

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY), the ranking member of our Health Subcommittee.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota, our ranking member, for yielding me time and for his tireless advocacy on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

As the ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health, it has been my privilege to work with the ranking member and my fellow committee members to establish and conduct rigorous oversight of the Choice Program.

We enacted the Choice Act in a time of crisis. Those of us who served on the committee during that time remember all too well the horrific stories that came to light that moved Congress to enact this law.

Congress passed the Choice Act to ensure that all veterans receive timely access to quality care. It is clear, however, that, in the rush to set up the Choice Program, many veterans were still forced to wait too long and bureaucratic headaches continue to delay needed care.

We need to get Choice 2.0 right and balance the obvious need for care in the community while protecting the top quality care that the VA provides. We must also make sure that Choice 2.0 protects the civil rights of veterans as well as VA employees, contractors, and community providers caring for our veterans.

Today's bill will allow the VA to continue spending the remaining funds in the Veterans Choice Program fund. It will also allow the VA to reimburse community providers faster and improve the sharing of medical records. It gives us time to continue our bipartisan work to fix the Choice Program.

Each Member of this body, on both sides of the aisle, agrees that our veterans have earned the very best care available. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation so that veterans can receive care now while Congress uses this opportunity to get this right.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), a former member and a very active member of our committee.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Veterans Choice Program Improvement Act.

This legislation protects access to health care for our Nation's veterans by maintaining the VA Choice Program and ensuring that funds already allocated for veterans health care remain dedicated to that purpose.

Veterans across my district have utilized the program to access treatment from community healthcare providers. And while they appreciate the flexibility this program provides, I often hear of a need to make improvements and remove hurdles that prevent this program from realizing its full potential.

I am pleased this legislation takes several steps to reduce red tape. Now, what do I mean by that?

First, we are going to speed up reimbursements to community providers. We are going to strengthen medical record sharing between the VA and community providers and reduce out-of-pocket costs for veterans—all very important steps to improving the VA Choice Program. These are commonsense, bipartisan improvements.

I want to thank Chairman ROE for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE), my good friend, the ranking member of our Economic Opportunity Subcommittee.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the chairman of the full committee, and I join the ranking member of the full committee in honoring the work of Chairman ROE, his staff, and his ensuring that we do the right thing for every single one of the veterans in this country that we are here to serve.

It would be easy just to criticize the Choice Program which has not worked fully as intended. Too many of the veterans that we represent are still getting bills when their provider in the community, the VA, and the third-party administrator can't resolve their differences.

Too many veterans are having too hard of a time in getting an appointment in a timely fashion. And as we learned recently, the VA still is not fully measuring the true wait time for the more than 3 million appointments that have been made through the Choice Program right now. We don't have the kind of accountability that we must have.

All the same, the Choice Program is bridging care for veterans who need it in millions of instances. To simply allow the sunset to take place without having the time necessary to work on some of the necessary fixes would be irresponsible. So thanks to the chairman and the ranking member, we are able to do that today.

We also ensure that the VA becomes the primary payer, which is going to reduce some of the billing headaches that veterans have unnecessarily been subjected to.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to point out that the bill contains the Vet Connect Act, which I was able to author with Congressman BENISHEK, a bipartisan bill, last session, re-introduced this session.

It is bicameral, as well, in the Senate. We have Senators TESTER, ISAKSON, and MANCHIN, who authored this bill that ensures that veterans' private medical information follows them from the VA to their provider in the community and then back to the VA, ensuring that every appointment, every provider, and every doctor can make informed medical decisions on behalf of those veterans. Right now, at the current rate of inclusion of veterans' personal medical information, it would take 60 years to get all the data into the hands of the doctors who need to make that care.

This brings the VA and the veterans under the VA's care into modern medical record keeping and sharing. It honors all of the HIPAA regulations; ensures privacy of veterans' medical records; but, most importantly, ensures that they are going to get better, more informed quality care, better outcomes, better treatment. It is what the veterans that we serve have earned and deserve.

I am very proud to join my colleagues in this to work for its passage. I hope that the other Members of this body will join us in supporting this unanimously.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining? I have two speakers to go.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). The gentleman from Minnesota has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA), a good friend, a new member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, someone who came to the House of Representatives and asked to serve veterans and be on the committee.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE and our ranking member, Mr. WALZ, for all the good work for all of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I rise also in support of the Choice Act and urge my colleagues to also protect our veterans' access to health care.

Our veterans all gave some, and many, many made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. Providing our vets with the best health care our Nation can deliver on a timely basis is the least we can do for our veterans.

Sadly, as all of us know, in 2014, the average wait time at a VA medical center was 115 days. The Choice Program has provided vets with the opportunity of obtaining health care in their community on a timely basis.

The VA, of course, is an excellent institution that takes care of many, many of our veterans. Yet, when the VA is not available, the Choice Program can be the best option for our heroes.

No one—no one—should have to wait 3 months to see their doctor, especially our vets, our heroes. We must meet our commitment one way or another. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Let's, all of us, keep the promise this country has made to every one of our veterans.

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

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. KIHUEN), who has taken a keen interest in veterans' issues. I am grateful that he is here today.

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE and Ranking Member WALZ for their bipartisan work on this issue on behalf of our veterans and our country. It is very refreshing to see bipartisanship here in this body.

Mr. Speaker, veterans have made the incredible sacrifice for our country. The Department of Veterans Affairs has the obligation to ensure that they have access to high-quality and affordable health care.

I support the aim of S. 544 to make key improvements to the Choice Program as Congress continues to work on longer term solutions.

While I am hopeful that this bill will help eliminate the problems and delays that veterans have experienced with the Choice Program, this program should be the option of last resort for veterans.

In Ely, Nevada, a rural community in my district, the VA is considering not renewing its contract with the Ely Community Clinic, forcing veterans to rely solely on the Choice Program for access to care. Just this week, hundreds of veterans turned out at a forum in Ely to voice their opposition to using the Choice Program.

Closing the VA clinic in Ely will be burdensome for many veterans in northern Nevada and central Nevada and could force them to travel hundreds of miles to get healthcare services that they rely on. These veterans have already fought for their country. They shouldn't have to fight to keep their VA clinic in Ely open.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, but it is not enough. We owe it to our veterans not to use the Choice Program as a crutch, but to make the proper investments in the health care our veterans deserve.

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

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to thank the chairman, the staff, and everyone who has been here.

I think, of all the committees that are modeling the behavior of democracy, bipartisanship, and what our government stands for, the Veterans' Affairs Committee is one that takes that responsibility seriously. The chairman always models it. I think this is a case of that.

You heard the speakers come here. This is a big issue. There may be some differences in how the delivery, long term, looks, but there is no division on getting the best and most timely care to our veterans.

With that, I encourage my colleagues to support S. 544.

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

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

I want to thank the majority and the minority staff that worked on this bill, and certainly the Senate, Senators TESTER and ISAKSON, and the committee on the Senate side for getting this over here in a timely way. We needed to do this now so that we could continue care for patients that would go past August 7. We have people right now who are getting care that is going to be long term, and they would be cut off or couldn't use the Choice program.

We have heard a lot of the problems with Choice here, but it has also helped a lot of veterans. What we feel like we want the opportunity to do now is be given a little bit of time, in a bipartisan way, to work out the problems with this.

I think this goes for everyone on our committee: At the end of the day, our purpose, our goal is to provide access and the best quality of care for veterans that this country can deliver. That is the goal of our committee in a bipartisan way.

With that, once again, I encourage all of my Members to support this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 544.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SELF-INSURANCE PROTECTION ACT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 241, I call up the bill (H.R. 1304) to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from the definition of health insurance coverage certain medical stop-loss insurance obtained by certain plan sponsors of group health plans, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RICE of South Carolina). Pursuant to House Resolution 241, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce, printed in the bill, shall be considered as adopted, and the bill, as amended, shall be considered read.

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

H.R. 1304

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 ''Self-Insurance Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. CERTAIN MEDICAL STOP-LOSS INSURANCE OBTAINED BY CERTAIN PLAN SPONSORS OF GROUP HEALTH PLANS NOT INCLUDED UNDER THE DEFINITION OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.

(a) ERISA.—Section 733(b)(1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1191b(b)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following sentence: ''Such term shall not include a stop-loss policy obtained by a self-insured health plan or a plan sponsor of a group health plan that self-insures the health risks of its plan participants to reimburse the plan or sponsor for losses that the plan or sponsor incurs in providing health or medical benefits to such plan participants in excess of a predetermined level set forth in the stop-loss policy obtained by such plan or sponsor.''.

(b) PHSA.—Section 2791(b)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg–91(b)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''Such term shall not include a stop-loss policy obtained by a self-insured health plan or a plan sponsor of a group health plan that self-insures the health risks of its plan participants to reimburse the plan or sponsor for losses that the plan or sponsor incurs in providing health or medical benefits to such plan participants in excess of a predetermined level set forth in the stop-loss policy obtained by such plan or sponsor.''.

(c) IRC.—Section 9832(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''Such term shall not include a stop-loss policy obtained by a self-insured health plan or a plan sponsor of a group health plan that self-insures the health risks of its plan participants to reimburse the plan or sponsor for losses that the plan or sponsor incurs in providing health or medical benefits to such plan participants in excess of a predetermined level set forth in the stop-loss policy obtained by such plan or sponsor.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each shall control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

□ 1445

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 1304.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1304, the Self-Insurance Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, across the country, hardworking men and women are struggling to afford rising healthcare costs, and their options continue to drop year after year. At the same time, employers, large and small, are finding it harder to provide the type of high-quality, affordable healthcare coverage their employees need.

With over 150 Americans relying on an employer-sponsored health plan, Congress must do everything possible to ensure employers have the tools they need to help control healthcare costs for working families. Preserving access to self insurance is one simple step we can take as part of that effort.

More than 60 percent of employers who offer healthcare coverage choose to self-insure. This means that instead of purchasing a plan from an insurance company, employers pay their employees' healthcare costs directly. As a result, the employers have greater flexibility to structure a healthcare plan to the unique needs of workers and their families.

Although these plans provide important protections, they are free from certain restrictive rules that force workers to purchase one-size-fits-all benefits that they may not want or need. Self-insurance is a popular option that often leads to lower health insurance premiums for workers and their families.

In years with below average medical claims, any remaining healthcare dollars can help offset premiums for workers the following year, or can be used to help create new jobs and higher wages.

It is not just private sector employers who like the flexibility and affordability of self-insured health coverage. It is also embraced by labor organizations, schools, cities, and counties.

Of course, there is some level of risk associated with these plans. That is why employers purchase stop-loss insurance, so that employees can count on their healthcare coverage when they need it. Because it simply serves as a financial backstop to an actual health insurance policy, stop-loss has never been regulated as health insurance by the Federal Government. Never.

But as we all know, the previous administration had a constant urge to regulate practically every aspect of American life, regardless of the consequences. It was only a matter of time before the Obama administration made stop-loss insurance one of its regulatory targets, even though many employers would find it nearly impossible to self-insure as a result.

Limiting a popular free-market healthcare option that millions of Americans rely on was a price they were willing to pay in order to push their government-run healthcare scheme.

Fortunately for working families, the Obama administration was unsuccessful, and we now have a new administration committed to expanding, not limiting, affordable healthcare options. However, all this highlights the need to protect access to self-insurance.

Employers need long-term certainty when it comes to the healthcare benefits they provide, and working families deserve peace of mind that they won't lose the plan they like because of a partisan, unnecessary Federal regulation. The Self-Insurance Protection Act provides that certainty and peace of mind by reaffirming existing law and preventing Federal bureaucrats from regulating stop-loss as health insurance.

There is more we can and should do to promote affordable healthcare coverage for working families. This legislation is one small step we can take to ensure Americans can continue to benefit from flexible healthcare plans that help lower costs.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for affordable healthcare options for workers and employers by voting in favor of H.R. 1304.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1304, the Self-Insurance Protection Act, purports to protect stop-loss insurers from being regulated at the Federal level. It appears that we are considering a bill that is a solution in search of a problem.

I am not opposed to stop-loss insurance or the purpose of stop-loss insurance. It can be helpful in shielding employers from unforeseen risks in many instances when they choose to self-insure and want to protect themselves from unexpected and unusually high expenses.

Now, while many self-funded plans, in conjunction with the purchased stop-loss, look like a traditional fully insured plan, stop-loss coverage itself is not regulated at the Federal level. There is no indication or suggestion that the administration would seek to regulate stop-loss insurance, so the bill prohibits Federal regulation of stop-loss insurance.

The Federal Government does not regulate stop-loss insurance today, and doesn't look like it is going to seek to regulate self-insurance in the foreseeable future, so it is difficult to ascertain exactly what the purpose of the bill is.

But employers, particularly small ones, do face risks when self-insuring. I think it is important that we ensure that employers are aware of the risks and protect them and their employees when appropriate. They can incur tremendous losses if the employee incurs a serious injury or illness.

Employees are also at risk of receiving fewer benefits because many consumer protections do not apply to self-funded plans.

Employers are legally prohibited from discriminating on the basis of health status, but stop-loss insurers are not. Many policies have provisions that will trigger immediate, even retroactive, increased premiums when the stop-loss insurer receives greater-than-expected claims.

To date, many States have taken action to regulate stop-loss insurance in order to protect both businesses and workers. Some have required a minimum, what is called attachment point. That is when the stop-loss insurance kicks in. Others have restricted the selling of stop-loss insurance with certain small group markets.

New York prohibits the sale of stop-loss insurance to small employers, and prohibits employers from serving as their own third-party administrators. North Carolina has chosen to regulate stop-loss insurance as if it were normal health insurance, holding stop-loss insurance to the same standards of others in the market.

Now, if States want to ban stop-loss insurance altogether, that should be a State prerogative. States have taken these steps because, frankly, self-insuring and stop-loss insurance come with greater risks to both employers and employees. Stop-loss plans place annual limits on services. Some place annual limits on services or exclude coverage for certain benefits, such as prescription drugs.

Furthermore, the renewal of stop-loss insurance is not guaranteed, so if an employer suddenly has high medical costs, the stop-loss insurer can refuse to renew or charge so much that it is no longer affordable.

In the committee markup, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) offered a clarifying amendment to ensure that this legislation would not be construed to restrict the ability of States to regulate stop-loss insurance.

Chairwoman FOXX agreed to include such clarifying language in the committee report, agreeing with the intent of that amendment. Based on that understanding, that amendment was withdrawn.

The clarifying language is in the report, and that clarification is vital to ensure that there is nothing in the bill that incorrectly can be interpreted as to preempt or restrict a State's ability to regulate stop-loss insurance as they see fit, or otherwise restrict effective oversight and regulation of these policies at the State level. I appreciate the majority's willingness to work with us on the inclusion of that clarifying language.

Mr. Speaker, while I don't intend to oppose the legislation, I would note that it seems to be a distraction from the Republicans' recent failed attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act. After 7 years of complaints, the Republicans offered an alternative which was demonstrably worse than the Affordable Care Act on every measure; more people uninsured, higher prices, and the policy you end up getting is worse.

Democrats will continue to resist any attempts to move this country backwards by making health insurance less accessible and less affordable to American families.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), the author of the bill, a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, and chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Self-Insurance Protection Act, H.R. 1304.

Mr. Speaker, I find it hardly plausible you could make something worse where one-third of the counties in my district have no option to buy any insurance on the exchange, and the third largest county in the State of Tennessee has no option. So I would beg to differ, Mr. Speaker.

We all want to ensure workers have access to high-quality, affordable health coverage. That is exactly what this legislation is all about.

Self-insured plans offer high-quality healthcare coverage at a reasonable cost for workers. This popular option allows employers to pay their employees' healthcare costs directly and, if costs are lower than expected, those savings can be reserved for later years to help cover their workers' future healthcare costs.

One of the benefits to self-insurance is that employers have more flexibility to customize their healthcare plans as they see fit for the unique needs of their employees. These plans are also free from many of the restrictive requirements associated with traditional healthcare plans, requirements that limit choices and force employees to purchase specific benefits they may not want or need.

As healthcare costs have risen, many employers have turned to this cost-effective model. In fact, in 2016, more than 60 percent of all employers offering health insurance coverage were self-insured, of the 160 million or so people in this country that have insurance through their job.

Even the labor unions have embraced this approach. However, employers may also take greater financial risk when providing this popular option to workers. To help mitigate that risk, many employers opt to purchase stop-loss insurance.

Stop-loss insurance is not health insurance, nor has it ever been considered health insurance under Federal law. It does not process medical claims, and it does not perform any other traditional function of health insurance. What it does instead is provide employers choosing to provide self-insurance with a financial backstop, protecting the benefits of workers and their families.

Unfortunately, the former administration threatened to regulate stop-loss insurance as traditional health insurance, a move that would put workers and their families at risk of losing access to the self-insured market. While we now have a new administration that understands the importance of providing more pathways to affordable healthcare coverage, Congress must also act to ensure that no future administration will be able to restrict the self-insurance option. The Self-Insurance Protection Act does just that.

This legislation reaffirms longstanding policies, prevents future bureaucratic overreach, and clarifies once and for all that stop-loss insurance is not health insurance. By supporting H.R. 1304, we will promote more choices and protect access to affordable healthcare coverage options for families.

Let me put this all in English. I was the mayor of Johnson City, Tennessee, where we had a self-insured plan for the teachers and for the workers there at the city. The city provided an opportunity for people to have health insurance for their families. We would accept risks up to $250,000, and then we bought policies to protect the taxpayers and the city from any costs that went above that.

What this plan also allowed us to do is put in incredibly innovative health prevention, things like wellness programs, smoking cessation, weight loss, diabetes screening, lowering cholesterol. We put all those things in that plan, which helped hold—even with insurance premiums going up, we were able to level insurance costs going up and, therefore, save the employees and the teachers money in that community. That is all it is.

Everybody buys insurance in this country to mitigate risk. When you by homeowners insurance, you say: I will have $1,000 deductible. So if I have a roof blow off, I can stand to pay $1,000, but my insurance covers the rest.

That is all this is. It just protects risk.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1304.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), chairman of the Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1304, the Self-Insurance Protection Act. I thank my good friend, Dr. PHIL ROE, for his leadership and insights on this issue.

□ 1500

As the Affordable Care Act continues its death spiral—and indeed it does, very clearly, and ultimately will leave people without insurance—too many small businesses in the process and working families in my district have been left without real options for healthcare coverage that they can afford.

Self-insured plans are one solution that small businesses have tried to push back against these rising costs. These policies provide employers flexibility to design a healthcare plan tailored to the unique needs of their workers and their families. Last year, over 60 percent of employers who offered healthcare coverage utilized self-insured plans.

Unfortunately, the previous administration pursued regulations that would jeopardize access to self-insured plans by redefining stop-loss insurance as traditional health insurance under Federal law. Stop-loss insurance does not pay our medical claims; rather, it is a tool—I remind you—that simply provides protections for employers to guard against a catastrophic medical claim.

Mr. Speaker, our constituents need more affordable healthcare options, not fewer; and the bill before us will stop any future administration from putting harmful limitations on self-insured plans. To achieve meaningful healthcare reform, we must promote flexibility and innovative options, not curtail them.

H.R. 1304 provides much-needed certainty to the workers and employers who access quality care through self-insured healthcare plans. As employers and their employees look to plan for the future, the Self-Insurance Protection Act will help provide some long-term certainty that these affordable health insurance options are available. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and promoting healthcare choice for American workers and for their employers.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are continuing to hear complaints about the Affordable Care Act. Whatever someone thinks about the Affordable Care Act, I think it is important to look at the replacement that was offered just over a week ago which actually would have made

things worse. It would have increased the number of uninsured, it would have increased the price, it would have reduced the quality of the product, and it would have made it less likely that insurance companies would come in and offer anything at all.

If we are going to amend the Affordable Care Act, we ought to improve it. We ought to make things better. We should first do no harm with the Affordable Care Act, and we should not allow this administration to sabotage the Affordable Care Act. When they said it might implode, we have to be careful that they are not doing the implosion. There are things that this administration can do to undermine the Affordable Care Act and sabotage it, and we would hope that we would join in a bipartisan effort to make sure that that does not happen.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) who is a member of our committee.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Self-Insurance Protection Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor. Restoring health care is more than one bill—our plan has always included a series of efforts to directly address the challenges facing our healthcare system. The challenges resulted from ObamaCare. This legislation is one such effort, part of a series of measures to increase choice and access. This bill would make it easier for families to get health insurance from their employers.

As my colleagues have noted, more than 160 million Americans get their insurance from an employer. Of that, 60 percent of employers offering healthcare coverage are self-insured, meaning employers directly reimburse healthcare providers and employees for medical expenses. These self-insured plans provide more flexibility than traditional healthcare plans, as they can be designed and operated to meet the unique needs of workers and families. For many years, the company I led, in fact, was self-insured, and we bought stop-loss coverage.

For most self-insured employers, choosing to buy stop-loss insurance simply assists them in avoiding catastrophic losses. It is a business insurance policy. Regulating it like a traditional healthcare insurance would restrict access to self-insured plans dramatically.

We should be making it easier, not harder, for employers to offer their employees comprehensive health packages, and it certainly should not be left to an unelected bureaucrat to decide which types of plans or which benefits work for American families.

This legislation is a simple, straightforward approach to protect self-insured healthcare plans. It offers clarity, reaffirming longstanding policies recognizing that stop-loss insurance is a distinct business insurance and prevents bureaucrats from—one more time—tinkering with our economy and damaging health care.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, as it is an important measure to promote and to increase access to health care.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill prohibits Federal regulation of stop-loss insurance. The Federal Government does not regulate stop-loss insurance. It does not affect the States' ability to regulate the insurance, and that is where it should be done. So the bill does no harm. I would hope that, after this bill, we will refocus our efforts into addressing some of the challenges with the Affordable Care Act by first doing no harm, not going backwards like the bill did several days ago where the costs went up, the number of insurers went down, and the quality of the insurance was worse. We can improve healthcare coverage in this country, but we can't do it if the first step is a backward step.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we all want workers and employers to have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare coverage, and that is exactly what this legislation is about.

Our Nation faces significant healthcare challenges. Costs are soaring, and choices are diminishing. This legislation will in no way address all of these challenges; however, it is one step we can take to protect access to affordable healthcare options for workers and employers.

Let's give workers and employers who rely on self-insured healthcare plans a little bit of certainty and peace of mind today by passing this commonsense legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to vote in favor of the Self-Insurance Protection Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 241, 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.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer a resolution previously noticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that President Donald Trump shall publicly disclose his tax return information, which would conform with an important tradition connected to occupancy of the White House, as well as uphold his promise to the American people that he would release his tax returns.

Whereas, every President since Gerald Ford has disclosed his tax return information to the American people;

Whereas, in May 2014 Donald Trump stated during a television interview: ''If I decide to run for office I'll produce my tax returns absolutely. I would love to do that'';

Whereas, in February 2015 Donald Trump stated during a radio interview: ''I have no objection to certainly showing tax returns'';

Whereas, in February 2016 Donald Trump stated during a televised Republican Presidential debate: ''I will absolutely give my returns, but I'm being audited now for two or three years, so I can't do it until the audit is finished, obviously'';

Whereas, in May 2016 Donald Trump stated during a television interview: ''I will really gladly give them. When the audit ends, I'll present them. That should be before the election'';

Whereas, the IRS has made clear that any taxpayer, including Donald Trump, may release his tax returns at any time while under audit;

Whereas, the House of Representatives by constitutional design is the institution closest to the American people, and an overwhelming majority of the American people think Donald Trump should release his tax returns immediately;

Whereas, 17 different intelligence agencies in the United States have concluded that Vladimir Putin and his Russian regime interfered with our Presidential election for the purpose of helping Donald Trump;

Whereas, multiple high-level Trump associates were in regular contact with Russian operatives and intelligence agents during the same time that Russia was hacking into our democracy;

Whereas, multiple high-level Trump associates have financial ties to the Russian regime;

Whereas, Paul Manafort, Donald Trump's former campaign chairman, engineered a pro-Russia change in the Republican Party platform in July 2016 and has received millions of dollars from pro-Russian oligarchs to advance Putin's agenda;

Whereas, Michael Flynn, Donald Trump's first National Security Adviser, resigned in disgrace for misleading to Vice President Mike Pence about potentially unlawful phone calls to the Russian Ambassador and failed to disclose financial compensation received from a Russian propaganda media outlet closely tied to Vladimir Putin;

Whereas, Carter Page, a top foreign policy adviser to the Trump campaign, has now acknowledged visiting the Kremlin in the midst of the 2016 Presidential election;

Whereas, Jeff Sessions, Donald Trump's Attorney General, misled the Senate under oath by failing to disclose his meetings with the Russian Ambassador that took place in July 2016 at the Republican National Convention and again in September of 2016;

Whereas, Michael Cohen, Donald Trump's personal attorney, now acknowledges being

in contact with Russian operatives at the same time the attacks on our democracy were taking place;

Whereas, Jared Kushner, a senior White House advisor and Donald Trump's son-in-law, now acknowledges previously undisclosed meetings with the Russian Ambassador;

Whereas, Roger Stone, a self-described political trickster and Donald Trump's longtime consigliere, now acknowledges being in contact with the Russian-aligned hacker Guccifer II and predicted during the campaign that John Podesta's emails would soon be exposed;

Whereas, Ian Fleming, the renowned British author has observed, ''Once is happenstance. Twice is coincidence. Three times is enemy action'';

Whereas, Donald Trump has shown an unrestrained willingness to criticize and insult allies of the United States of America;

Whereas, Donald Trump wrongly accused Great Britain, our closest ally, of wiretapping Trump Tower in New York City;

Whereas, Donald Trump declined to shake German Chancellor Angela Merkel's hand while seated together during their recent joint appearance at the White House;

Whereas, Donald Trump stated in a recent C–PAC speech that ''Paris is no longer Paris'';

Whereas, Donald Trump threatened to cancel a refugee transfer agreement with our ally Australia and reportedly hung up on the Prime Minister;

Whereas, Donald Trump told the President of Mexico that America would deploy military personnel to that sovereign nation if our southern neighbor does not deal with its ''bad hombres'';

Whereas, Donald Trump has repeatedly criticized our strategic and military alliance with Western European allies and called NATO ''obsolete'';

Whereas, Donald Trump refuses to say a negative word about Vladimir Putin or his corrupt Russian regime;

Whereas, Bill O'Reilly interviewed Donald Trump on Super Bowl Sunday and asked about Putin's brutal and murderous regime;

Whereas, Donald Trump responded, ''There are a lot of killers. You think our country's so innocent?'', suggesting a moral equivalence between the United States and Russia;

Whereas, Yogi Berra, the great Yankee catcher and philosopher-King, once observed ''that's too coincidental to be a coincidence'';

Whereas, Donald Trump tweeted on January 11: ''I have nothing to do with Russia—no deals, no loans, no nothing'';

Whereas, Donald Trump Jr. once stated: ''Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets. We see a lot of money pouring in from Russia'';

Whereas, disclosure of Donald Trump's tax returns will help the American people and their elected Representatives in this House better understand Trump's financial ties, if any, to Putin's Russia;

Whereas, the American people have a right to know whether financial conflicts of interest exist between the President of the United States and a hostile foreign power;

Whereas, the chairmen of the House Ways and Means Committee, Joint Committee on Taxation, and Senate Finance Committee have the authority to request Donald Trump's tax returns under section 6103 of the Tax Code; and

Whereas, the FBI is conducting a criminal and counterintelligence investigation into Russian interference with the recent Presidential election, including possible collusion between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin: Now, therefore, be it:

Resolved, that the House of Representatives shall—

1. Immediately request tax return information of Donald J. Trump for tax years 2007 through 2016 for review in closed executive session by the Committee on Ways and Means, as provided under section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code, and vote to report the information therein to the full House of Representatives; and

2. Postpone consideration of comprehensive tax reform legislation until after the elected Representatives of the American people in this House have been able to review Trump's tax returns and ascertain how any changes to the Tax Code might financially benefit the President of the United States.

□ 1515

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from New York wish to present argument on the parliamentary question of whether the resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House?

Mr. JEFFRIES. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, under rule IX, clause 1, questions of the privileges of the House are ''those affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings.''

This resolution is privileged based on two issues of institutional integrity, both anchored in the United States Constitution.

Upon adoption of the Constitution, Senators were elected by State legislative bodies; justices were appointed by the executive branch; Presidents were placed into office indirectly through the electoral college.

The House was the only institution where Members were directly elected by the people. We were given 2-year terms to stay close to the people. Our integrity as a separate and coequal branch of government flows directly from our ability to vigilantly represent their interests.

We don't work for the executive branch. We don't work for President Trump. We work for the people of this great Nation, and the American people overwhelmingly want the President's tax returns released.

Secondarily, this House should exercise its prerogative as a separate and coequal branch of government, vigilantly represent the people, and act as a check and balance against Presidential obstruction. Our integrity hangs in the balance.

The integrity of this House also hinges, lastly, on our willingness to properly legislate changes to the Tax Code. The American people have, in many cases, lost faith in our institutions of government, in part because they believe that we are out of touch and that we do not act in the best interests of hardworking Americans.

Pursuant to Article I, section 7, clause 1 of the Constitution, often referred to as the Origination Clause, the House of Representatives has the sole authority to initiate legislation that raises revenue for the national government.

According to a 2011 Heritage Foundation report, the taxation power was intentionally placed with the body closest to the people as part of the Great Compromise. The Heritage Foundation report urges Members of this House to ''be more zealous in protecting this exclusive prerogative.''

President Trump has expressed an interest in working with the House to take on the most significant legislative reform of our Tax Code in 30 years. How can we work with him on this legislation if we do not know how the proposed reforms might financially benefit him or the companies or countries to which he has business entanglements?

How can we ascertain whether suggestions made by the executive branch are aimed to help the American people or aimed to help the President or his allies in business or throughout the world?

The Founders of this great Nation made it so that we, as representatives of the people, have the constitutional duty to check and balance the executive branch, not the other way around.

The integrity of this body is at risk if we choose to follow the path of unfettered obedience to the executive branch. The American people deserve to see his tax returns, and we have the power in this House to make it happen.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to rule.

The gentleman from New York seeks to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX.

As the Chair most recently ruled on March 22, 2017, the resolution directs the Committee on Ways and Means to meet and consider an item of business under the procedures set forth in 26 U.S.C. 6103 and, therefore, does not qualify as a question of the privileges of the House.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Foxx moves to lay the appeal on the table.

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

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. 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, this 15-minute vote on the motion to table will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of H.R. 1304.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 228, nays 185, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 219]

YEAS—228

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—185

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

DeFazio
Sanford

NOT VOTING—14

Beatty
Bishop (UT)
Bridenstine
Collins (GA)
Davis, Danny
King (NY)
LaMalfa
Lawrence
McEachin
Sánchez
Slaughter
Velázquez
Williams
Yarmuth

□ 1545

Ms. McCOLLUM, Messrs. WELCH, and QUIGLEY changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. JOHNSON of Louisiana, POSEY, DENT, SMUCKER, HUNTER, and RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

Mr. SANFORD changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''present.''

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SELF-INSURANCE PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 1304) to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from the definition of health insurance coverage certain medical stop-loss insurance obtained by certain plan sponsors of group health plans 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 400, nays 16, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 220]

YEAS—400

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawson (FL)
Levin
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar

Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—16

Conyers
DeSaulnier
Evans
Green, Al
Grijalva
Huffman
Jayapal
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Raskin
Schakowsky
Visclosky
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman

NOT VOTING—13

Beatty
Bishop (UT)
Bridenstine
Davis, Danny
King (NY)
Lawrence
McEachin
Pelosi
Poliquin
Sánchez
Slaughter
Smith (TX)
Williams

□ 1557

Mr. NADLER changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 220 on passage of H.R. 1304, I am not recorded because I inadvertently missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 219, On Motion to Table Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair, I was unavoidably detained and missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

I was also unavoidably detained for rollcall No. 220, H.R. 1304, the Self-Insurance Protection Act and missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WOMACK. 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 (Mr. COMER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

MOMENT OF SILENCE REMEMBERING VIRGINIA TECH VICTIMS

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

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I am joined today by Members of the Virginia delegation and Members who were affected by the horrific attack by a gunman at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007. Today, we ask that all pause to remember the victims of this attack.

Although 10 years have passed, those whose lives were tragically cut short or altered forever will not be forgotten. As we approach April 16, I ask that we keep the families and loved ones of the victims in our thoughts and our prayers.

May God bless the Hokie community, their courage, their spirit, and their determination to honor the memory of those not here today.

Accordingly, I would ask that all Members join me at this time in a moment of silence.

RECENT CHEMICAL ATTACKS IN SYRIA

(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, yesterday, dozens of Syrians suffered yet again at the hands of Bashar al-Assad when he employed chemical weapons in an attack that left children gasping for air and suffering in the middle of the streets. In the deadliest chemical attack in Syria since 2013, the death toll has now surpassed 70 and continues to rise.

This attack was morally reprehensible, but let's be clear: this attack is the fault of President Assad, and it is a war crime. He must be held accountable for his actions, as must the Russian regime that continues to enable his acts of carnage.

Such barbarism is an attack on our collective humanity, and a chemical attack of this nature must never happen again in Syria or anywhere else in the world, and the world must not look the other way.

Mr. Speaker, I condemn this attack and these actions in the strongest possible terms. I am grateful to the humanitarian groups and the medical personnel who are tending to these wounds today. My heart breaks for the victims who were injured and killed in Syria.

Let us speak out as a world with one voice to condemn this attack and say: Never again.

CLIMATE ALARMISTS OFFER NO SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, climate change alarmists always predict cataclysmic events that will inevitably occur when the world's temperature rises by more than 2 degrees Celsius.

But all the howling and gnashing of teeth signifies nothing. It is all posturing for their own purposes, including a desire to control people's lives or get another government grant or an academic promotion.

The Paris climate agreement, supported by about 200 countries, would, at best, only prevent an increase in temperature by one-sixth of a degree Celsius.

If the Paris Agreement has little impact on global temperatures, then no regulation proposed by the Obama administration nor any single bill introduced in Congress would have any significant impact on climate change—not one regulation, not one piece of legislation.

So the next time you hear or read about some imminent calamity due to climate change, remember it is just all words and no action.

The real solution isn't more ineffective and costly regulations. It is innovative technology that will make all forms of energy cleaner and less expensive.

HONORING BISHOP JIMMY W. GLENN, SR.

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bishop Jimmy W. Glenn, Sr., who was recently elevated to Auxiliary Bishop of Texas' Northeast Fourth Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Church of God in Christ.

Bishop Glenn first embraced the call to serve at the young age of 8 years old when he began singing at revival services around Texas. By the time he was 21, Bishop Glenn was licensed and ordained to serve as minister and began to travel across the State of Texas to help spread the word of Christ.

Bishop Glenn has served in various Fort Worth churches, including Gethsemane Church of God in Christ, St. Mary Church of God in Christ, and Greater Love Chapel Church of God in Christ.

A true servant with a heart for others, he took on a major leadership role within the Church of God in Christ and now serves as the vice president of the National Evangelist Department.

On May 5, Bishop Glenn will be recognized for his recent elevation to Auxiliary Bishop of Texas' Northeast Fourth Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction during their inaugural banquet.

I hope you will all join me in congratulating Bishop Glenn on this momentous achievement.

DO YOUR JOB

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

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, trust in government is at a record low, and it is not hard to see why.

In 2016, Members of the House of Representatives were in session for a total of just 55 full legislative days. That is 55 days out of 365. In what other job are you allowed to work for just 55 days a year?

Looking at this, it is not hard to understand why Congress has a lower approval rating than cockroaches, colonoscopies, and Genghis Khan.

Despite working for 55 days out of the year, Members of this body are paid more than three times the median household income in America.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I have introduced the Do Your Job Act, which would prohibit Congress from taking a recess until it passes a budget and funds the government. In other words, Congress can't take a vacation until it does its job. I know this sounds simple. But where I am from in northeast Wisconsin, if you don't do your job, you lose that job; if you don't finish your work, you do not collect a paycheck.

Here we are just a day away from leaving this Chamber for a 2-week break from legislative activity, risking government shutdown, and yet we are leaving.

This is unacceptable, and this is why I am standing before you today. I am urging all of my colleagues in the 115th Congress to unite behind a simple idea: let's work together and do our jobs.

STATE DEPARTMENT CUTS

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our Nation's dedicated diplomats, the hardworking men and women at the State Department and USAID who are heroically serving our country here and around the world.

In his very first budget, President Trump has proposed draconian cuts to these agencies. These reductions threaten not only our leadership in the world, but they put our Nation's people and interests at unnecessary risk.

Our global leadership depends on balanced investment in three areas: defense, diplomacy, and development. Undermining any one of these pillars weakens all of them.

The State Department and USAID's effectiveness and success is not a function of equipment or technology. Rather, it is the experience, capabilities, and strategic deployment of our people.

In a world where our challenges are, every day, more numerous and more complex, we are constantly sending our diplomats to places further afield. They are deserving of our full support and our utmost respect for their bravery, dedication, and service in defense of the United States and our values.

I call on my colleagues to join me in protecting our strategically important investments in diplomats, diplomacy, and development, as well as defense.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. BUDDY HICKS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life and memory of my friend, Dr. Buddy Hicks of Kingwood, Texas, who passed away Sunday while delivering a sermon at Pipeline Church in Humble, Texas.

This is a photograph of Buddy and his wife, Carolyn, and their grandson, Cole.

Buddy was doing what he loved to do until the very moment that the good Lord called him home. The Lord called him home right in the middle of his sermon.

For nearly 30 years, Buddy has faithfully and tenaciously ministered to congregations throughout the great State of Texas. He was a man of God, always had a smile, never met a stranger. He spent his life spreading the gospel to communities throughout Texas and bringing other followers to fellowship with each other.

Buddy was a member of my pastors' roundtable, an organization that he organized that had religious leaders from all faiths come together to work together in our community.

I leaned on him for prayer and guidance. I have a great deal of appreciation for Buddy and his dedication to church and the Humble-area community. He will be sorely missed.

My prayers are with his wife, Carolyn; their three children, Angela, Shari, and Trey—Trey worked for me here in Congress—and our prayers also go to his two grandchildren, Cole and Zoe, for they will miss their Pops.

2 Timothy 4:7 recites Buddy's life to a tee:

''I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.''

And that is just the way it is.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize families across this great country who have been tragically affected by the growing opioid epidemic plaguing our communities.

All too often, we hear the heartwrenching stories from families who have lost loved ones to this pernicious scourge. We have heard from law enforcement officers and healthcare providers who have chronicled the growing influx of crime and addiction in our society.

In 2016, in Broome County alone in my district, 76 people died from drug overdoses. Ninety percent of those deaths were opioid related.

We have kicked the can down the road for far too long. Now, Congress must act swiftly and work to provide resources for those struggling with addiction by supporting rehabilitation centers, as well as educational and preventative programs.

That is why I am taking the lead on the national level by supporting the funding of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act in the 2018 budget. This is only a start, but I will continue to fight across all sectors to find comprehensive and caring solutions to this tragedy in our communities.

RECENT ATTACKS IN SYRIA

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a mother. As I looked at the video of young children trying to survive, trying to live in Syria—this is one of the most potent pictures—I had to come and cry out for the mothers and children of that vile and heinous act.

I am calling upon Americans and this government to stop talking and to act, to begin to demand that Russia stop assisting President Assad—himself a terrorist—against his people and begin to understand that the chemical attack was driven by Assad's bombers.

No matter where it might have been, you have to know that families are here.

To my Syrian neighbors in Houston, Texas, we are standing with you. We must find a resolution.

Even as we are investigating Russian collusion and Russian investigation into elections, the President must say to Vladimir Putin to become a world citizen and not a thug. This is thuggish. We are killing people.

The Syrian people and Syria deserve to live. We must stand up and fight together, and I hope that we will immediately be able to respond to this with the United Nations, with our surrounding neighbors, and with legislation that brings sanctions against Russia and Assad.

MAJOR GOALS

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to my constituents and report on promises I made to them.

I promised to introduce legislation to prevent Members of Congress from being paid until a balanced budget is passed.

I promised to rein in bureaucratic rulemaking and restore Article I authority to Congress.

I promised to end the ObamaCare loophole that is designed to benefit Members of Congress.

I promised to pass Grant's Law to protect innocent U.S. citizens from violent illegal immigrants.

I promised to ensure that Common Core never becomes a Federal mandate, and that States and local officials have authority over the teaching of our Nation's youth.

I promised to remove Arizona from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and place it into a newly established 12th circuit that can provide more equal access to justice.

I am pleased to inform and report to my constituents that I have cosponsored legislation to address all six of my promises. I am working every day to pass these bills through the United States Congress. My constituents expect me to keep every promise I made. I intend to do that just as long as I am in this body.

□ 1615

HONORING THE LIFE OF KAREN DELANEY SHIDELEFF IN HER FIGHT WITH ALS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of my constituent, Karen Delaney Shideleff of Ottsville, who passed away this January after a courageous fight with ALS.

During her 6 years with ALS, Karen did everything to make a difference and serve as an advocate for individuals and families living with ALS. She participated in the Ride to Defeat ALS; the Phillies Phestival benefiting research efforts; served as a board member for the Greater Philadelphia ALS Association Chapter; and she lobbied her representatives both in Washington and in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, all the while undergoing numerous drug and other research trials.

The strength, compassion, and zest for life exhibited by Karen is an inspiration for those dealing with the diagnosis of ALS and those individuals and community members committed to defeating this uncompromising disease. It is with Karen's legacy in our minds that the fight against ALS continues, and must continue.

Our thoughts and our prayers as a nation and in this Chamber go out to Karen's husband, Bob, and her family and friends.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I want to recite this prayer:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

JEANNETTE RANKIN AND 100 YEARS OF WOMEN IN CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks, and include extraneous materials on the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the first woman elected to Congress, Jeannette Rankin. 100 years ago this week, on April 2, 1917, Jeannette Rankin inspired millions of Americans when she became the first woman in the Nation's history to serve in the United States House of Representatives.

It is hard for me to believe, but Jeannette Rankin served in Congress before women had the national right to vote in this country. In fact, it was a driving force behind her decision to run for elected office. Upon her historic election in November 1916, she declared: ''I may be the first woman Member of Congress, but I won't be the last.''

The women who have joined me here, and are going to join me here on the floor this afternoon, are her living legacy, along with the more than 300 women who have served in Congress before us.

Representative Rankin, a Republican from Montana, served two terms in Congress; the first term from 1917 to 1918, and the second term from 1941 to 1942.

Because of Rankin's groundbreaking achievement 100 years ago, hundreds of women from across the country have made history in Congress, drawing attention to the pressing issues of their time and creating policies that have impacted generations of Americans. We are as diverse as the districts we represent, and I am pleased to be joined on the floor by my fellow women in Congress to celebrate this important milestone.

In recognition of her work and the rich history of women in Congress, Members of Congress from across the country, across party lines, will be rising to honor Representative Rankin and to share what 100 years of women in Congress means to them.

Mr. Speaker, with that said, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), my friend and co-chair of the Congressional Women's Caucus.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be with you today.

First of all, I want to celebrate Jeannette Rankin also as being the first woman in Congress.

Today I am going to talk about someone who was my role model, one of my favorites, Bella Abzug.

Bella Abzug was a leading liberal activist and politician. She lived from 1920 to 1998, and was especially known for her work with women's rights. After graduating from Columbia University Law School, she became involved in the antinuclear and peace movements. In the 1960s, she helped organize the Women Strike for Peace and the National Women's Political Caucus.

I just want to say that I feel like that is how I got my start in political activism, was in the antiwar marches in the 1960s at Boston University.

Mrs. Abzug won a seat in the United States House of Representatives, where she advocated for women's rights and withdrawal from the Vietnam war. And even after leaving office, she continued to work on many causes, including the establishment of the Women's Environment and Development Organization.

Incidentally, I know we have a lot of Harvard lawyers in this Congress, but she was rejected because of her gender. But kudos to Columbia because they got her.

She was known for her hats and her big voice, and she really left a mark for many of us.

Representative BROOKS, I am happy to be with you here today. I think there are a lot of women today who are feeling nervous or anxious because of political situations, but someone like Bella Abzug gives us inspiration that you can have a big voice, you can be a community activist, and you can make a difference in life.

I am going to leave you with her quote. She said of herself:

''I've been described as a tough and noisy woman, a prizefighter, a manhater, you name it. There are some who say I'm impatient, uppity, rude, profane, brash and overbearing''—oh, my goodness, I think I am talking about the whole Women's Caucus here—''but whatever I am—and this ought to be made very clear at the outset—I am a very serious woman.''

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank another very serious woman. It has been a pleasure to be with you and to honor the women who came before us and led the pathway.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman FRANKEL for her remarks and for reminding us that often while those of us in this arena might be called names, we are a strong voice. She was a very serious

legislator, as are you. I just want to thank you for your leadership in this body and thank you for being a part of honoring the 100 years of women in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS), my friend, our Republican Conference chair, the fourth highest Republican in the House, and also the highest ranking woman in Congress. I welcome her to discuss and honor Jeannette Rankin.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, a big ''thank you'' to SUSAN BROOKS and LOIS FRANKEL, co-chairs of the Women's Caucus for this Congress, for bringing us all together to celebrate Jeannette Rankin.

This body, the people's House, is the heart of representative government, and it functions best when everyone, no matter their background or their walk of life, has a voice. And 100 years ago, Jeannette Rankin gave women that voice. She shattered a glass ceiling here in Congress and paved the way for more than 300 women to lead and to serve.

As she famously said: ''I may be the first woman Member of Congress, but I won't be the last.''

And she was right. We now have 104 women serving the Halls of Congress, more than any other time in history. Today, women play key roles in all areas of policymaking. We are involved in the budget, tax reform, education, health care, and national security. Every day, women bring their unique perspectives, talents, and passions into the national debate, and remind us that all issues are women's issues. Everything we have accomplished as women leaders: the first female speaker, the first female committee chairman, the first African-American woman; and Latinas; the first women to have children while serving in Congress. All of these advances and milestones were made possible by the bravery of women in the early 20th century.

Rankin had the courage to say: Why not me?

She had the courage to step up and be the first, and she couldn't even vote in the election, but she won and stood in this very Chamber and spoke her mind. I find it incredibly moving. It is so powerful.

She was a trailblazer, and she really set the standard for women. She stood strong in her beliefs when everyone around her challenged her ideas, her methods, even her very presence.

This is the example everyone in the Chamber should be setting—is setting for the next generation of women leaders. Fortunately, we have a strong foundation. We are following in the footsteps of so many inspiring women: Jeannette Rankin, Edith Rogers, Clare Boothe Luce, Coya Knutson, Lindy Boggs, Jennifer Dunn, to name a few. The women in this room and the hundreds that came before us show the world that women have something unique, something special to offer the world.

I am reminded of this each time I look at my two young girls, Grace and Brynn; and I look at them and I see so much boundless potential. That is why I view this centennial, this milestone, so much bigger than Congress. It is not a date on the calendar. It is a celebration of the American spirit. Our country is the place where you can imagine what is possible, and then go out and make it happen.

Our government is where good ideas, no matter their source, can be debated, considered, and crafted into law, and where our ideas and values can have real and positive impact on millions of lives.

I want my daughters to know that not only should they take a seat at the table, but that there is a seat reserved for them. I want them to know that when they speak, the world should listen; that when they act, it is with purpose; and when they lead, they can change the world.

After 100 years, we stand on the shoulders of giants, but we stand there to lift up the next generation higher than ourselves. We stand there so that every woman has a voice and has an opportunity to be legendary, and so that women can keep making history for many years to come.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman so very much, and I am so inspired by the fact that the gentlewoman is the first woman to have given birth to three children while serving in Congress, also her service in her State legislature before and her role in leadership in this body. I just want to thank her very much for being a part of this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), my friend from the State to the north of Indiana, and would turn it over to her for any thoughts she might have celebrating 100 years of women in Congress.

□ 1630

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Indiana for being co-chair of the Women's Caucus and for being an amazing mother.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to illustrate the importance of 100 years of women in Congress.

On April 2, 1917, Jeannette Rankin from Montana was sworn in as the first woman ever to serve in Congress. Her life was filled with extraordinary achievements, and she was one of the few suffragists elected to Congress and the only Member of Congress to vote against the U.S. participation in both World War I and World War II.

She has said that ''I may be the first woman,'' but we all know she said ''I won't be the last,'' holding the door open for all of us to follow behind her.

While we have a long way to go for women representing Congress, in 2017, we are in the company of 104 amazing women in Congress. We are 19 percent of the 535 Members who serve. Thirty-eight of the 104 women in Congress are women of color: 18 African Americans, 10 Latinos, nine Asian Pacific Islanders, and one multiracial Member.

In 1951, Ruth Thompson, a longtime lawyer and judge, became the first woman to represent my home State of Michigan in Congress. She was the first woman to serve on the House Judiciary Committee.

Since then, we have had nine more female Members from Michigan, including myself. I am proud to be in the 115th Congress to stand alongside Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW. We work together for the Michigan delegation and the Congressional delegation to advance the concerns of women and issues in our great State.

I also want to recognize a woman that truly I stand on her shoulders, and that was the first African-American woman to serve in Congress, Shirley Chisholm.

So we have, in our history of Congress, so many women who paved the way, opened doors, and have been role models not only for us standing here today but for women all over the country.

I will work with my colleagues across the aisle to see that the concerns of women are addressed and to continue increasing our representation in local government.

In the words of Representative Rankin, we are half of the people, and we should be half of Congress.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for her work as vice chair of the bipartisan Women's Caucus. I also want to thank her so much for partnering with me and visiting a school in Detroit where my son was a student teacher. I will forever remember our partnership visiting with those kids at Davison Elementary and want to thank her for that.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, it is a great example of how we work together. I thank the gentlewoman from Indiana for her leadership.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I now yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS), the other vice chair of the Women's Caucus, my friend.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my fellow female Members of the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives 100 years ago.

A mere 4 years after Congresswoman Rankin's landmark election, three more women were elected to Congress, including Mae Ella Nolan.

Congresswoman Nolan was not only the first woman from California to be elected to Congress, she was also the first woman to chair a congressional committee.

Mr. Speaker, now a century after Jeannette Rankin was sworn into Congress, it is not enough to simply recognize the significant contributions

women have made throughout history, we must also look to the future.

We have made significant strides in this country, but more are needed. Women represent over 50 percent of the population, yet we still face significant obstacles in the workplace, academia, and elsewhere. That is why we must work together to expand opportunities, remove barriers, and empower the next generation of women.

We must always remember that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us and fought for equality—equality of opportunity, not-quality of outcome.

As we strive to make our country stronger for the next generation, we must continue to fight so that each woman has an equal opportunity to compete and to excel based on her abilities and accomplishments.

I want to thank the co-chairs of the Congressional Women's Caucus, Congresswoman BROOKS, and Congresswoman FRANKEL, for sponsoring this Special Order.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for spending time with us and talking about the women who came before us who fought for equality, who fought for us, and women like Jeannette Rankin who actually fought so hard that she fought her way here before women had the right to vote in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from California, too, has served in her State legislature, and I want to commend her for her service and being a role model for so many people in her State.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to another gentlewoman from the State of California (Ms. SPEIER), who, in my time here in Congress, I have observed has fought on behalf of women and girls and has fought, in particular, with respect to issues involving sexual violence and other violence against women. I want to commend her for that work.

Mr. Speaker, I would love to hear her thoughts on the 100 years of women in Congress.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Indiana for creating this opportunity for us to celebrate 100 years of women serving in Congress.

It is remarkable that we are still trying to see our numbers inch upwards and continue to be at something like 19 percent when women represent over 50 percent of the voting population.

I thought it would be interesting to highlight one of these women in Congress, a great woman, and one that I have long admired. Her name is Helen Gahagan Douglas. She was the first California woman elected to Congress in her own right—in that case, not succeeding a deceased husband.

Helen Gahagan was an actress and an opera singer who did not consider herself political until a chance conversation she had over coffee while performing in Vienna, Austria, in 1938. The man was a Nazi sympathizer, and the things she heard truly sickened her.

She returned to the United States intent on destroying Nazism. She and her husband, Oscar-winning actor Melvyn Douglas, joined the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League and called for a boycott of products made in Nazi Germany.

The release of John Steinbeck's seminal novel, ''The Grapes of Wrath,'' consumed her. She began studying the plight of migrant farmworkers coming to California from the Dust Bowl States.

After meeting the author, Helen was named president of the John Steinbeck Committee and became the national spokesperson for the rights of migrants.

That work attracted the attention of President and First Lady Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, and Eleanor became a mentor to Helen.

Helen Gahagan Douglas won the open congressional seat in California's 14th District in 1944. She was in the Hollywood area, and that was her district.

She served three terms in Congress, earning a reputation as a deep thinker, voice for the downtrodden, and skilled orator.

In 1950, she ran for the United States Senate, facing fellow southern California Congressman Richard Nixon.

In the campaign, Nixon conflated her anti-Nazi views and work for migrant workers with being a communist fellow traveler.

He also employed anti-Semitic surrogates who attacked her for marrying a Jewish man.

These and other low-campaign tactics spurred Douglas to call Nixon ''Tricky Dicky,'' a moniker that stuck with him his entire career.

During the Watergate scandal, more than two decades after the 1950 Senate race, a popular bumper sticker in California read, ''Don't blame me, I voted for Helen Gahagan Douglas.''

After her death in 1980, California State Senator Alan Cranston delivered a stirring eulogy on the Senate floor. He said: ''I believe Helen Gahagan Douglas was one of the grandest, most eloquent, and deepest-thinking people we have had in American politics. She stands among the best of our 20th century leaders, rivaling even Eleanor Roosevelt in stature, compassion, and simple greatness.''

But it is Congresswoman Gahagan Douglas' own words that speak best for her legacy. As we celebrate 100 years of women in Congress, I can think of few quotes more fitting than Helen's: ''I knew men never would share power with women willingly. If we wanted it, we would have to take it.''

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for sharing the trials and tribulations of a woman who came before us. As she said, as I look throughout our Chamber, the descriptions of her as grand and eloquent and deep-thinking really remind me of so many of the women who we serve with currently today.

She certainly went through difficult elections and put herself in the arena which can be very difficult.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for sharing that story, and I thank her for being here.

I would like to welcome the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my good friend, and actually the chair of the Budget Committee. I have long admired her career since joining the conference, and I just want to thank her for being here and look forward to anything she might share with us about her thoughts about women serving for 100 years here in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Indiana for yielding to me and for hosting this very important Special Order where we recognize women and, in particular, Jeannette Rankin.

Mr. Speaker, I want to rise today to honor Jeannette Rankin and to celebrate 100 years of women in Congress.

Jeannette inspired millions of Americans when she became the first woman in the Nation's history to serve in the House of Representatives.

A Republican and a former schoolteacher from Montana, Jeannette declared ''I may be the first woman Member of Congress, but I won't be the last,'' as is seen on the poster that the gentlewoman from Indiana has right there in front of the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, while we may not agree on all the issues, Jeannette and I share a vision to preserve and protect the American Dream for future generations.

We do so with the hope that young girls, like my two granddaughters, would be able to live a life they choose for themselves, not that someone else chooses for them.

For me, this topic is deeply personal. I spent the first years of my life in public housing, the daughter of parents with no more than a ninth-grade education.

I came from a background where people didn't always know how to dream, and, as a result, I was prepared to settle for a life of unfulfilled potential. I had started to believe that, as a young woman growing up in the fifties and the sixties, who literally lived on the other side of the tracks, maybe the American Dream wasn't for me.

But in time, doors of opportunity were opened that helped me to realize a plan for my life that was greater than I could ever imagine.

I became the first person in my family to earn a college degree. I fulfilled my desire of becoming a nurse, and I became privileged to serve in the Tennessee General Assembly, and now in Congress.

I have traveled far corners of the world, and I have seen the struggle that women endure for access to education, a paycheck, and for real independence. I am keenly aware that only here in this country is my story even possible.

Only here could someone like me go from living in the halls of public housing to serving in the halls of the United States Capitol—that is why we call this the American Dream.

Jeannette Rankin reminds us that the people's House represents Americans from all walks of life. Today in Congress, we have 104 women serving, and I am honored to be the first female chairman of the Budget Committee.

As we celebrate 100 years of women in Congress, we must resolve to ensure that stories like ours are not unique. The work we have done here in Congress must reach today's young women with the truth that they have God-given talents waiting to be used, and that the American Dream is theirs to share as well.

I again thank the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) for bringing us together to celebrate this monumental anniversary.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for spending her time with us today. I think her story coming from, as she said, public housing, and I think over time because of education and because of opportunities in this country, and she started the business, she got her nursing degree, she started a business before coming here to Congress, served in her State Legislature as well, I know she is a mom, she is a grandmother, she has been an incredible voice here in the House, and she really does show that everything is possible in this country. Yet I really appreciate her acknowledging that we are standing on the shoulders of the women who came before us.

□ 1645

I just want to thank the gentlewoman, and I know other women in Tennessee serve as well. The chair of my subcommittee, Congresswoman MARSHA BLACKBURN, is serving as chair of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and there have just been terrific folks that have come from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACK. It is really just such a wonder when we look at this country and, having traveled, as I know that you have, throughout the world, see the struggles of women in many, many other countries. I know we are not quite where we want to be, and I know we have still a ways to go, but I am so proud of what we do here in the United States to lift up our women and to recognize that they have talents that we need in every sector of our society.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Absolutely. As Congresswoman MCMORRIS RODGERS mentioned, there needs to be a seat reserved at the table here in the House. And I certainly know that women on both sides of the aisle, like yourselves, are mentors to other women in other legislative bodies and in other elected offices, encouraging them to come to this body, and so I just want to thank you for that.

We come from all parts of this country to talk about women here serving in the House over the last 100 years. While I come from the Midwest, we heard from the West Coast, CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS. We heard from the other Midwest Member, BRENDA LAWRENCE from Michigan, the great State of California, but I don't think anyone comes as far to serve in the House of Representatives as the next Member I am about to introduce.

Congresswoman AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN joins us from American Samoa, so she represents a territory and travels tremendous distances to be here in this body each and every week that we are in session.

I have really enjoyed getting to know you as a Member. With the beautiful reminder of the flower that you wear regularly here in this body, you remind us of the incredibly beautiful place from which you come and the proud people that you represent. I look forward to hearing your remarks.

I yield to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN).

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the swearing in of the first woman to serve in Congress, Jeannette Rankin of Montana.

As the first woman to represent American Samoa, I could not be more honored and humbled to be here today to salute this great woman who paved the way for each and every one of us serving in Congress today.

Imagine the difficulties she had to deal with as the first woman in Congress—in 1917, no less—a woman who stood by her convictions no matter the cost. It must have been extremely harrowing for her at times, but she soldiered on as one would expect from the first female in what was at the time, and in many ways still is, a male-dominated world.

The Congresswoman was a woman of rock-solid principles which she absolutely would not budge from, as evidenced by her being the only Member of Congress to vote against involvement in both world wars, a position that was very unpopular at the time. But she stood by her beliefs and could not be swayed, an example for all of us.

While Congresswoman Rankin served only two terms in Congress, her legacy lives on in all of the women who have served since and those who will in the future. She famously once said, and we have all said it several times because it is worth saying and repeating:

''I may be the first woman Member of Congress, but I won't be the last.''

She was absolutely correct, and I am grateful for her determination to ensure that the women of this great Nation have a voice in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise and join me in saluting this remarkable woman and the lasting legacy she has left behind as an example to all women.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I just want to commend the gentlewoman as well for being an incredible role model, not only for the young women of American Samoa, but for the young men of American Samoa because, as I have often said, we need to also bring along the young men to support young women who choose to run for office. I assume the gentlewoman had many of them in her election getting involved and helping her come to this place and be a voice for American Samoa.

I know the gentlewoman's work on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, that she has continued to be a strong voice for the men and women of our armed services and veterans, and I want to thank her for that fine work.

At this time, I welcome a new friend and a new colleague to talk about the women in Congress, someone whom I have just recently met, Congressman RASKIN from the great State of Maryland. I welcome him to this body and to the Chamber and any thoughts that he might want to share. I know that he comes from the academic world prior to coming here, as a professor. And for anything the gentleman might want to share with us on his thoughts on women serving in Congress, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman so much for convening this superb discussion of Jeannette Rankin and a century of women in Congress. She, of course, was part of the great generation of suffragettes who transformed America by winning the right for women to vote, first in a lot of the State legislatures and by way of State constitutional amendment, and then by way of the 19th Amendment. So it is a fitting tribute that the gentlewoman brought everybody together to do this.

I was reflecting today, when I heard that this was going to happen, about the fact that we have, in Congress, I think it is 85 women now, which is about one-fifth of the Chamber, and I think there are 20 U.S. Senators, which is also one-fifth on the Senate side. Obviously, those numbers are not proportionate to women's place in the population.

I hope that we could use the anniversary of Jeannette Rankin's election to reflect on things that could be done to improve these numbers today. One of the things that I would love to be able to pursue with the gentlewoman and other interested Members is the use of multi-Member districts, which were much more common at the time that she first served than they are today.

A lot of our States have multi-Member districts for election to State house or State senate. When you use multi-Member districts, the proportion of women rises considerably because what happens is people form tickets, they form slates, and it would be very unusual today to form a slate that is not balanced according to gender and some kind of racial, ethnic diversity. When we have single-Member districts, it is

much tougher to accomplish that. So that is one of the things that we could discuss, in addition to making this Chamber and other chambers much more work-family friendly, especially for people who are in the young parenting years.

I thank the gentlewoman for what she has done and salute her on this project.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I thank the gentleman for speaking out and for being here today.

I think that we do have a long way to go. There are many initiatives that are being undertaken around the country. The gentleman's offer or suggestion of a multi-Member district is certainly not one that I am familiar with. I know that often our party organizations require it to have gender balance, certainly in political organizations many times. But that is certainly a concept that I am not familiar with.

But I will say that, as a new Member of Congress, I think and am hopeful that, as you work in your committee work, you will meet the incredible women in the body who serve currently. We, both sides of the aisle, are constantly recruiting and asking more women to consider serving.

Often, our State legislatures or city councils and other places are wonderful places to seek out women to continue to serve in office, and it is because of terrific colleagues like the gentleman who add so much. I know he is already adding to this body in a significant way, and I want to thank him for honoring Jeannette Rankin.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit more, because it was 97 years ago that the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote. I want you to think about this once again.

Jeannette Rankin was elected to Congress before she could even vote, before women had the right to vote. And can you imagine being elected before women across the country could really cast a ballot? That is pretty incredible and pretty historic.

She had a vision that women in Congress would one day be equal to the number of men, their male colleagues. Now, unfortunately, 100 years later, we are still far short of that goal. The reality is that many women today are still making history by just running for elected office, just like Congresswoman Rankin did 100 years ago.

As you may or may not know, I am the Congresswoman from the Fifth Congressional District of Indiana. I represent Hoosier communities in eight urban, suburban, and rural counties in central Indiana.

What you may not know is that, when I was elected in 2012 along with my colleague Congresswoman JACKIE WALORSKI, we were the first Republican women to represent the State of Indiana in Congress in more than 50 years. By running and winning, Jackie and I were making history for the Indiana Republican Party, and we joined a proud tradition of Hoosier women across both sides of the aisle who served our State in government roles at every level since our State's founding 200 years ago.

It was in 1851 that women in Indiana, in response to the failure of an amendment to our State constitution to give married women equal rights to property, formed the Women's Rights Association of Indiana. This group worked for the next 70 years to achieve women's suffrage.

It is important that women recognize the success of other women, because we didn't get here on our own, and encourage and support each other to break through those barriers. The women that have come before us have set the groundwork for us to continue building upon.

Since winning the right to vote, seven women from Indiana have represented Indiana in Congress. That is only seven, and that includes me. I would like to highlight just some of the accomplishments of the Hoosier women who came before me.

Virginia Ellis Jenckes was a widow who managed her late husband's farm on the Wabash River. Serving as her own campaign manager, and with her 19-year-old daughter as her driver, Jenckes logged 15,000 miles on a districtwide speaking tour before her election in 1933, unseating a 16-year veteran Congressman to become the first female to represent Indiana in Washington. In Congress, she advocated for stronger flood control measures, as well as for American farmers, veterans, and workers.

In 1949, Representative Cecil Murray Harden became the first Republican woman elected to represent Indiana. She believed that women had an important role to play in politics. She famously said earlier in her career: ''The more interest you take in politics, the more you meet your responsibilities as a citizen.'' She served for five terms and pushed for more women to become engaged in and consider running for public office. And, in fact, I was pleased that her great-granddaughter was involved in my first run for office.

In 1982, Representative Katie Hall became the first African-American woman from Indiana to be elected to Congress. Democratic Representative Hall supported measures to reduce unemployment, to address crime, family debt and bankruptcy, and alcohol and drug abuse. She is best remembered for introducing and working to enact legislation to make Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a Federal holiday.

The fourth female elected to represent our State in Congress, Representative Jill Long Thompson, earned the nickname ''Jill Longshot'' when she became the first woman to earn the nomination of a major party for a U.S. Senate seat in Indiana in 1986. Although her bid was unsuccessful, she went on to win a seat in the House in 1989. She served three terms in Congress, focusing on efforts to help Hoosier farmers.

She continued this work first as Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development under President Clinton and then as Board Chair and CEO of the Farm Credit Administration under President Obama.

After nearly 20 years in the Indiana Legislature and as Center Township trustee, where she erased the city's welfare agency debt, Democratic Representative Julia Carson, the grandmother of our own colleague now, Congressman ANDRÉ CARSON, was elected to represent our State capital city of Indianapolis. She was the first African American and first woman to represent the city in Congress, and she served for 12 years. A staunch and passionate advocate for the poor, she focused on helping people achieve financial literacy and supported working families.

□ 1700

In 2013, Indiana sent two Republican women to Congress for the first time in more than 50 years. I am proud to be serving in Congress alongside my good friend, Representative JACKIE WALORSKI. Born in South Bend, JACKIE served our State as a member of the Indiana State House of Representatives and in Congress. She has been an advocate for commonsense solutions to growing our economy and strengthening our national security from the beginning.

Hoosier women have certainly left their marks in America's history book, but as I stand here today, I am struck by, quite frankly, how much work we still have to do. Indiana is one of only 22 States that hasn't yet sent a female United States Senator to Washington. As you have heard today, 19.4 percent of the seats in the House and Senate are held by women.

A lot has been accomplished by women like Representative Jeannette Rankin—four women in the past 100 years—and, today, I want to encourage all of us to consider how much further we can go in the next 100 years.

I am pleased that another colleague, a freshman from the great State of Washington, is joining a previous Congresswoman, CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, from the State of Washington, who was here earlier. I was pleased to meet Representative JAYAPAL at our first Women's Caucus meeting. I want to welcome the gentlewoman. The gentlewoman has been an incredibly strong advocate on behalf of women in her career prior to coming to Congress, representing Seattle and the surrounding area, and I would welcome a discussion.

I want to welcome the gentlewoman as a new member in the freshman class. Many women have joined the gentlewoman in this freshman class. I want to welcome the gentlewoman to our celebration of 100 years of women in Congress.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congresswoman so much for her leadership and for her work on all of these issues.

I was listening to the gentlewoman as I came in and thinking that I couldn't agree with the gentlewoman more on, first of all, the need for us to do a lot of work to continue to increase our presence and our ability to really effect policy decisions in the best ways, but also to celebrate the accomplishments of Jeannette Rankin as well as all of the Congress Members that are here.

I am so proud to represent the Seventh District in Seattle. When I ran for the State senate, it was my first run for elective office. I became the only woman of color in the State senate. But our State has traditionally been very strong with women's leadership. We are fortunate to have two women Senators. We have had a woman Governor and a woman mayor of the city of Seattle. So we have, I think, made some strides that have been very important to the well-being and the welfare of our State.

Unfortunately, we have taken some steps backwards in the last couple of years. The numbers of women in legislative office at the State level have gone down, but I do believe that Republican and Democratic women, together, have put together a strong agenda for the things that we care about around families.

I am very pleased to have already worked with one of the members of your caucus across the aisle, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, on a letter around domestic violence victims and the immigration system. I am very pleased about the work that the gentlewoman has championed and that we intend to, together, lead around making sure that families have security for themselves and for their children.

I rise to congratulate the gentlewoman for what the gentlewoman is speaking about today, for the work that the gentlewoman has done, and to say that I remain very committed to trying to find all of the areas where we women, together, can put forward priorities that are important to us.

We do joke that, if they would just turn the keys of all elective office over to women, I think we would get a lot of things done—and no disrespect to our incredible male colleagues who have been right there with us every step of the way. So I am looking forward to this time here in the House of Representatives.

I am proud to also be the first Indian-American woman ever elected to the House of Representatives. I think that as we think about getting women into office, we also should continue our work on making sure that women of color enter elective office and that the representation of people here in this great Chamber that we are so honored to serve in reflects the representation that we have across the country of women, of people of color, of African Americans—as the gentlewoman mentioned in her speech—of immigrants, and, actually, of people who have been born outside of the United States. I think I am one of just about a dozen Members of Congress who were not born in the United States but have the great honor and privilege of becoming a United States citizen and now serving in this great body where only 11,000 or so people have served before in the history of our country.

So I thank the gentlewoman again for her leadership. I look forward to working with the gentlewoman. I appreciate her yielding in her Special Order hour. Hopefully, it is a great symbol of the things we can do together.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I thank the gentlewoman so very much for coming here today.

I think the gentlewoman has reminded us that we are a body that reflects the country, and the gentlewoman, indicating that she was not born in this country, yet she is an incredible role model for so many young men and women. As I have said previously, I think it is important for the young men of this country, regardless of where they were born, who now live in this country, to see that women like the gentlewoman are a strong voice in this body.

While the gentlewoman mentioned that there have been about 11,000 people who have served in this body, there have only been about 300 women. We have a long way to go.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman for sharing her work with ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, who has been in Congress serving this body, a female who has been here longer than any other female in this body. She does tremendous work. She has been chairwoman of the Foreign Affairs Committee and continues to be a strong—I assume the gentlewoman is serving with her on that committee.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Not on Foreign Affairs, unfortunately, but we work on immigration issues together.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. I think the gentlewoman helps demonstrate that very often we find colleagues, female colleagues across the aisle, to work on issues together, whether it is on legislation, cosponsoring legislation or co-leading legislation, whether it is leading discussion groups here in the House, or whether it is leading letters to the agency heads in the executive branch and letting them know that we stand together on those issues.

So I look forward to working with the gentlewoman here in this body, and I want to thank the gentlewoman for her time and her thoughts.

At this time, I would like to wrap up by sharing that we see that women have taken on leadership roles like all of the women who have spoken here during this past hour. In many ways, these women have all made history in their own rights in their communities, in their States, in their districts, and in this body. We should celebrate each of their accomplishments.

As CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS from the great State of Washington said, we want to ensure that our daughters and our granddaughters have seats reserved at the tables, have seats here in this body in the future, and that eventually this body better reflects the composition of our country where, actually, more than 50 percent of our population is women. We need to do what we can to encourage women to continue to seek out leadership opportunities at all levels, whether it is working in student government in their schools, whether it is working in student government in their colleges and universities, whether it is having a leadership role in their church group, or whether it is having a leadership role in their neighborhood group or in their Y or in their 4–H.

All of these things can help give them the skills to then go on, whether it is in their local communities, in city halls or in their local city councils or county councils, or in their neighborhood associations, or in State legislatures and then, really, coming to this body, because women do have strong, serious, and thoughtful voices. The women before us certainly had that. It was proud pioneers like Jeannette Rankin who came to this body before women had the right to vote. I want to continue to celebrate their accomplishments. The fact that women are still making history by participating in politics is a sign that we still have far to go.

I want to thank all of the women and the gentleman from Maryland who participated in celebrating Jeannette Rankin.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Women's Caucus Chairs: SUSAN BROOKS and LOIS FRANKEL, for hosting this bipartisan special order focused on the Achievements and Importance of Women in Congress.

I am proud to be a Woman Member of Congress representing the great state of Texas.

And, as a member of the Women's Caucus, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of Congresswoman BROOKS' commemorative resolution which honors the life and legacy of the first woman to serve in i the United States Congress, Jeannette Pickering Rankin, on the l00th anniversary of her swearing-in to Congress, who famously said "I may be the first woman in Congress, but I won't be the last."

It is critical today that we take pause to highlight the importance and contributions of women Members in Congress; as well as:

1. Recognize the importance of the Suffragette Movement in achieving opportunities for women;

2. Emphasize the imperative of promoting education for women in STEM; and

3. Affirm our nation's commitment to expanding opportunities for women in my home state of Texas and across the country.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the first woman being elected to Congress, Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana.

This resolution is a fitting way to honor Representative Rankin's legacy, and to celebrate the many contributions of the female lawmakers who have succeeded her in this institution.

Jeannette Rankin was a trailblazer who broke barriers throughout her lifetime and whose example continues to inspire women the world over.

She graduated from the University of Montana with a biology degree in 1902.

She later became active in the women's suffrage movement, organizing the New York Women's Suffrage Party and working for the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

In 1916, Representative Rankin became the first woman elected to Congress, even before the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which guaranteed the right to vote to women.

For all of her contributions to women's rights, to political activism, and to this institution, it is only fitting to pay tribute to her achievements.

This year also marks the 45th anniversary of the first woman in her own right to represent Texas in the House of Representatives, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

In 1972, Congresswoman Jordan, was the first African American elected to the Texas Senate after Reconstruction, and the first Southern African-American woman elected to the United States House of Representatives.

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan was a lawyer, educator, an American politician, and a leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

Today, it is with great honor that I serve in my mentor and friend's former seat, continuing to carry the torch she elevated for so many and for so many years, representing the outstanding constituents of Houston, Texas.

We tend to think that before the Women's and Civil Rights Movements minority Americans had no ability to represent themselves in government.

Despite the tremendous obstacles of intimidation and harassment that was faced by these brave Americans, they sought and won election to political office.

Prior to her election to Congress, Jordan taught political science at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama for a year before passing the Texas State bar in 1960 and starting a private law practice by which she served her community with pride.

In 1994, President Clinton awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom and The NAACP presented her with the Springarn Medal.

She was honored many times and was given over 20 honorary degrees from institutions across the country, including Harvard and Princeton, and was elected to the Texas and National Women's Halls of Fame.

Congresswomen Jordan and Rankin both dedicated their lives to the pursuit of unfettered democracy so that we all could have a voice and use it freely.

Shirley Chisholm became the first African American woman elected to Congress, when she was elected to represent the New York's Twelfth Congressional District in 1968 running on the slogan, ''Fighting Shirley Chisholm—Unbought and Unbossed.''

She reflected that spirit well during her 14 years in Congress.

During her first term she spoke out for civil rights, women's rights, the poor and against the Vietnam War.

Her first term in Congress was set against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement for equal rights.

Shirley Chisolm had an understanding that during those turbulent times the nation required a determined leader to represent the voice of so many Americans who felt dismay at their treatment.

She took an extremely active role in changing the way women were to be judged from that point on.

She remarked that, ''Women in this country must become revolutionaries. We must refuse to accept the old, the traditional roles and stereotypes.''

This is a sentiment that I myself take to heart, women in this nation are now told they have a right to determine the kind of life they want to lead; Shirley Chisholm was at the core of this movement.

On January 25, 1972, Chisholm announced her candidacy for president.

She stood before the cameras and in the beginning of her speech she said:

''I stand before you today as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency of the United States.

I am not the candidate of black America, although I am black and proud.

I am not the candidate of the women's movement of this country, although I am a woman, and I am equally proud of that. I am not the candidate of any political bosses or special interests.

I am the candidate of the people.''

Shirley Chisholm did not win the nomination; but she went on to the Democratic Convention in Miami and received 151 delegates' votes.

More than that, she demonstrated the will and determination of so many Americans who had previously felt forgotten, she had lighted a fire under so many who had felt disenfranchised.

I am glad to walk in their footsteps and will continue to encourage women to uphold the principles they taught us to fight for and cherish.

Because Representative Rankin is a graduate of the sciences from a rural area, encouraging participation in programs such as the Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program is the perfect way to honor her legacy as a woman of the sciences and the first woman elected to Congress, and to inspire the next generation of women and minorities from rural areas to take up STEM fields.

Following in the footsteps of so many astounding role models, we must continue to encourage women, particularly those from underserved communities across the country, to participate in research and projects in all academic fields, and specifically in the sciences.

Women and minorities have been and continue to be underrepresented in STEM fields.

Although women make up 47% of the total U.S. labor force, they comprise only 36% of the computing workforce, 24% of the engineering workforce, and 18% of the advanced manufacturing workforce.

Indeed, minority representation in STEM fields is even lower, with African-American and Latino workers comprising 29% of the general workforce, but only 15% of the computing workforce, 12% of the engineering workforce, and 6% of the advanced manufacturing workforce.

The Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program is one way that we can address these glaring disparities.

The program awards grants to universities and institutions of higher learning to distribute to eligible applicants, and they prioritize projects and programs of particular relevance to USDA.

Recipient institutions have used these grants for worthy endeavors, such as:

1. establishing a Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program fellowship program for women and minority high school students in rural areas;

2. providing mentorship and hands-on, service-based learning to high school students and undergraduates in particular STEM fields; and

3. offering mentoring services to current undergraduates to help them successfully complete STEM-based degrees.

These women were in positions of great responsibility during times when this nation was under a great burden.

The true greatness of their story is not just that they overcame the oppression they faced, but that they had the courage to help remedy a nation that in many ways had spited them.

They refused to bend their principles to the hatred they faced; they were true pioneers in leadership.

They are my role models in Congress because they represent the kind of leaders that America has always needed at times of adversity, they had a spirit and a courage that could not be broken, they had a vision of America that exceeded that of most of their peers.

I am very proud to be a Member of Congress and to follow in the footsteps of giants like Jeannette Rankin, Barbara Jordan, and Shirley Chisolm.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Jeannette Rankin, whose groundbreaking career in Congress a century ago paved the way for all of my female colleagues standing here today.

Jeannette Rankin was persistent, driven, and fearless.

She came to the House of Representatives before women even had the right to vote in this country.

Jeannette Rankin's voice in Congress was instrumental for women's suffrage. She knew how to get things done, opening the first House floor debate on women's right to vote in 1918.

And she stayed true to her convictions throughout her life, advocating for peace.

Today my fellow female Members of Congress and I stand together to honor trailblazers like Jeannette Rankin, whose bravery and determination opened the doors for women in the United States and throughout the world.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS) laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

MARCH 30, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to Section 4(a) of House Resolution 5, 115th Congress, I am writing to appoint the following members to the House Democracy Partnership:

The Honorable David Price of North Carolina, Ranking Member
The Honorable Keith Ellison of Minnesota
The Honorable Susan Davis of California
The Honorable Gwen Moore of Wisconsin
The Honorable Dina Titus of Nevada

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard of California
The Honorable Gerry Connolly of Virginia
The Honorable Ted Lieu of California
The Honorable Norma Torres of California

Thank you for your attention to these appointments.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

Mr. LIEU, California.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all participating 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 gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and my partner in this Special Order hour, Congresswoman JAYAPAL from the State of Washington, I rise to discuss the imminent Senate filibuster against President Trump's nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ordinarily, a Supreme Court nomination like this would be an all-consuming public matter. It has gotten a little bit less attention because there is so much going on all over the globe. The world is on fire today. We see outrageous atrocities taking place in Syria under the so-called leadership of President Assad. We see here in America a government in turmoil, as every day the curtain is drawn back just a little bit further on the Russian connection with the Trump White House.

But we do need to take some time to focus on the U.S. Supreme Court if for no other reason than what we have in America today is one-party control of the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, the White House, and, if the Supreme Court goes, too, we essentially have no meaningful multiparty democracy in terms of the essential governance of the country.

Now, as the Senate takes up the President's nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Court, I have heard a number of officials and commentators criticize the effort taking place in the Senate over the last few days and into the next few days to stop Gorsuch. I have heard them criticize it by invoking the aphorism ''two wrongs don't make a right.'' Of course, they are referring to the fact that President Obama's nomination of Merrick Garland, the Chief Judge of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court, was stonewalled for 9 months in the last year of President Obama's Presidency.

Judge Garland didn't even receive a hearing. It never got to the point that there was a vote. He would have loved the opportunity to have someone filibuster his nomination on the floor of the Senate. His nomination never got to the floor of the Senate. He never had a hearing in committee—completely unprecedented in our history simply to stonewall, obstruct, and sandbag a judicial nominee like this. I will have something to say about the qualifications of Judge Garland.

But, in any event, the Democrats now are saying: We are not going to proceed with the nomination of Judge Gorsuch; we are going to block it. In answer, I hear repeatedly from U.S. Senators and commentators this phrase: Two wrongs don't make a right. Of course, that truism is true. But what does this excellent piece of folk wisdom have to do with the current situation of the nomination of Gorsuch to the Supreme Court?

If you saw someone punching out a security guard and running into a bank to rob the bank, it would be legally and morally wrong for you to go punch out another security guard at a bank across the street and go rob that bank. Two wrongs, indeed, do not make a right. You don't solve one bank robbery by committing another. But if you saw someone punching out a security guard and running into a bank to go rob it and you decided to run after the robber, pounce on him, and punch him out, that would be completely legally and morally justified.

In other words, stopping the original wrong is not in itself a wrong. Stopping the original wrong is right. That is the right thing to do, and that is what the Democrats are doing. They are trying to block a crime in progress because, understand, we have never, in American history, seen something like a President send a nomination to the Supreme Court to the U.S. Senate to fill a seat probably for 20 or 30 years and the Senate just says simply: We are not going to have any hearings about it. That is exactly what they did to Judge Merrick Garland.

□ 1715

Let me just say a few words about him before I turn it over to my colleague, Congresswoman JAYAPAL.

Judge Garland is, arguably, one of the two or three most experienced and qualified judges ever to be nominated to the Supreme Court. He graduated summa cum laude from Harvard College and magna cum laude from Harvard Law School.

After serving as a law clerk to Judge Henry Friendly of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and then Justice William Brennan on the U.S. Supreme Court, he practiced law at Arnold & Porter here in Washington; and he worked as a Federal prosecutor in the Department of Justice, where he played a leading role in the investigation and prosecution of the Oklahoma City bombers and the investigation and prosecution of Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber.

He has had nearly 20 years of judicial experience on the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. The Senate originally confirmed him in an overwhelming 76–23 vote, where he not only swept the Democratic Caucus in the Senate, but won the majority of Republicans when he first went on the court.

His nomination to the Supreme Court fell victim to the GOP Senate leadership's rule-or-ruin mentality that is ravaging the most basic norms of American political democracy in this century. If Garland could not be confirmed to the U.S. Supreme Court, then no moderate liberal judge can be.

Some people have suggested that Gorsuch should be filibustered for exactly 9 months, which is the length of time that the GOP used to run out the clock on the Merrick Garland nomination. In other words, he was blockaded for 9 months. Therefore, blockade Gorsuch for 9 months, then have a vote on him.

This apparently symmetrical answer would certainly make President Trump's nominee twist in the wind and suffer the way that President Obama's nominee twisted in the wind and suffered, but that is not the point. It is not to inflict pain on the nominee. The real problem is not 9 months of legislative obstructionism, much less retribution for what was inflicted on one judge.

The real question is: Who gets to have the seat on the Supreme Court?

It is about the next 25 years of Supreme Court decisionmaking. That seat, by all rights, belongs not to Judge Gorsuch, but, rather, to Judge Merrick Garland.

Judge Gorsuch, however qualified he might be in terms of his own career, would present a jurisprudence dramatically to the right of the jurisprudence that would clearly be advanced by the addition of Judge Garland to the court. That is what we are going to talk about tonight.

I am going to begin by turning it over to a great champion of justice, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights for all the people, my distinguished colleague and the vice chair of the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague from Maryland (Mr.

RASKIN). It has been such a pleasure since coming to Congress—and it seems difficult to believe that it has been almost 3 months—but it has been such a pleasure to co-lead this Special Order hour with the gentleman and to really bring to the public all of the issues that we feel are so important in the Progressive Caucus, issues that have ranged from the issue we are talking about now with the Supreme Court nomination, to issues around health care, immigration, the Muslim ban, and many others.

I think that the vision that we are trying to make sure people understand for the Progressive Caucus and certainly for Democrats is a vision of inclusion, a vision that respects the rights of everybody, regardless of what gender you are, regardless of what race or religion you might be.

This moment is, in fact, very important. Tomorrow, Senate Republicans will attempt to push through President Trump's Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch. I stand with my colleague, Mr. RASKIN, and with our other Democratic colleagues in the Senate who are opposing this nomination because I truly believe that confirming Neil Gorsuch to this position would be a devastating backslide for numerous communities.

I want to go through some of the communities that would be affected and how. Women, people of color, people living with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ community will have to wonder if the conservative majority on the Supreme Court is going to systematically remove their protections and strip them of their rights.

Unfortunately, Neil Gorsuch, though an accomplished justice in his own right, does have a track record of doing that throughout his judicial career. So this isn't as simple as saying: Well, you blocked our nominee; therefore, we are going to block your nominee.

No. This is about the issues and the refusal he has had to answer some of the questions before the committee.

I did want to reflect briefly on the fact that yesterday was Equal Pay Day. Ninety-four days into the year, Equal Pay Day symbolizes the amount of extra time that it takes for a woman to earn the same amount as a man. We have got to work—I see the heads nodding up there in the Chamber—extra hard for an additional 3 months and some days in order to earn the same wages as a man.

When you break it down by race, the gap widens even further. Black women working full time year round only earn 63 cents to the dollar. For them, Equal Pay Day comes on July 31. Latina women earn a mere 54 cents, which means that their Equal Pay Day—get this—is November 2.

Over a lifetime, the financial losses that women face due to this gap are immense. On average, a 20-year-old woman will lose $418,000 over the course of her 40-year career. For Black women, they will lose $840,000. Latinas will lose more than $1 million.

Now, why do I bring this up in the context of Judge Gorsuch?

Because I believe that as we mark Equal Pay Day, we need to know that we will have a Supreme Court Justice who will, in fact, crack down on the gender pay gap and enforce the law.

Unfortunately, Judge Gorsuch has a history of prioritizing big business over people. In fact, he has ruled in favor of employers in two-thirds of the employment and labor disputes that have been brought before him on the basis of discrimination. Let's be clear: Equal Pay Day and the situation that women face is about discrimination.

Gorsuch ruled against an African-American man who claimed that he was fired because of racial discrimination in Johnson v. Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

In Poindexter v. Board of County Commissioners of the County of Sequoyah, he ruled against a man who argued that he was demoted because of his political views.

His opinion in Strickland v. UPS was particularly troubling. The court ruled in favor of a female employee who had been discriminated against based on sex. Judge Gorsuch, though, wrote a dissenting opinion, despite the fact that the woman's male colleagues testified that she was required to attend counseling sessions while they were not, even though she was out performing them.

The court ruled in her favor, but, again, Judge Gorsuch, President Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court of the United States of America, went out of his way to undermine her.

Perhaps the clearest example of Gorsuch's affinity for big business was his ruling in the Hobby Lobby case, which many people across the country may know about. He ruled that private corporations should enjoy the same constitutional protections as people.

Not only are people being told that the money of corporations represents protected speech, but women across this country are being told that those corporations can make decisions about women's health care and their rights to make decisions about their own body. This case sent a clear signal that Judge Gorsuch is no friend of women's reproductive rights.

It isn't a surprise, frankly, that this President chose him, because he does fit right into this administration's all-out assault that we have seen since the beginning of this Congress on women's rights to make decisions about their bodies and their health care.

Judge Gorsuch wrote a concurring opinion arguing that the Affordable Care Act forced employers to violate their religious beliefs by providing birth control. It is our right to choose whether and when we want to have families. But rather than coming to the conclusion that corporations should be required to allow women to make their own healthcare decisions, Judge Gorsuch made it very clear that he stands with big business and against women's rights.

His appointment is a deep threat to something that I have appreciated my whole life and that women before me have fought for so hard. His appointment is a threat to Roe v. Wade, which has protected women's rights to abortion access.

Trump has said many times that he intended to appoint a Justice who would overturn Roe v. Wade. While being questioned in his confirmation hearing, Judge Gorsuch sidestepped all of the questions on this issue, but his views are obvious. He has questioned and argued against the legal foundation of a woman's right to choose, and he has been critical of the decisions of Roe v. Wade's and its reliance on the right to privacy and the substantive due process rationale.

That is unacceptable. Roe v. Wade is the law of the land, and it has helped save the lives of millions of women across our country. We need to make sure that we protect that right to choose and continue to allow abortion access in this country.

Judge Gorsuch has also taken actions that signal his support for the defunding of Planned Parenthood. Of course, we remember the doctored videos that came out to destroy Planned Parenthood's image. Utah Governor Gary Herbert attempted to defund the organization, but the tenth circuit issued an injunction. Gorsuch stood with the Governor. He even went so far as to push for a rehearing by the full court, without being asked by the Governor. The court refused. Gorsuch issued then a dissenting opinion that relied on the very fallacies that the Governor was pushing.

We cannot afford to have this critical vote on the Supreme Court go to someone who so clearly intends to undermine women's fundamental and constitutional rights.

Judge Gorsuch has also shown that he presents a threat to the LGBT community. In 2005, he wrote that people should rely on the ballot box to achieve marriage equality.

During his confirmation hearing, he was asked about cases that involve LGBT people as a class. This qualification is important because it adds heightened scrutiny. Apparently, Gorsuch was not comfortable with this, because he dodged the question. That is alarming. Our LGBT community does face discrimination at extremely high rates. This is not a speculation; it is fact.

Gorsuch could not even give a straight answer when Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN asked if he agreed with Justice Scalia that there is ''no protection for women or gays or lesbians under the equal protection law.''

With States around the country attempting to pass discriminatory bills, it is crucial that we have a Supreme Court Justice who will apply that heightened scrutiny.

Finally, people living with disabilities are also fearful of this appointment and the possibility that Judge

Gorsuch might be our next Supreme Court Justice.

In Luke P., a case involving a severely autistic student, Judge Gorsuch ruled that a State can provide an education offering minimal educational progress to students with disabilities.

Rather than requiring States to fulfill their responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Judge Gorsuch was satisfied with putting a student's learning potential at severe risk. In the middle of his confirmation hearing, the current Supreme Court unanimously overruled his decision.

What does that say about his judgment? Do we want a Supreme Court who gets it wrong on so many issues?

Judge Gorsuch should not be appointed to the Supreme Court. The fact that Senate Republicans are threatening the nuclear option if Democrats filibuster his appointment is just terrifying. It would have long-lasting consequences, and it is inappropriate to select a man for this key position to the United States Supreme Court who makes decisions about so many issues that affect all Americans across our country.

It is not right that they would make that on a purely partisan ideological basis. There should be a 60-vote threshold. We should make sure that they understand that, if they do this and they go to the nuclear option, it will have long-lasting consequences for them in their districts, in their offices, and also for the entire country.

□ 1730

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for that excellent discussion of the pro-choice question and other jurisprudence.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am really grateful to the gentleman for yielding but also for organizing this Special Order on something that really is special: Who is going to sit on the Supreme Court, and how do we deal with Judge Neil Gorsuch's nomination? Of course, we in the House don't have a vote, but we certainly do have the privilege to be able to weigh in on something as important as this in this manner. So I do appreciate the opportunity.

Judge Gorsuch's nomination to the Supreme Court is the latest battle in the Republicans' war on women and workers. I will find myself agreeing and probably repeating some of what Congresswoman JAYAPAL has said, but I think it bears repeating.

First of all, let me say we should make no mistake: this is a stolen Supreme Court seat. Senate Republicans demonstrated unprecedented—meaning never before in history—disrespect for the President of the United States, Barack Obama, and our Constitution by denying Judge Merrick Garland a vote or even a hearing when he was put into nomination by President Obama. That has never, ever happened before in our history.

Last year, Republicans ignored their constitutional duty by denying Judge Garland a hearing. By the way, he had been approved by the Congress in the past for a seat on the district court, and he had praise on both sides of the aisle. So it wasn't a question of his being qualified or not. It was they did not want the ability of Barack Obama to even nominate someone and have him considered for the Supreme Court.

So now they want to break the rules of the Senate to rush their own nominee through. This is a nomination to the United States Supreme Court, the highest body in the land, the highest Court in the land. The decisions the next Justice takes part in will affect Americans for decades, if not centuries, because it could set precedent. Given the importance of this position, Senators have the right to insist on a 60-vote threshold for ending the debate on the nominee, and Senate Democrats should insist on 60 votes because Judge Gorsuch has demonstrated time and time again that he has put the interest of corporations above Americans—I will describe that later—whether it is worker safety or a woman's access even to contraception.

I am going to talk for a minute about women. President Trump said he would nominate a judge to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that said, as a matter of privacy, that women could make their own decisions about terminating a pregnancy. Women take that threat very seriously. Judge Gorsuch talked about precedents he likes, like Brown v. Board of Education, integrating the schools. I agree with him on that. But tellingly, when he mentioned the precedents that he reveres, he certainly did not give Roe v. Wade the same status.

Judge Gorsuch's judicial record should add to our concern. After the 10th Circuit panel ruled against the State of Utah's attempt to defund Planned Parenthood following the release of deceptively edited videos, Judge Gorsuch called for the full court to hear the case, presumably to overturn the decision. Judge Gorsuch was in the minority in this instance, and his request was dismissed.

In the Hobby Lobby case, Judge Gorsuch sided against women, allowing bosses to deny their women employees contraception as part of health coverage.

Now I want to talk a little bit about workers. In many other cases, Judge Gorsuch has prioritized the interest of employers over the rights of workers. He blocked a woman in Colorado from going to trial on sexual harassment claims because she didn't report the harassment quickly enough.

Judge Gorsuch denied a professor with leukemia at Kansas State University protection under the Rehabilitation Act. He sided with a mining company after a worker was electrocuted due to inadequate safety training. He sided with a trucking company that fired a trucker driving through Illinois—that is my State—who decided to leave his broken trailer instead of freezing to death, literally. The truck was down, couldn't get started, and his choice was to sit there with the truck or to be able to go to safety in freezing temperatures.

Fortunately for workers, Judge Gorsuch was in the minority in some of those cases, but we can't count on him being in the minority once he is on the Supreme Court. His dangerous antiwoman, antiworker views should not be elevated to our highest court.

So I urge my Democratic colleagues in the Senate to stand strong against the Gorsuch nomination. And to Senate Republicans, it was disrespectful to the Constitution to block Judge Garland. I am not even saying necessarily that he would have been approved, but to not even offer him a hearing or a vote was disrespectful to our Constitution, and it is disrespectful to the traditions of the Senate to force Judge Gorsuch through now.

We don't want to break the rules to get one nominee through, especially not a nominee who puts critical protections for Americans at risk. Women are watching. Workers are watching. And on Friday, all Americans will know whose side the Senate is on and whose side the Senate Republicans are on. Everyone is paying attention.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for those excellent comments. As we have been discussing this evening, there is an egregious process problem with the nomination of Judge Gorsuch, and there is an egregious substantive problem with it.

The process problem, of course, is that the seat properly belongs to Judge Merrick Garland, the chief judge of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, who was denied, extraordinarily, even a hearing for a 9-month period. The justification for that offered by Senator MCCONNELL was that he felt that the people should speak in the 2016 election. Of course, President Obama was President. The Senate was the Senate. The people had spoken in the 2012 and 2014 elections. But they said they wanted the people to speak.

Well, the interesting thing, of course, is that the people spoke, and 2.9 million more people voted for the candidate who said she would appoint someone to the Court who was pro-choice, pro-Bill of Rights, pro-civil liberties, and not the Justice promised by Donald Trump, someone who would reverse Roe v. Wade and stand by Citizens United and the corporatization of the Supreme Court. So the people spoke.

The other problem, the substantive problem, is that Judge Gorsuch adds to what has come to be called the corporate majority on the corporate Court. Corporations win; workers lose.

Corporations win; investors lose. Corporations win; consumers lose. Repeatedly. Time after time in the Roberts Court, the jurisprudence of the Court is defined by the identity of the parties, which is completely antithetical to our whole concept of rule of law and constitutional justice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the very thoughtful gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from the great State of Maryland, a well respected theorist and professor who has been such an addition to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Let me say something not out of arrogance or even difficult pride because pride goes before the fall, but I do believe the Committee on the Judiciary in this Congress—both the House and the Senate—has, at this moment, the highest responsibility for truth. I don't think there should be one moment of partisanship in our committee. Certainly I am delighted to be here with you and the Congressional Progressive Caucus, but we both serve on the Committee on the Judiciary, and our ranking member, Mr. CONYERS, is a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. I believe that we are here, as was the Congressional Black Caucus just a few days ago, because it really behooves us to be able to speak to an important point that I think that I would like to make, a brief point.

First, I would like to indicate that none of this reflects on Mr. Gorsuch's personality, character, or standing as a member of the judiciary who has served in the 10th Circuit for any number of years or the many accolades that he received from colleagues, but it does go to the question of the temperament and the ability to withstand the easy way of making decisions where you feel most comfortable. That is not the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court is to be able to look at the proceedings of the lower courts, but also the facts, and make decisions regardless of where you stand politically in your former life or where you feel comfortable in your philosophy. And so my concern, and the reason why I think there is courageous actions by my colleagues in the other body as they proceed to filibuster—and filibuster sounds like an ugly word. It sounds like here they go again, what obstructionists. But let me be very clear. I have had the privilege to either read about great jurists, or I have either lived through that period of time, and they were not all appointed by Democrats. I am certainly a great admirer of Chief Justice Warren, who led the Court for a number of years, a Republican, and certainly I have watched Justice Kennedy for a period of time and many others. But listen to the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; I want to take their words: ''Judge Gorsuch's decade-long record on the Federal bench, as well as his writings, speeches, and activities throughout his career, demonstrate he is a judge with an agenda. His frequent dissents and concurrences show he is out of the mainstream of legal thought . . .''

Now when we say mainstream, we are not suggesting that we dictate what he wants to do, but the mainstream is where the American people are. They are on Main Street, no matter who they are.

''. . . the mainstream of legal thought and unwilling to accept the constructs of binding precedent and stare decisis''—that is a key element, not willing to accept what has been accepted by so many—''when they dictate results he disfavors. If confirmed to the Supreme Court, which is closely divided on many critical issues, Judge Gorsuch would tip the balance in a direction that would undermine many of our core rights and legal protections.''

So let me make these two points in joining my colleague. The most indicting decision where Judge Gorsuch was in the dissent—let me see if the American people can understand this decision where, in fact, if I am correct, the gentleman prevailed in the lower court, I believe, and this is the truck driver, the freezing truck driver who was freezing one night when the cargo part of his big, huge 18-wheeler was attached to a bad working—I am trying to be a trucker here now—cab that he sits in. The brakes didn't work.

□ 1745

I know a lot of truckers, and that is absolutely zero. You just don't drive—icy roads, freezing. He tried to wait on the repair guys. They did not come. He knew that if he had attached the large part of the 18-wheeler that it would be dangerous, and he might lose his life. He drove the cab off and he was fired. His legs had been freezing. He had been there for a long period of time.

Judge Gorsuch wound up being the dissenter on a decision that favored not somebody's personality or ''I am a union member judge.'' No. It was about the fact that he said employers could just fire you for whatever reason whatsoever.

The plaintiff has not been able to work for 7 years. It has impacted his whole life. But the other members of the court thought that he had a legitimate reason and did everything that he could. That is Main Street.

My final point is that we are in a very unique and challenging time. There are investigations going on regarding this administration, and we really don't know where the truth will wind up.

There are suggestions by committees—not this Member or not the distinguished Congressman that is on the floor here with me—that crimes have been perpetrated, criminal acts, someone may go to jail. I believe Judge Gorsuch should not be confirmed until we determine the conclusion of the investigations against the Trump administration. This is not biased. This is not about picking one side versus another.

I just want to remind my colleagues: Would it happen if it were President Obama? Would it happen if it were President George W. Bush? Would it happen if it were President Clinton? These are the Presidents I have had the privilege of serving with. No, it would not.

You cannot be the person who selects the person to a lifelong position on the Supreme Court and your whole administration, the context of the White House, is totally under investigation, including your former national security adviser for lying to the Vice President of the United States of America, your allegations that your former President wiretapped you, which has been disapproved by the FBI Director. I don't think so, and I don't think we can go forward.

So I would say that the nomination of Judge Gorsuch should be filibustered as it is. I am saddened by the fact that it has to be filibustered. I would hope that Mr. MCCONNELL could pull it down, that the President would understand that the whole nomination process was compromised. There was no consultation with the Democrats, as all Presidents have done. And, frankly, we call it: We are not ready; we are not prepared; we are unready, if you will, to go forward with a nomination by this President who is under complete investigation by the FBI and various intelligence agencies in the United States.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for those extraordinary comments. Congresswoman LEE makes me think about the partisan identification of Supreme Court nominees because it is a relatively recent phenomena that we identify them as Democrats or Republicans.

Many of my favorite Supreme Court Justices were appointed to the Supreme Court by Republican Presidents. Justice Suitor, of course, was appointed by the first President Bush. He was an exceptional Justice, who earned the ire, unfortunately, of the Republicans because he voted with the majority in Planned Parenthood v. Casey, affirming a woman's right to choose an abortion in consultation with her physician and her family and because he voted in Lee v. Weisman to prevent religious prayers from taking place at public school graduation ceremonies.

The rhetoric then in the Republican Party was, ''No more Suitors,'' despite the fact that he had been nominated by a Republican President. ''No more Suitors'' is what they said.

Or Justice Kennedy, who has been an exceptional Justice when it comes to vindicating the constitutional rights and equality of the LGBT Americans. He was the one who authored the decision in Lawrence v. Texas, overruling Bowers v. Hardwick, saying that the State of Texas and other States could not arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate gay people simply for their relationships. He wrote that.

He also was the author of the Supreme Court's magnificent decision in the Obergefell case, determining that equal protection means that States cannot discriminate against gay and lesbian citizens in the institution of marriage—and there is no going back on that.

But, of course, the rhetoric on the other side now, because it has got to be turned into a partisan football, is, ''No more Kennedys.'' ''No more Kennedys.'' ''No more Suitors.'' Why? Because they did their jobs as Justices. ''We want people like Neil Gorsuch who are going to tow the line every step along the way.''

Neil Gorsuch is someone that they are convinced will be part of both the attempt to dramatically reduce or abolish the privacy rights of the people, turn the clock back on the equal rights of the LGBT community but, also, more importantly, participate in what has been called the development of the corporate court Neil Gorsuch.

Now, that is a long-running development. But the critical moment came in 2010 with the Citizens United decision. Understand, the traditional doctrine for two centuries was that a corporation is, in the words of Chief Justice John Marshall from the 1819 decision in the Dartmouth College v. Woodward case, he said, ''an artificial being, invisible, intangible, existing only in contemplation of law,'' not possessing the constitutional political rights of the people. But in Citizens United, a deeply divided 5–4 Supreme Court found for the first time in our history that for-profit business corporations enjoy the political free speech rights of the people.

So what did that mean as a practical matter? Because, after all, before, the CEOs could spend whatever they wanted of their own money independently in a political campaign—see Buckley v. Valeo; the members of the board, the corporate executives, could spend whatever they wanted independently in a political campaign—see Buckley v. Valeo; they could contribute up to the limits—see Buckley v. Valeo; now they can contribute to every Member of Congress and every Member of Congress' opponent because of a recent decision handed down by the Supreme Court.

But there is one thing they couldn't do: The CEOs could not take money directly out of the corporate treasury to spend in politics. But the Citizens United majority gave them that power.

This breached an understanding that had been in place for centuries that the most conservative Justices on the Court adhered to. Chief Justice Rehnquist, a very conservative judge, said that corporations are magnificent vehicles for the accumulation and investment of wealth, and they have worked great for the economy, but they are very dangerous if you allow them to cross the line from economics to politics.

Justice White, a very conservative Justice, appointed by a Democrat, President Kennedy, said that corporations are endowed with all kinds of special attributes, like perpetual life of the corporation, the limited liability of the shareholders, and all kinds of legal trappings and subsidies. He said: The corporation is the creature of the State, and the State need not permit its own creature to consume it, to devour it.

So we had a doctrine, which is that corporations could be confined to the economic realm. They could not convert all of the wealth and power they accumulate in economics into political power. But that is what the Supreme Court did in Citizens United.

But it didn't stop there. Because now the question became, as the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals put it: If a corporation has political rights, if a for-profit business corporation has political rights, why doesn't a for-profit business corporation have the religious rights of the people? And that became the Hobby Lobby decision in 2014.

Hobby Lobby was a for-profit business corporation, not a religious entity, not a church, not a mosque. It was a business corporation. And it was not organized for religious purposes. It was organized for profitmaking purposes. Yet the corporate leadership said: We don't want to participate in the provision of contraceptive care for our employees under the Affordable Care Act. We don't want to do that. We assert the religious rights of the corporation.

Now, stop and think about that for a second. From the standpoint of most religions, it is pure blasphemy to say that a corporation should have religious rights. As James Madison put it back when he wrote his famous remonstrance against religious taxation: The religious rights of the people are sacred in our system because they are between the person and God, they are between the believer and God. The government doesn't get involved; corporations aren't involved; and all of these other artificial entities aren't involved. It is between the person and his or her religious faith or worship.

But beyond the blasphemy of it, think about what this means. What it means is that a business corporation can say that it does not want to participate in the provision of contraceptives to their employees, thereby violating the rights of their employees.

If a corporation can exercise its newly found religious conscience to say that it doesn't want to provide contraceptives to employees, why can't the corporations say: Well, it also violates our rights to compel us to serve people on an interfaith or interracial basis; that offends our religious beliefs, too, as a corporation? Where does this doctrine end?

Now, why do we raise this? Because Judge Gorsuch was part of the majority which determined that corporations have a religious conscience, have a religious soul. He has been part of the spiritual ennoblement of business corporations to the detriment of workers and consumers and other people who have to deal with this newfound corporate power.

Judge Gorsuch seems like a good guy. He is right out of central casting, but he is being put on the Court to participate in the greatest concentration of corporate power, jurisprudence, and thinking on the Supreme Court in its entire history, with the possible exception of the Lochner period. Of course, in the Lochner period, in the early 20th century, the Supreme Court began to slash away at child labor laws, at laws protecting the rights of people to belong to unions, at any kind of social regulation, saying that violated due process.

Well, today, the First Amendment, where religious freedom played the same role that due process played during the Lochner period, they become a catchall rubric for the Court to strike down the laws of the people and to benefit big corporate power against the rights of actual human beings, like the people who lost their contraceptive care in the Hobby Lobby case because some of the corporate lawyers representing Hobby Lobby had the bright idea to assert that the corporation was protected by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. And, of course, Judge Gorsuch went along for the ride, with all of the other corporate judges and the justices on the corporate court.

Mr. Speaker, there is one category of judges in our Federal judiciary that merit the Appalachian Justice, who are called ''Justice.'' Everybody else is called ''Your Honor'' or ''Judge.'' But the people who go on the Supreme Court get to be called ''Justice.'' It means something.

□ 1800

There is a massive injustice taking place here because of the outrageous sandbagging, stonewalling, and obstruction of the D.C. Circuit Court Chief Judge Merrick Garland, who was denied even a hearing in the U.S. Senate. Now there is an attempt to tilt the Court for the next 15, 20, or 30 years with the appointment of Judge Gorsuch to the corporate bloc.

So here in the House of Representatives, of course, we do not enjoy the power of advice and consent; but a number of us simply wanted to say this evening that we stand very strongly in solidarity with those Members of the Senate who are exercising their constitutional duties by trying to filibuster this nomination, which is conceived in a wrong, in an attempt to steal a Supreme Court seat and, if it were to be accomplished, would be destined simply to add to a rightwing procorporate majority on the Roberts Court.

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

THE SUPREME COURT AND THE RIGHT TO LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BIGGS). Under the Speaker's announced

policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to be recognized by you to address you here on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

I came to this floor this evening to take up a topic that I think is essential to the future of our country for our moral foundation. Yet, as I have listened to the gentleman from Maryland's presentation, there are a few moments I would like to spend with the other perspective before I move into the topic I came to address.

I go back as far as the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who used the reference and said that stare decisis is binding precedent. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want the American people to know that stare decisis is a Latin term, a legal term that means, once the case is decided, it deserves deference. It has already been decided; it deserves deference, but where it has never been a binding precedent.

There have been a number of times that the Supreme Court has turned 180 degrees on what the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) has called a binding precedent. I could go through a list of those, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is important to note that accepting a decision of a previous Supreme Court as if somehow it were binding precedent and then settled law and then incorporate it into the Constitution itself would be a very erroneous concept to carry into the Supreme Court itself, because we have to go back and evaluate that these were mortals that made the decision in the Supreme Court and the other courts and they aren't always right. And if a case is not soundly reasoned, it needs to be reconsidered.

So I appreciate Justice Clarence Thomas' view on stare decisis. Essentially, it doesn't exist. If you want to evaluate the reasoning of a previous Court, that is a good thing to do because they have already thought it through and they have already written on it. There are already majority opinions and dissents that are generally written. Yet, to be bound by that, really handcuffs any future decisions. So it is worth looking at the decisions of the previous Court, but we can never be bound by them. So I take issue with the gentlewoman from Texas' position that stare decisis is binding precedent. It is never binding precedent.

Stare decisis is an indicator, and it is informative. We have to go back to the text of the Constitution and the various amendments, and we have to understand what they were understood to mean at the time of ratification. Otherwise, the Constitution no longer is a guarantee from generation to generation. It is just simply an artifact of history that allows the Justices to hold up and say: Hey, we are bound by stare decisis; we can only make a decision that narrows things down; and we are essentially trapped into a funnel of reason that brings about a predictable conclusion that might be completely erroneous.

To give an example, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the series of decisions that were made by the Supreme Court—and the first one I would start with, and I am going to get to abortion in this decision: Griswold v. Connecticut.

In the early sixties, the Court had a case before them where the State of Connecticut had banned contraceptives, not just contraceptives in the school, as one might say today, but contraceptives that would be used in marriages. So there was a case. Griswold took it all the way to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court ruled that it was a right to privacy of married couples to be able to purchase contraceptives.

There is no right to privacy that is stipulated in the Constitution. But it was a decision that was made by the Supreme Court that, if respected as stare decisis, now the next Court would be bound by it, and the next Court was.

So the Supreme Court ruled that Connecticut couldn't ban contraceptives to married couples because they had a right to privacy to purchase those—as illogical as it sounds, even as I say it, Mr. Speaker, married couples had a constitutional right decided by Griswold v. Connecticut to purchase contraceptives within the State of Connecticut and the Nation, as the decision turned out.

Well, that decision didn't flow over into unmarried couples. So unmarried couples went to court, and they sued. And it became the Eisenstadt decision, which concluded that any rights that are bestowed upon married couples with regard to right to privacy in purchasing contraceptives also must be available to unmarried couples who might be cohabiting or having a relationship in whatever way and they should be able to purchase contraceptives, too.

So this right to privacy established by Griswold, expanded by Eisenstadt—see, how this is bringing us down to an irreversible conclusion, Mr. Speaker?

This right to privacy was then argued before the Court in 1973 in Roe v. Wade. And the Supreme Court of the United States concluded in the emanations and penumbras that there was this right to privacy that extended to abortion itself.

So when I hear the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) say stare decisis is binding precedent—if we are going to accept as binding precedent that there is a Court-manufactured right to privacy in Griswold, reinforced by Eisenstadt that is the foundation for the irrational, illogical, and unconstitutional reasoning that has brought about the abortion of 58.5 million babies since 1973 and all because a Court chased the rationale down a narrower and narrower path that they were bound to make decisions only on the judgment of the previous Court—it left very little of the Constitution to be reviewed.

If we would have had nine Justice Thomases on that Court, they would have concluded this: first, that precedent didn't count. Eisenstadt, look at it if you like, look at the reasoning if you like, but they are not bound by it. Griswold v. Connecticut, they are not bound by it.

In the case of Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, I might add, the combination of those two cases together gave abortion on demand in America for any reason or no reason at all from an irrational foundation that began with a stare decisis view that came from an activist Court that, I believe, wanted to come to that conclusion anyway.

I think they believed that society was moving along and that society was going to get to the place where they supported abortion. They just thought they would just go ahead and beat the Congress to the punch or beat the State legislatures to the punch and impose a right to abortion on America, and that is what they did.

We saw this happen in our country. We saw this happen in different places around the world, and now it is still being pushed in some of the countries in the world.

Mr. Speaker, if there is anybody listening from the nation of Chile, I would suggest to them: Back away from that push to legalize abortion in your country. We have seen what has happened in America.

Twenty percent of the pregnancies in America now end in abortion, and the death toll of a bell that would ring for 58.5 million babies that have been aborted since 1973. It is a missing component of two going on three generations.

And those little babies today, Mr. Speaker, had they been given that right to life that is guaranteed to any born person in the United States—if someone commits mass murder in the United States of America, mass serial murder in the United States of America, mass serial murder in multiple locations in multiple States in a ghastly and ghoulish and blood-thirsty way, we take them to court and say: You are innocent until proven guilty. You may have, by my description, committed capital crimes that would be facing the death penalty. Federal murder, it might be, in multiple States that have the death penalty.

No matter how ghastly a murderer we have, we give that murderer first the presumption of innocence. They are innocent until proven guilty. We give them an opportunity to be tried by a jury of their peers. They are sometimes tried in the court of public opinion on top of it. If they don't have their due process—and often it is concluded by a judge along the way that they don't—they can appeal their death penalty all the way up to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Why?

Because they have a right to life because they are deemed and legally are

a person not only in the eyes of God, but in the eyes of American law. In the eyes of American law, the most ghastly murderer that I can describe has a right to life and a right to due process until such time as the full appeals all the way up the board have been heard. If they are sentenced to death, then it must be the most merciful death that we can possibly devise in this country or the judges will rule that it is unconstitutional, cruel, and inhuman punishment. That is how we treat the most ghastly murderers in America.

But the most innocent among us, those 58.5 million little babies that are there curled up in an innocent little fetal position in their mother's womb with little fingers, little toes, feet, hands, eyes, nose, ears, and a mouth—no teeth yet, but that mouth has an expression on it; it smiles; it frowns; it twists itself around—those babies can feel pain. They can put their hands together, and they can move around. The expressions on their faces, we now see them through 4D ultrasound.

Mother after mother, father after father, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, even before the baby is born, they bond with that little baby through the ultrasound. We have always known, the Catholic church has always known, and so have many of the other Christians organizations and many entities around this country and around this world have always known that that baby's life began at the moment of conception.

If you look at our society, we don't have a lot of sympathy, as our society is concerned, for those beings that can't scream for their own mercy. That baby is silent. That baby can't cry out from the womb. The ring of that baby's cries doesn't echo in our ears. We turn our mind away from it. We turn our eyes away from it. And we listen to people say: Well, it is choice.

Well, the baby is never given the choice.

This little baby that could be the next Einstein, the next Lincoln, the next Ronald Reagan, the next Billy Graham, how many of those gifts to the world are in that mountain of guilt that is poured upon the United States of America that numbers now over 58.5 million?

We will never know the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker. We will never know.

We cry out to the conscience of the American people, the conscience that especially now knows because of ultrasound that that baby's life begins at the moment of conception, and science can prove it when we can detect a heartbeat. When we can detect a heartbeat, we know that is life and we know that it is innocent human life.

For the purposes of the law today, it is innocent, unborn human life not protected by law, not even close to the first protection we offer the most heinous murderer that we can devise. Yet, they are the most innocent.

I remember Father Jonathan Morris was speaking one day as I was watching him in the morning, and he was talking about the ladies in the church. When a baby cries, they pick the baby up and they go outside the church in order to get that baby's cries away from the congregation so the rest of them can hear the sermon. He said it doesn't bother him when there are babies crying in his church because those are the only innocent voices in that church, the voice of babies.

The most innocent that we encounter are actually in the womb, not yet born, not yet with an opportunity to fill their lungs full of air and scream for their own mercy. We have to speak for them. We have to defend them. We have to protect them.

We know by our conscience, we know by our science, we know by natural law, we know by what is innate with us in our intuition that life has to begin at a moment. You can't take a life by accident. If there is going to be an error, it must be on the side of life.

□ 1815

I know that when I was able to hold our firstborn, I looked at him, and there was an aura about him. I was so amazed that that miracle was in my hands, and that was an extension into another generation from the long line of families that we all have and share and enjoy.

I looked at him, and I thought, could anybody take this little baby's life now, now that he is here, now that he is minutes old; could anybody take his life now? Of course they could not. Well, some can, and we do our best to lock them up or send them in the next life.

But to take the life of a newly born baby is one of the most ghoulish things that I can think of, and so I thought, this little life is sacred. I know there is a soul in him. I know there is. And so could anyone take his life the minute before he was born? Is he any different? What transformed him as he came through the birth canal? He is not transformed. He is the same baby.

He could be born by cesarean. His life is as sacred, and as unique, and as much created in God's image, and as much as a soul within him, born by cesarean as if he comes through the birth canal. So could anybody take his life the minute before he was born, or an hour, or a day, or a week, or a month, or a trimester, or two, or three?

What transforms this child through that period of time that I have described as 9 months? What transforms them? So if you think back through from the minute before a little boy or an innocent little baby girl is born to the hour of the week, the hour of the day, the week, the month, the trimester, there is no dramatic moment from the moment of conception, because conception is the dramatic moment. It is the instant, the moment life begins.

At that moment, if God doesn't already put the soul in that little baby, I am completely convinced that it happens at that moment of conception when the genetics of the father and the mother are joined together in a unique being has begun, that has such a robust growth that if we think of it in terms of the multiples of size from the fertilized egg until the 5-, 6-, 7-, 8-, 9-pound baby is born, the dramatic growth that is there, that little baby has a soul in it from that moment. And that is human life. It is nurturable, and it must be protected, must be protected in law.

So what we have done is, we have introduced the Heartbeat bill here in the United States Congress, and we have two-and-a-half dozen or so cosponsors on the bill. This is the first time I know of that this legislation has been introduced in the United States Congress, but it protects the life of every little baby who has a heartbeat. It requires that if any abortionist seeks to commit an abortion, that they first check for a heartbeat.

That heartbeat can be discovered as early as 16 days from the moment of conception. I would like to have a bill that protected life from the moment of conception, and I would support such a thing. We can't scientifically prove conception, but we can scientifically prove heartbeat, and everybody knows, every mother knows, every father knows, every human being knows that if a heart is beating, there is life. And you can't describe this life as anything other than human life. It is human life. It is innocent life—nothing more innocent than a conceived little baby.

We need to protect human life in all of its forms, from conception to natural death. This bill, the Heartbeat Protection Act of 2017, protects those babies from the moment their heartbeat can be detected, the baby is protected.

And if an abortionist is determined or decides to commit an abortion, they must first check for a heartbeat under this law, and they must keep the records to demonstrate that they have done so. If they fail to do so, they would be facing a Federal penalty of a fine, imprisonment up to 5 years. The mother is not penalized in this. She is not subjected to this. It is the abortionists who are subjected to this statute.

I would reiterate: if a heartbeat is detected, the baby is protected. Mr. Speaker, some people will be wondering—and they will be wondering, well, what kind of support does legislation like that have across the United States of America? So we have a poll here that is on this easel, and this is the question about the Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490, and we went to over 1,000 adults in America and asked for their opinions.

Those 1,002 interviews were conducted, as a matter of fact, and this has a sampling error that is about as small as you get in a legitimate poll. Sometimes you will see them in 5½ percent or more, but this is down to a little over 3 percent accuracy, and it

says: Do you agree or disagree or have no opinion on supporting the Heartbeat bill that would outlaw abortion in America? If a heartbeat can be detected, it would outlaw abortion unless there was a physical threat to the physical life or health of the mother.

Sixty-nine percent of Americans agree with this legislation. That is across the spectrum. It is across the board, Mr. Speaker. That includes Democrats, no party, independents, and Republicans, and it includes 13 percent of the people who had no opinion.

Those that disagreed are 18 percent over here in the orange, Mr. Speaker. So we are sitting here with 69 percent of Americans who support legislation that would protect innocent, unborn human life from the moment that a heartbeat can be detected.

Because we know that life is precious, and every one of those lives contributes to the well-being of humanity. No matter what kind of life we may think they experience, they are a blessing to their father, they are a blessing to their mother, they are a blessing to their family, they are a blessing to this country. And I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that when you break this down, 69 percent in favor that support the Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490, only 18 percent oppose. And I think some of them will do that for political reasons, but they would have a hard time making the argument if they are looking in the eye of someone who has survived an abortion.

I have never heard one of the pro-abortion people look at one of the survivors of abortion and say: You should have never been born. No one does that. They don't have the nerve to do so because they know that each one of us contributes to the well-being of society, and each one of us are a gift from God. And His gift to us are the tools that we are born with, and our job is to develop them and utilize them for the well-being of everyone else.

Here is the breakdown politically: 86 percent of Republicans support the Heartbeat bill, only 6 percent of Republicans disagree. I don't know why they do, but 6 percent do. I don't know what their argument is. In the center, we have the graph of the Democrats; 55 percent of Democrats—they are the ones who would be lined up against this, I would think, but it is a significant majority. In fact, if this were a political election, Mr. Speaker, that would be a landslide at 55 percent of Democrats supporting the Heartbeat bill.

Now, we are looking for some Democrats to sign on it. Maybe they will reflect the will and wishes of their constituents. Fifty-five percent of Democrats support the Heartbeat bill, 25 percent oppose—more than 2 to 1. The undecided are in orange. That is 25 percent. So it is well over 2 to 1—2½ and actually, bordering on 3 to 1, support among the Democrats for this.

If you go to the Independents, 61 percent of Independents support the Heartbeat bill, and 13 percent of the Independents oppose, and 27 percent of the—so it is 61 percent support among Independents, and 55 percent support among Democrats, 86 percent support among Republicans. That is the party breakdown for those who think of this in politics.

I think of this in human terms, Mr. Speaker. I think of this in terms of picking up little babies and holding them in my arms, and feeling that love, and that special smell that a little baby has, and the gurgle, the laughter, and the crying. It is all part of life.

When I think of the privilege of being able to go to church with almost my whole family and taking up, well, I guess last Sunday, parts of three pews and not all of all three. And I think of this little baby that got passed back to me, and he is kind of an in-law shirttail relation. I had never held him before. He snuggled up in my arms there at the end of mass, and I was able to carry him out.

We have also little children who come out of the pews to run up front at the beginning of the collection to carry their dollar bill up and put it in that basket. They are being raised right, those little kids. They will be fine. But I see them bubbling out of the pews and coming, pouring down the aisle, and lining up there. Sometimes they trip and run into each other, and knock each other down, and help each other up, and little big brother or sister will go help the little 2-year-old back again.

When you see that joy and you hear that gurgling laughter, and you think: 58.5 million babies never even had a chance to do that—never had a chance to learn, to love, to laugh, to play, to fall in love, to have their own children, to feel that joy of family, to experience this life in this wonderful country that we have. All denied them, denied them because the Supreme Court came down with a ruling that said: Well, stare decisis, the right to privacy, extended right to privacy. In the emanations and penumbras of the Constitution is a decision that they would support abortion on demand.

Well, we know that the Court has also left room—and we will have a new Court soon—the Court has left room for us to make this argument before the Court. And if anyone should stand up and say that we shouldn't move this legislation to save the lives of the next 58.5 million babies because a Court might rule it unconstitutional, my challenge back to the Court, Mr. Speaker, is: it was an erroneous decision in Roe v. Wade. It was erroneous in Eisenstadt, it was erroneous in Griswold, and it was erroneous in Doe v. Bolton. And all of those together are bound up—don't be hiding behind stare decisis, Supreme Court.

Let's look at this right to life that we have, and the right to equal protection under the law that is guaranteed to us in the 14th Amendment, and that is extended out to all of the States. And if we can't execute the most heinous murderer without a due process all the way to the Supreme Court, and then do so in the most painless and merciful way possible while babies are being torn apart in the womb, then what have we come to as a nation?

We have the chance to rectify this, Mr. Speaker. We have an opportunity, an opportunity to move the Heartbeat bill, an opportunity to send a message from the House to the Senate and to all of America. Americans have an opportunity to weigh into us—to sign onto this bill, to move this, to save the lives of all of the babies who are born who have a heartbeat. If a heartbeat is detected, the baby is protected.

That needs to be our rallying cry across this country and across this land. Forever.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCEACHIN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for April 4 and today.

HOUSE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and joint resolutions of the following titles:

January 20, 2017:

H.R. 39. An Act to amend title 5, United States Code, to codify the Presidential Innovation Fellows Program, and for other purposes.

January 31, 2017:

H.R. 72. An Act to ensure the Government Accountability Office has adequate access to information.

February 14, 2017:

H.J. Res. 41. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers''.

February 16, 2017:

H.J. Res. 38. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule.

February 28, 2017:

H.J. Res. 40. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Social Security Administration relating to Implementation of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007.

H.R. 255. An Act to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

H.R. 321. An Act to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach.

March 13, 2017:

H.R. 609. An Act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs health care center in Center Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the ''Abie Abraham VA Clinic''.

March 27, 2017:

H.J. Res. 37. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics

and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

H.J. Res. 44. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

H.J. Res. 57. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to accountability and State plans under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

H.J. Res. 58. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues.

March 31, 2017:

H.J. Res. 42. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to drug testing of unemployment compensation applicants.

H.R. 1362. An Act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin VA Clinic.

April 3, 2017:

H.J. Res. 69. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to ''Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska''.

H.J. Res. 83. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness''.

H.R. 1228. An Act to provide for the appointment of members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to replace members whose terms expire during 2017, and for other purposes.

SENATE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and joint resolutions of the Senate of the following titles:

January 20, 2017:

S. 84. An Act to provide for an exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of Defense within seven years of relief from active duty as a regular commissioned officer of the Armed Forces.

March 21, 2017:

S. 442. An Act to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes.

March 28, 2017:

S. 305. An Act to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

March 31, 2017:

S.J. Res. 1. A joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.

April 3, 2017:

S.J. Res. 34. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to ''Protecting the Privacy of Customers of Broadband and Other Telecommunications Services''.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 6, 2017, at 9 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the first quarter of 2017, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO BELGIUM, EXPENDED BETWEEN FEB. 17 AND FEB. 21, 2017

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Michael Turner	2/19	2/21	Belgium		578.00		N/A				578.00
Hon. Lois Frankel	2/18	2/20	Belgium		578.00		8,576.00				9,154.00
Hon. Thomas Marino	2/18	2/21	Belgium		869.00		2,227.00				3,096.00
Hon. Steven ''Brett'' Guthrie	2/18	2/21	Belgium		869.00		1,778.00				2,647.00
Hon. Mike Kelly	2/18	2/21	Belgium		869.00		1,523.00				2,492.00
Hon. James Costa	2/17	2/21	Belgium		1,031.00		7,750.00				8,781.00
Hon. Ted Deutch	2/19	2/21	Belgium		578.00		6,839.00				7,417.00
Jessica Calio	2/17	2/21	Belgium		1,156.00		2,011.00				3,167.00
Janice Robinson	2/17	2/21	Belgium		1,156.00		2,011.00				3,167.00
Ed Rice	2/17	2/21	Belgium		1,156.00		2,011.00				3,167.00
Committee total					8,840.00		34,726.00				43,566.00

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER, Feb. 21, 2017.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

974. A letter from the Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Inflation Adjustments and Other Technical Amendments Under Titles I and III of the JOBS Act [Release Nos.: 33-10332; 34-80355; File No.: S7-09-16] (RIN: 3235-AL38) received April 4, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

975. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's FY 2016 report to Congress entitled ''Preservation and Promotion of Minority Depository Institutions'', pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1463 note; Public Law 101-73, Sec. 308 (as amended by Public Law 111-203, Sec. 367(4)(B)); (124 Stat. 1556); to the Committee on Financial Services.

976. A letter from the Executive Director, Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, transmitting the FY 2016 Annual Report of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 5452(e); Public Law 111-203, Sec. 342(e); (124 Stat. 1543); to the Committee on Financial Services.

977. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Rehabilitation of the Jetty System at the Mouth of the Columbia River: Jetty A, North Jetty, and South Jetty, in Washington and Oregon [Docket No.: 160405311-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BF95) received April 4, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

978. A letter from the Acting Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the FY 2016 Annual Report, pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 306(a); Public Law 109-304, Sec. 4; (120 Stat. 1489); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

979. A letter from the Vice President, Government Relations, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting the Authority's Statistical Summary for FY 2016; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

980. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human

Services, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Medicare Program; Advancing Care Coordination Through Episode Payment Models (EPMs); Cardiac Rehabilitation Incentive Payment Model; and Changes to the Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement Model; Delay of Effective Date [CMS-5519-IFC] (RIN: 0938-AS90) received April 4, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

981. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicaid Program; Disproportionate Share Hospital Payments — Treatment of Third Party Payers in Calculating Uncompensated Care Costs [CMS-2399-F] (RIN: 0938-AS92) received April 3, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and 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. GOODLATTE. Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1667. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy (Rept. 115–80). 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. LARSON of Connecticut (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BERA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. EVANS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HECK, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEAL, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H.R. 1902. A bill to protect our Social Security system and improve benefits for current and future generations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and 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. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COURTNEY, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 1903. A bill to improve compliance with mine safety and health laws, empower miners to raise safety concerns, prevent future mine tragedies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 1904. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to align physician supervision requirements under the Medicare program for radiology services performed by advanced level radiographers with State requirements; 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. CUMMINGS (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. COHEN, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. BASS, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 1905. A bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, the Judiciary, Armed Services, and 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.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CLAY, Ms. LEE, Ms. BASS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 1906. A bill to provide for the sealing or expungement of records relating to Federal nonviolent criminal offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and 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. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. BASS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H.R. 1907. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct research and development to mitigate the consequences of threats to voting systems, to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require the voting systems used in elections for Federal office to comply with national standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology for operational security and ballot verification, to establish programs to promote research in innovative voting system technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology, and Homeland Security, 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. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 1908. A bill to provide for the use of funds in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for the purposes for which the funds were collected and to ensure that funds credited to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund are used to support navigation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and 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 Mrs. LAWRENCE (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1909. A bill to prioritize educating and training for existing and new environmental health professionals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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.

By Ms. STEFANIK (for herself, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. COOK, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FASO, Mr. JONES, Mr. OLSON, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. ZELDIN):

H.R. 1910. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the process for determining the eligibility of caregivers of veterans to certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. VEASEY):

H.R. 1911. A bill to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to monitor and combat anti-Semitism globally, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 1912. A bill to ensure that claims for benefits under the Black Lung Benefits Act are processed in a fair and timely manner, to better protect miners from pneumoconiosis (commonly known as ''black lung disease''), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. PANETTA (for himself, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 1913. A bill to establish the Clear Creek National Recreation Area in San Benito and Fresno Counties, California, to designate the Joaquin Rocks Wilderness in such counties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 1914. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to grant owners of copyright in sound recordings the exclusive right to prohibit the broadcast transmission of the sound recordings by means of terrestrial radio stations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 1915. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide the Administrator of the Small Business Administration authority to increase amount for general business loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. TURNER, Mr. MOULTON, and Ms. TSONGAS):

H.R. 1916. A bill to ensure the ballistic missile defense capacity of the Army; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. ROBY, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1917. A bill to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. SIRES, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. YOHO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCCAUL, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, and Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 1918. A bill to oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, 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. FERGUSON (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. BARTON, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 1919. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify eligibility for the child tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. UPTON (for himself, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. TIBERI):

H.R. 1920. A bill to amend part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to exclude customary prompt pay discounts from manufacturers to wholesalers from the average sales price for drugs and biologicals under Medicare, 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. BANKS of Indiana:

H.R. 1921. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to authorize block grants to States for prekindergarten education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 1922. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish fair and consistent eligibility requirements for graduate medical schools operating outside the United States and Canada; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 1923. A bill to prohibit the use of members of the United States Armed Forces to carry out offensive combat operations in Syria; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 1924. A bill to provide definitions of terms and services related to community-based gang intervention to ensure that funding for such intervention is utilized in a cost-effective manner and that community-based agencies are held accountable for providing holistic, integrated intervention services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself and Mr. GRIFFITH):

H.R. 1925. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to protect at-risk youth against termination of Medicaid eligibility while an inmate of a public institution; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SERRANO):

H.R. 1926. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to ensure that juveniles adjudicated in Federal delinquency proceedings are not subject to solitary confinement while committed to juvenile facilities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. TURNER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SABLAN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. ROSS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. RASKIN, Mrs. DEMINGS, and Ms. LOFGREN):

H.R. 1927. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the African American Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 1928. A bill to provide a permanent appropriation of funds for the payment of death gratuities and related benefits for survivors of deceased members of the uniformed services in event of any period of lapsed appropriations; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. CRIST:

H.R. 1929. A bill to increase the maximum amount of increased cost of compliance coverage available under the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

H.R. 1930. A bill to require the Administration of General Services to issue guidance relating to the procurement of reclaimed refrigerants; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KILDEE,

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TONKO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. NADLER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. SARBANES):

H.R. 1931. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to discourage corporate inversions and to impose tax on unrepatriated earnings and unrecognized gains in connection with corporate expatriations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. NADLER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 1932. A bill to end offshore corporate tax avoidance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, 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. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mrs. BLACK):

H.R. 1933. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals to receive a premium assistance credit for insurance not purchased on an Exchange, 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. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 1934. A bill to establish a 5-year ban on individuals appointed to Executive Schedule positions and Members of Congress engaging in lobbying activities at the Federal level; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 1935. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the termination of further retirement coverage for Members of Congress under the Federal Employees' Retirement System, except for the right to continue participating in the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 1936. A bill to prohibit congressional recesses until Congress adopts a concurrent resolution on the budget that results in a balanced Federal budget by the last fiscal year covered by such resolution, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules, 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. GARRETT:

H.R. 1937. A bill to provide loan forgiveness to borrowers of Federal student loans who agree to delay eligibility to collect social security benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 1938. A bill to require the President-elect to submit copies to the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate of the Federal income tax returns filed for the 4 most recent taxable years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. GRIFFITH (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 1939. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure equal access of Medicare beneficiaries to community pharmacies in underserved areas as network pharmacies under Medicare prescription drug coverage, 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. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. EVANS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. LEE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. RASKIN):

H.R. 1940. A bill to allow homeowners of moderate-value homes who are subject to mortgage foreclosure proceedings to remain in their homes as renters; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:

H.R. 1941. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make the exception for returning workers permanent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:

H.R. 1942. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to periodically conduct an audit of the Veterans Health Administration budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 1943. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that each wheelchair, furnished to a veteran because of a service-connected disability, restores the maximum achievable mobility in the activities of daily life, employment, and recreation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BACON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. COLE, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 1944. A bill to amend section 100905 of title 54, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to require annual permits and assess annual fees for commercial filming activities on Federal land for film crews of 5 persons or fewer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. LATTA (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. COLE, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 1945. A bill to establish the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, recreational shooting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. LEWIS of Georgia:

H.R. 1946. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require reporting by the National Institutes of Health on requests for funding research that were not granted and had the greatest potential for improving public health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LEWIS of Georgia:

H.R. 1947. A bill to affirm the religious freedom of taxpayers who are conscientiously opposed to participation in war, to provide that the income, estate, or gift tax payments of such taxpayers be used for nonmilitary purposes, to create the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund to receive such tax payments, to improve revenue collection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. LOVE (for herself and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 1948. A bill to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself and Mr. MEEHAN):

H.R. 1949. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual assault, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. MURPHY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. EVANS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr.

FITZPATRICK, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DENT, Mr. SMUCKER, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT):

H.R. 1950. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 120 West Pike Street in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, as the ''Police Officer Scott Bashioum Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. O'HALLERAN (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. KIHUEN):

H.R. 1951. A bill to provide that the salaries of Members of a House of Congress will be held in escrow if that House has not agreed to a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018 by April 15, 2017, to eliminate automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress, to prohibit the use of funds provided for the official travel expenses of Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the legislative branch for first-class airline accommodations, and to amend title 18, United States Code, to establish a uniform 5-year post-employment ban on lobbying by former Members of Congress; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Oversight and Government Reform, 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. O'ROURKE (for himself, Mr. AMASH, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. LOVE):

H.R. 1952. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the revocation or suspension of drivers' licenses of individuals convicted of drug offenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PAULSEN (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. HECK, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 1953. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, 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 Ms. PINGREE (for herself, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. RUSH, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. SABLAN):

H.R. 1954. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand health care and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for military sexual trauma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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. REED (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 1955. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 1956. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the amounts of educational assistance payable under Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. SÁNCHEZ (for herself, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. POCAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. MACARTHUR, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 1957. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to address and take action to prevent bullying and harassment of students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SHERMAN (for himself and Mr. ROYCE of California):

H.R. 1958. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to include retrofit loans such as property assessed clean energy loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER):

H.R. 1959. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the exclusion for employer-provided dependent care assistance; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H.R. 1960. A bill to require the Supreme Court of the United States to promulgate a code of ethics; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 1961. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain land to Washington County, Utah, to authorize the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Utah, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself and Mr. NEAL):

H.R. 1962. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect older, longer service and grandfathered participants in defined benefit plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 1963. A bill to provide protection for survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault under the Fair Housing Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WILLIAMS:

H.R. 1964. A bill to preserve competition among mortgage lenders, provide relief from unnecessary regulatory requirements on responsible community mortgage lenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself and Mr. WOODALL):

H.J. Res. 94. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to repeal the sixteenth article of amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SWALWELL of California (for himself and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Con. Res. 47. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that until the conclusion of the FBI's criminal and counterintelligence investigations into the nature of the Russian connection to the Trump campaign, the Trump Administration is acting under a ''gray cloud'' of the appearance of a conflict of interest, and, as such, should refrain from taking any actions or making any changes to United States policy that could be seen as benefitting President Putin or his inner circle; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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 Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. GOWDY, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. MITCHELL, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Ms. LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. MCSALLY, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. FOXX, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. OLSON, Mr. ISSA, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. KILMER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. STEWART, and Mrs. ROBY):

H. Res. 249. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of the first woman to serve in the United States Congress, Jeannette Pickering Rankin, on the 100th anniversary of her swearing-in to Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. VARGAS):

H. Res. 250. A resolution expressing the need to eliminate life without parole for children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Res. 251. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of April 9, 2017, through April 22, 2017, as National Young Audiences Arts for Learning Week; to the Committee on 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. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 1902.

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 defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:
H.R. 1903.
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. OLSON:
H.R. 1904.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8
By Mr. CUMMINGS:
H.R. 1905.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.
By Mr. CUMMINGS:
H.R. 1906.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, the Congress shall have the power to ''regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes''
By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:
H.R. 1907.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, which grants Congress the Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers.
By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:
H.R. 1908.
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 Mrs. LAWRENCE:
H.R. 1909.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Sectiom 8, clause 18 allows Congress to make all laws, ''which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution'' any ''other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United Stataes.
By Ms. STEFANIK:
H.R. 1910.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution.
By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:
H.R. 1911.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
Article I, Section 8, Clause 4
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:
H.R. 1912.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes
By Mr. PANETTA:
H.R. 1913.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, Section 3, clause 2 provides Congress with the power to ''dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory and other Property belonging to the United States.''
By Mr. ISSA:
H.R. 1914.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, clause 8, ''to promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Rights to their respective Writings and Discoveries,''
By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:
H.R. 1915.
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. SHUSTER:
H.R. 1916.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:
H.R. 1917.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution, To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.
By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:
H.R. 1918.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. FERGUSON:
H.R. 1919.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to the 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. UPTON:
H.R. 1920.
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. BANKS of Indiana:
H.R. 1921.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.
By Mr. BURGESS:
H.R. 1922.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.
By Mr. CAPUANO:
H.R. 1923.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The War Powers Act—P.L. 93–148; 50 U.S.C. 1541–1548
By Mr. CÁRDENAS:
H.R. 1924.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. CÁRDENAS:
H.R. 1925.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. CÁRDENAS:
H.R. 1926.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. CLAY:
H.R. 1927.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. CONNOLLY:
H.R. 1928.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 1 and Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. CRIST:
H.R. 1929.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois:
H.R. 1930.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. DOGGETT:
H.R. 1931.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. DOGGETT:
H.R. 1932.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:
H.R. 1933.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, 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.
Under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, 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 the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof
By Mr. GALLAGHER:
H.R. 1934.
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,
By Mr. GALLAGHER:
H.R. 1935.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 6, Clause 1: The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treaasury of the United State.
By Mr. GALLAGHER:
H.R. 1936.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 5: Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings,

By Mr. GARRETT:
H.R. 1937.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. GARRETT:
H.R. 1938.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. GRIFFITH:
H.R. 1939.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. GRIJALVA:
H.R. 1940.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.
By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:
H.R. 1941.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 8, cl. 4
U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 8, cl. 3
U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 8, cl. 11–16
U.S. Const. art. I, sec. 8, cl. 18
By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:
H.R. 1942.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. KING of Iowa:
H.R. 1943.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. LATTA:
H.R. 1944.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2
The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations and among the several States
By Mr. LATTA:
H.R. 1945.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2
The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States
Amendment II
A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.
By Mr. LEWIS of Georgia:
H.R. 1946.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.
By Mr. LEWIS of Georgia:
H.R. 1947.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.
By Mrs. LOVE:
H.R. 1948.
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 Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:
H.R. 1949.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania:
H.R. 1950.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8
By Mr. O'HALLERAN:
H.R. 1951.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. O'ROURKE:
H.R. 1952.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 4 of Article I of the Constitution:
Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.
By Mr. PAULSEN:
H.R. 1953.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8 grants Congress the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.
By Ms. PINGREE:
H.R. 1954.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 1, Article 8—The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes; duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States
By Mr. REED:
H.R. 1955.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8
By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:
H.R. 1956.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Ms. SÁNCHEZ:
H.R. 1957.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article One, section 8, clause 18:
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 of Officer thereof.
By Mr. SHERMAN:
H.R. 1958.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I; Section 8; Clause 3 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have the Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes,
By Ms. SINEMA:
H.R. 1959.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1. Section 8.
By Ms. SLAUGHTER:
H.R. 1960.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Article I, Section 8.
By Mr. STEWART:
H.R. 1961.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 allows that ''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.''
By Mr. TIBERI:
H.R. 1962.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I
By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ:
H.R. 1963.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. WILLIAMS:
H.R. 1964.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3—''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes''
By Mr. KING of Iowa:
H.J. Res. 94.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article V of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 60: Mr. LANCE and Ms. MENG.
H.R. 179: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 282: Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 305: Mr. PANETTA, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. KEATING, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. ESPAILLAT.
H.R. 367: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 392: Mr. TIBERI, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 432: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 490: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.
H.R. 496: Mr. STEWART and Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 502: Mr. RASKIN, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 620: Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 635: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 659: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 662: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 676: Mr. SARBANES, Ms. TITUS, Ms. MENG, Mr. CORREA, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 721: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 739: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 741: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 747: Mrs. TORRES and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 788: Mr. STEWART and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 804: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 807: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 896: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 899: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 927: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 953: Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 959: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 997: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 1005: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1017: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 1054: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.
H.R. 1057: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1058: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 1090: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 1116: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 1148: Mr. UPTON and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 1155: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1160: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 1172: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1225: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 1227: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1235: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CLAY, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. CLYBURN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. WALZ, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 1241: Mr. REED.
H.R. 1243: Mr. SUOZZI and Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 1291: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, and Mr. MCEACHIN.
H.R. 1307: Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 1318: Ms. ROSEN and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 1322: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 1380: Mr. DUNN.
H.R. 1404: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. BIGGS, and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1413: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 1419: Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 1468: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1485: Mr. ROYCE of California.
H.R. 1513: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1516: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1544: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. HURD.
H.R. 1551: Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 1566: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1582: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 1587: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. LEE, Ms. MOORE, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1589: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 1623: Mr. COLE and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1626: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 1639: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 1645: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 1648: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. YODER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 1661: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 1676: Mr. ROSKAM, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 1677: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1695: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 1697: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. KATKO, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. COMER, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1698: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1722: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. LONG.
H.R. 1725: Mr. HIGGINS of New York.
H.R. 1762: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 1776: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 1796: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 1815: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1832: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1833: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 1841: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 1870: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1899: Mr. RUSH.
H.J. Res. 1: Mr. GALLAGHER.
H.J. Res. 2: Mr. GALLAGHER.
H.J. Res. 59: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H. Res. 28: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. BOST, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, and Mr. LAHOOD.
H. Res. 31: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. BOST.
H. Res. 129: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. POSEY, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. DESANTIS, and Mr. WITTMAN.
H. Res. 188: Mrs. WAGNER.
H. Res. 199: Mr. GALLEGO and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H. Res. 220: Mr. SIRES and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H. Res. 234: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H. Res. 245: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H. Res. 246: Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. BROWN of Maryland.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF WILLIAM ''BILL'' SMETHERS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of William ''Bill'' Smethers, who passed away on March 31, 2017. Bill was a wonderful friend and beloved member of our community whose passing is deeply felt. Having known and worked with Bill, I know that he will be greatly missed. He touched many lives throughout his decades of service to our community.

As a former Santa Clara County Fair Manager, Bill fought to protect the County Fair from being eliminated and continued to advocate for improving the Fair well after leaving his post as manager. His steadfast dedication became an inspiration for others to follow, encouraging them to preserve and continue these Fairs, festivals, and other cultural institutions not only in Santa Clara County but across California.

Most importantly, Bill founded Youth Focus Inc. almost 50 years ago to empower and motivate youth, providing learning opportunities for youth to excel and become future leaders in our community. Through various cultural and educational enrichment programs, Bill and his team at Youth Focus Inc. made a tremendous impact on countless young people by helping them develop skills they needed to become productive and contributing members of our society. His work has left a lasting impression on those who participated in Youth Focus Inc. programs and will continue to be felt by future generations.

Mr. Speaker, our San Jose community mourns the passing of Bill Smethers as we honor his life today. We thank him for his lasting contributions to our community and join his loved ones in celebrating his incredible life.

REINA BAUTISTA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Reina Bautista for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Reina Bautista is a 10th grader at Eagle Ridge Academy and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Reina Bautista is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Reina Bautista for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CHUCK BERRY, THE FATHER OF ROCK N' ROLL

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a legendary American musical genius;

An inaugural member of the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame;

And a former neighbor and friend of the Clay family for six decades . . .

The father of Rock n' Roll; the immortal Chuck Berry.

Mr. Berry, a legendary singer, songwriter and guitarist who created the original American art form that would come to be known as Rock n' Roll, died on March 18 at the age of 90.

He began singing in the Antioch Baptist Church choir in St. Louis when he was just six years old.

In 1952, when jazz pianist Johnnie Johnson lost his saxophonist, Alvin Bennett, to a stroke on Christmas Eve, he called on Mr. Berry to join the Sir John Trio.

The group played at the famed Cosmopolitan Club in East St. Louis. Although he was a new guitarist, Mr. Berry added vocals and showmanship to the group and was soon its leader.

During a 1955 visit to Chicago, legendary Blues man Muddy Waters suggested that Berry should reach out to Leonard Chess at Chess Records.

Mr. Berry sent him four demos; one was his iconic single . . . Maybellene. He got the contract.

The high-octane Maybellene became his first hit single.

As the civil rights movement was awakening the nation to the struggle for justice and equality for African Americans, Chuck Berry's music smashed the color barrier. He was one of the first Black artists to become as popular with white audiences as he was with Black audiences.

In 1958, he did an ode to teenage-hood: Sweet Little Sixteen. It grabbed the No. 1 spot on the R&B chart and No. 2 on the pop chart.

Then came Johnny B. Goode, his anthem that was part autobiography, part tribute to his piano player, Johnny Johnson. It's about a poor country boy with a gift for playing the guitar and dreams of someday seeing his name up in lights ''saying Johnny B. Goode tonight.''

In 1987, his self-titled autobiography was published and the enduring documentary film about his life, Hail! Hail! Rock n' Roll, was released.

Mr. Berry appeared as himself in the 1978 film, American Hot Wax, and performed at the Carter White House in 1979.

A career that transcended hate and racism, and outlasted hardship, began winning long-overdue recognition in the '80s.

In 1985, he received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award and was inducted into the Blues Foundation's Blues Hall of Fame.

In 1986, after more than 40 years in show business, Chuck Berry was inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame as a member of its inaugural class.

Two years later, Chuck Berry received his star on St. Louis' Walk of Fame.

In 2011 . . . a larger than life statue of Mr. Berry was installed near his star, across the street from the world-famous Blueberry Hill on Delmar Boulevard in the heart of my Congressional District.

The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and many other world-class groups owe their success to the innovative genius of Chuck Berry.

Mr. Berry's most recent award, the Polar Music Prize, aptly stated: ''Every riff and solo played by rock guitarists over the last 60 years contains DNA that can be traced right back to Chuck Berry.''

Charles Edward Anderson Berry was born Oct. 18, 1926 in St. Louis' historic Ville neighborhood. He was the fourth of Martha Bell Banks Berry and Henry William Berry Sr.'s six children.

Mr. Berry is survived by his wife, Themetta, and his four children, Ingrid Berry, Melody Eskridge, Aloha Isa Leigh Berry and Charles Berry Jr.

On behalf of the Clay family, I want to express our deepest condolences to our old friends . . . the Berry family.

And on behalf of music fans everywhere, I want to give thanks for the life of this legendary artist . . . whose legacy and unique sound will live on for generations to come.

A true St. Louis legend and an American treasure . . . Chuck Berry.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on April 3, 2017, and April 4, 2017, I was absent from the House and missed Roll Call Votes 209 through 216.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 209, on passage of H. Res. 92, I would have voted Yes.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 210, on passage of H.R. 479, I would have voted Yes.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 211, on ordering the previous question, I would have voted No.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 212, on agreeing to H. Res. 241, I would have voted No.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 213, on ordering the previous question, I would have voted No.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 214, on agreeing to H. Res. 240, I would have voted No.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 215, on the motion to recommit H.R. 1343, I would have voted Yes.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 216, on passage of H.R. 1343, I would have voted No.

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA VETERANS ASSOCIATION'S 2ND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the Northern Virginia Veterans Association's 2nd Anniversary Celebration. NOVA Veterans operates with the mission of supporting local veterans and families through coordination of services and case management until all needs are met. After coordinating resources for the veterans and their families, NOVA Veterans then completes the case by supplying information on local fitness, arts programs, and recreation resources.

NOVA Veterans began supporting veterans and their families in July 2015 and have since supported more than 50 clients and have completed more than 600 hours of case management. The organization has grown to include 42 partners, affiliates, sponsors, and donors. NOVA Veterans has more than 60 individuals who support their mission on an individual level through volunteering and donations and these numbers continue to grow.

NOVA Veterans' comprehensive network of proven local resources creates rapid, efficient, and effective results while also serving as a rally point where former and current military members and military support organizations can team up and serve their community. The multifaceted, inclusive, and collaborative support and care NOVA Veterans gives to our nation's veterans and their families empowers them to become involved in their communities and to improve the health and quality of their lives. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in celebrating NOVA Veterans' second anniversary and to wish them continued success in the future.

TRUMP DIRTY ENERGY EXECUTIVE ORDER

HON. NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, after the hottest recorded year in history, Donald Trump and his Environmental Destruction Agency under Administrator Scott Pruitt will undo more than a decade's worth of progress fighting climate change and protecting public health by seeking to eliminate the Clean Power Plan as we know it.

The Clean Power Plan which seeks to reduce carbon pollution from fossil-fueled power plants by more than 30 percent, was the biggest action the United States had ever taken to reduce carbon pollution, the main source driving climate change. It was also the lynchpin of the Paris Climate Agreement which brought countries from all over the world together for the first time to combat climate change.

By weakening the Clean Power Plan and retreating as the world's leader in combating climate change, the Trump Administration is giving away the ever-growing clean energy economy to China.

Contrary to President Trump's assertions, these actions will not bring back coal-mining jobs in Appalachia as natural gas continues to be more economically competitive than coal, the main reason for coal's demise.

The climate gap, the sometimes hidden and often-unequal impact of climate change on people of color and the poor, is real and only getting worse. Climate change disproportionately impacts minority and low-income communities like those in my district, especially with respect to heat waves, air quality and extreme weather events.

Low-income and minority communities in the inner city are more susceptible to the ''heat island'' effect where temperatures are magnified by concrete and asphalt. Reports have shown that African Americans living in Los Angeles are twice as likely to die as other Angelenos during a heat wave.

One of my top priorities is the issue of environmental justice—people should not breathe dirtier air simply because of their income or what they look like. As a United States Congresswoman for California's 44th congressional district, I will do everything I can to ensure clean air, water and lands for vulnerable populations.

TRIBUTE TO GARY BOSWELL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Gary Boswell. Gary was honored by the Adams Community Chamber of Commerce with the Agriculturalist of the Year Award at their annual banquet on January 26, 2017.

Gary is currently a member and board member of the Adams County Farm Bureau, and is secretary for the Southwest Iowa Egg Cooperative Board. He was selected as Southwest Iowa Region 8 Conservation Farmer of the Year and is currently a member of the Iowa Cattleman Association, Iowa Soybean Association and the American Soybean Association.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Gary for receiving this outstanding award and for his continued commitment to the agriculture community. I am proud to represent him, and Iowans like him, in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Gary and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

ZAIRA GARCIA DE LA CUEVA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Zaira Garcia De La Cueva for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Zaira Garcia De La Cueva is an 11th grader at Northglenn High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Zaira Garcia De La Cueva is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Zaira Garcia De La Cueva for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING ALBERT ''AL'' YANGER ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Albert ''Al'' Yanger on receiving the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year Award for Guam. This award honors an individual on Guam who has fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Al is the Co-Founder and President of Galaide Professional Services, Inc. (GPSI). Galaide Professional Services, Inc. is a Disabled Veteran Owned and SBA HUBZone certified small business providing professional, technical management, administrative and general contracting services for the Federal Government, Government of Guam and clients in the Western Pacific Region.

Al faithfully served in the U.S. Army for 22 years and retired as the Division Chief of Intelligence at the Pentagon. He then joined the private sector and worked for the Native American Industrial Distributers, Inc. Al recognized there was a need for the services he was providing with NAID in his home island of Guam and returned to the island in 2010. Together with his partner and fellow veteran Frankie Dumanal, Al launced Galaide Professional Services Inc. in December 2010. The company specializes in program/project management consulting with core competencies in the information technology sector. GPSI Guam works diligently with the Department of Defense Small Business representatives on Guam and has helped build the confidence of

federal and local buyers to use local Veteran/Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses. Additionally, GPSI Guam is committed to using other Veteran/Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses as subcontractors. GPSI Guam supports Joint Region Marianas, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force small business programs and the University of Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center and Small Business Development Center. GPSI Guam is also a strong supporter of the Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve through financial donation and recruiting through the ESGR office. Half of GPSI Guam's work force is proudly made up of retired military or active guard and reserve members.

Al and GPSI Guam are also active in the island community. GPSI Guam is a member of the Guam Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber's Small Business and Armed Forces Committees. They are also members of the Guam Contractor's Association and Guam Visitors Bureau.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Albert "Al" Yanger on his selection as the SBA's 2017 Veteran Small Business Champion for Guam. I commend him for his many contributions to our island and community.

HONORING THE CARTHAGE HIGH SCHOOL BULLDOGS, 2016 CLASS 4-A, DIVISION I STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, nestled in the eastern portion of the First District of Texas is a community which is home to the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame, known as the Gas Capital of the United States, and also home to the Texas state champions of the high school gridiron for 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2013. Once again we have the great honor to recognize the accomplishments of the Carthage Bulldogs football team which has captured the title of Class 4A Division I Texas State Football Champions for the fifth time in the school's history.

The title match found the Abilene Wylie Bulldogs meeting the Carthage Bulldogs on the turf to tangle for the state championship bragging rights, with the Carthage team emerging victorious and a final score of 31–17. The Carthage Bulldogs displayed great resilience and commitment throughout their season, and it is indeed an honor to bring these outstanding athletes to national attention and retention in our national record. The life lessons learned about teamwork, perseverance, and discipline will no doubt improve every participant in immeasurable ways.

My heartfelt congratulations to champions Ashton Hicks, Jesus Jimenez, Keilinn Shelton, Davian Parker, Dee Bowens, Baylor Colle, Mason Graham, Felipe Ponce, Mekhi Colbert, Greg Hurst, Jase Dixon, Macain Jones, Dewaylon Ingram, Cole Whitlock, Josh Gradberg, Darrian Ingram, Elijah King, Tristan Boniol, Jace Tiller, Brandon Medrano, Roderic Calloway, Austin Russell, Gunner Capps, Austin Gray, Chris Attaway, James Ebarb, Cam'ron Matlock, Peyton Bickham, Nick Moore, Jaden Smith, Dayquan Woodard, Nate Brittenham, Logan Baker, Christian McClure, Freeman Thomas, Jaime Gonzalez, Kason Davis, Kevion Booty, Grant Griffin, Jesse Wayne Pierce, Brewster Griffith, Hunter Gauger, Chad West, Callam Barber, Terrance Lewis, J.T. Romero, Tyler Lewis, Demetrius Cooper, Mykel Gates, Casey Jones, Tucker Smith, Tanner Elliott, Jose Dejulian, Brandon Collier, Keaontay Ingram, Tykieast Crawford, Montario Wilson, Dillon Ebarb, Kaden Holcomb, Peyton Monroe, Trevonte Alexander, Matt Davis, Kelvontay Dixon, Tre Gatlin, Jalen Brooks, Alberto Sigala, Callahan Baldree.

No matter how talented and committed, no team could achieve such success without a head coach of extraordinary vision and ability who could lead the Bulldogs to success both on and off the field. Scott Surratt has earned an unprecedented five state titles in his ten year career as head coach for the Carthage Bulldogs, placing him in the prestigious position of being one of the most successful Texas high school football coaches of all time.

The Bulldogs are a perfect representation of what can be accomplished when a team possesses both perseverance and resolve with proper guidance from the entire coaching and support staff. Congratulations are extended to Assistant Coaches: Darren Preston, Kevin Davis, Lee Berry, Zeke Dixon, Clint Endsley, John Goodwin, Brandon Hargers, Demond Horsley, Ryan Marion, Dennis McLaughlin, Jim Milstead, Mike Morgan, Josh Ross, Charlie Tucker, James Watson; Junior High Coaches: Paul Bishop, Art Horton, Jeff Griffin, Bryan Stacy, Damon Roberts; Athletic Trainer: Derek Reed; Athletic Secretary: Mamie Vanover; and the Student Assistants: Mynaisa Bowman, Tara Sells, Serena Rascoe, Neece Pellum, Kayleigh McCormick, Ebonae Maxwell, Devan Hudman, Hunter Gray, Leticia Gonzalez, Austin Buchanan, Caleb Randall.

A team and its coaches cannot soar to the heights of becoming champions without the encouragement and full support of the school itself, starting at the top with Superintendent: Dr. Glenn Hambrick; High School Principal: Otis Amy; and Assistant Principals: Pat Browning & Wade Watson.

It is truly an incalculable honor to pay tribute to this sensationally astounding group of young people who became so much more than the sum total of the team's individual parts. They magnificently represent the very best of the Carthage community and the entire First District of Texas.

May God continue to bless these young people, along with their families, friends and neighbors in Carthage, Texas. It is a tremendous honor to congratulate the 2016 State Football Champion Carthage Bulldogs, as their legacy is now preserved in the United States Congressional Record which will endure as long as there is a United States of America.

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID J. FURNESS

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express appreciation for an outstanding Marine, Brigadier General David J. Furness, who has directly supported the Armed Services Committees, this House, and the Congress at-large as the Legislative Assistant to the Commandant. Over the years, I have worked with him on a variety of issues. In each and every case, his focus has been improving our nation's security and bettering of the lives of Marines stationed around the world.

General Furness has been the Legislative Assistant to the Commandant since 2013. In that time he has served two Administrations, three Commandants, and four Secretaries of Defense. Through it all, General Furness has delivered a steady message focused on Marines and what the Marine Corps requires to remain our nation's force-in-readiness. As the Corps dealt with the consequences of the Budget Control Act, continuing resolutions, and inadequate funding, General Furness helped Members of Congress and our staffs understanding the real world consequences. He is known for his candor, responsiveness, and passion for his country and the Corps.

A big part of the reason that General Furness has been able to describe clearly the challenges facing the Marine Corps is his experience in command. He has led Marines in combat since he was a Second Lieutenant, where he served in Panama. He has also served multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2010, he was the Commander of the 1st Marine Regiment in Helmand Province, when operations in Southwestern Afghanistan were a principal line of effort and the coalition accomplished significant gains in the counter-insurgency mission.

General Furness is now returning to the operating forces where he will assume command of the Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa. I have no doubt that he will serve our Nation well in this challenging assignment.

This deployment will be the 11th of General Furness' career. Through all of them, his wife Lynda has been by his side. From coast-to-coast moves and years of separation, Lynda has raised four children—David, Elizabeth, Ben and Zachary. She truly is a testament to the reality that it is not just our service members, but also their families, who sacrifice for the safety of us all.

In thanking General Furness for his service thus far, I know that I join all our colleagues in wishing him and his family fair winds and following seas as he moves to the next phase of his career.

TRIBUTE TO A NOISE WITHIN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague, Representative JUDY CHU, rise today to honor A Noise Within, a classic theater company of Pasadena, California upon its twenty-fifth anniversary.

A Noise Within (ANW) was established in 1991 by Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott with the goal of performing classic theater as a vital means of enriching the community by embracing universal human experiences, expanding personal awareness, and challenging individual perspectives.

At a period when classical theater was seldom performed in the area, ANW's first production was Hamlet. Initially performing in a small theater in a former Masonic Temple in Glendale and funded by the founders, ANW flourished for nearly twenty years, garnering praise for its artistic excellence. After an effective capital campaign, ANW built a permanent home in east Pasadena, California in 2011.

A Noise Within performs in a rotating repertory manner to general and student audiences, reaching an audience of around thirty-five thousand people each season with one hundred-fifty shows of seven timeless classic plays, and has the distinction of being the only year-round classical repertory theater in Southern California. Dedicated to making great classic literature come to life for our youth, with its Our Classics Live! Education Program, ANW serves 16,000 students every season, with some level of subsidy for each student participant.

I ask all Members to join Congresswoman CHU and me in recognizing A Noise Within upon their twenty-fifth anniversary, and for their outstanding service and significant contributions to the arts in the greater Pasadena area.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTRALITY OF THE U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONSHIP TO THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, as Major General Ahmed Hassan Mohammed Asseri made clear in a recent op-ed, the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia is central to the fight against terror. Together our two countries are responding to the serious threat from ''Da'esh'' (ISIS) and other terrorist groups, Iran's continued support of terrorism, and the violent messages of religious extremism emanating from some quarters of the Middle East.

Gen. Asseri's support for intelligence-sharing is a clear recognition that countering these threats goes beyond the battlefield. We are appreciative of Saudi efforts to block the flow of funding to terrorists, weakening their capacity to perpetrate atrocities against innocents around the world. We note with enthusiasm efforts by Saudi Arabia to counter the messages of violent extremism that draw vulnerable young people into the grasp of these terrible groups and applaud efforts to address the challenge of rehabilitating convicted terrorists.

We are hopeful that the Saudi-led Islamic Coalition Against Terrorism will play an increasingly important role in both the fight against ISIS and efforts to push back against Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. Nowhere is this more relevant than in Yemen, where Saudi Arabia has suffered both military and civilian casualties. It is imperative to push Iranian influence out of Yemen, expedite humanitarian assistance to Yemenis suffering through this conflict, and develop a coherent, long-term political framework through which the country can move forward.

The United States values Saudi Arabia as a partner, and we are committed to working together in the fight against terror.

I include in the RECORD the recent editorial by General Asseri.

[From FoxNews.com, March 26, 2017]

MY COUNTRY SUPPORTS AMERICA'S TOUGH STANCE AGAINST ISIS, TERROR, AND IRAN

(By Ahmed Hassan Mohammed Asseri)

Published March 26, 2017 (FoxNews.com)

Leaders from 68 countries gathered in Washington for a meeting of the Global Coalition to Counter Daesh (ISIL) hosted by President Trump's administration this past week.

Saudi Arabia welcomes the new administration's attention to the Middle East and its support for America's friends who are fighting back against transnational terrorists such as Daesh and pushing back against Iranian interference in countries such as Yemen.

As Americans would say, ''You've got our back.'' And America's support is indispensable as we stand together against a host of threats to regional stability.

While meeting with Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—an architect of our country's economic, social, and governmental reforms—at the White House recently, President Trump enthusiastically endorsed the modernization drive that will make our country an even more valuable strategic partner. Similarly, our government welcomes the United States' long-standing support of the Saudi defense forces.

The new administration is also toughminded about the Iranian threat to regional stability, which was magnified by the recent nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers, including the United States.

Defense Secretary James Mattis and CIA director Mike Pompeo each describe Iran as the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, while Vice President Mike Pence has called the nuclear agreement ''a terrible deal.''

Saudi Arabia is prepared to work with the United States and its allies to restrain Iranian conduct, just as we have helped to stabilize the Arabian Gulf and its energy supplies since World War II. While the US–Saudi partnership is time-tested, reaffirming this relationship is a matter of strategy, not sentiment. Since the Global Coalition's founding three years ago, Saudi Arabia has been an active partner from Day One, including sending fighter jets to the Incirlik airbase in southern Turkey to join the US-led air campaign against Daesh in Syria.

On the financial front, Saudi Arabia works closely with the United States to cut off funding for Daesh and Al Qaeda. Through real-time information-sharing, we cooperate with the United States to shut down the flow of funds from western banks to Middle Eastern extremists.

To ensure that charitable contributions don't subsidize terrorism, we prohibit Saudi mosques and aid organizations from transferring money outside our country.

We have also taken strong steps to stop unauthorized shipments of military equipment from leaving Saudi Arabia and to prevent people from crossing our borders to join Daesh in Iraq or Syria.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is mobilizing the Muslim world against the extremist threat to our religion. Under Saudi leadership, the 41-nation Islamic Coalition is equipping our countries to fight violent extremists by training our security forces and sharing information and intelligence.

Last March, in the largest joint military exercise ever in the Middle East, some 350,000 soldiers, 20,000 tanks and 2,500 warplanes from 20 countries joined together in ''war games'' in the Saudi desert to jointly train our security forces for operations against non-state armed groups.

Turning from the battlefields to the battle of ideas, the Islamic Coalition is encouraging educators and scholars as well as religious and political leaders to raise their voices against those who preach violence. Moreover, Saudi Arabia has created a center which operates 24/7 to analyze social media to identify and track terrorist efforts to recruit and activate new followers.

But non-state armed groups and radical preachers aren't the only threats. By conducting ballistic missile tests last month and meddling in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, the Sinai Peninsula and even the Gulf States, Iran is imperiling the stability of our region. Even more disturbingly, Iran is sharing ballistic missile technology with the extremist Houthi militia in Yemen and similar groups in other countries, thereby imperiling the security of the entire region.

In Yemen, which shares a 1,100-mile border with Saudi Arabia, Iran is supporting and arming the Houthi militia, modeled on the terrorist Hezbollah movement that has destabilized Lebanon. While making Yemen ungovernable, the Houthis are attacking Saudi Arabia, having fired more than 40,000 mortars, rockets and other projectiles at our towns, killing at least 375 civilians, closing more than 500 schools and displacing 24 villages and over 17,000 people.

In January, three Houthi suicide boats rammed a Saudi frigate off the western coast, killing two crew members and injuring three others.

Responding to this threat, Saudi Arabia leads a coalition of 12 countries fighting to reinstate Yemen's legitimate, internationally recognized government and restore peace and security to the country.

To be sure, Saudi Arabia prefers to promote stability through peaceful means, as we do by providing much-needed diplomatic and economic support to strategic allies such as Egypt and Jordan. But aggression, active destabilization and acts of terrorism, including Iran's infringements in Yemen, demand a military response.

From the Cold War through the War on Terror, the U.S. has helped Saudi Arabia strengthen our defenses through joint military training exercise and ballistic defensive weapons sales, making our country the largest customer of U.S. military equipment.

Today, we're working with the United States and its allies to defeat Daesh, Al Qaeda and Iranian-sponsored extremism and expansionism.

We stand shoulder-to-shoulder for a secure and stable Middle East in a peaceful and prosperous world.

(Major General Ahmed Hassan Mohammad Asseri is an adviser to Saudi Arabia's Defense Minister.)

CONDEMNING NORTH KOREA'S DEVELOPMENT OF MULTIPLE INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 3, 2017

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 92, condemning North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile and nuclear weapons program.

I am pleased to cosponsor this resolution, which reaffirms the U.S. commitment to security on the Korean Peninsula.

It is undeniable that North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs have accelerated in recent years. In 2016 alone, the regime conducted two nuclear tests and more than 20 missile tests.

In its most recent test, North Korea simultaneously launched four intermediate-range ballistic missiles toward the Sea of Japan, three of which landed within Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

In response to the threat emanating from Pyongyang, the United States and South Korea made a joint decision to deploy the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system to protect South Korean security and alliance military forces.

Once deployment is completed, THAAD will provide upgraded ballistic missile defense capabilities on the Korean Peninsula.

This resolution urges China to cease its attempts to block THAAD and calls upon Beijing to pressure the North Korean regime to dismantle its weapons programs.

Importantly, H. Res. 92 calls on the United States to both enforce sanctions on North Korea and to undertake a rigorous diplomatic effort to urge the global community to fully enforce international sanctions on North Korea.

The Korean Peninsula remains one of the most dangerous flashpoints on the globe.

Navigating this complex web of regional stakeholders will require patient and committed U.S. leadership to avert the ever-present potential of conflict.

I ask that my colleagues support this resolution, which demonstrates our commitment to halting the regime's destabilizing provocations.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOODLAND HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th Anniversary of Woodland High School.

Woodland School was organized in 1917. It was the first consolidated school in Randolph County. It formed when Lamar, Cross Line, and New Site consolidated to form the school.

The original school building consisted of a hall and five classrooms. Ten grades were taught there until 1928.

The school will be celebrating the centennial with a ceremony on April 27, 2017. During the celebration, a time capsule will be sealed to be opened in 2042. Each grade will participate by contributing something for the time capsule.

Woodland High School is beloved by its community, and many of its teachers are alumni who have returned to give back to the community that built them up.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating Woodland's 100th Anniversary and in wishing them many more.

IN RECOGNITION OF POLICE CHIEF KEVIN SANZENBACHER

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Police Chief Kevin Sanzenbacher of the City of Winchester which is located in the 10th Congressional District of Virginia, and, as he nears retirement, ask that our colleagues join me in thanking him for his extraordinary service to the Winchester community and to our nation. After spending most of his career in various public safety positions in Maryland, Kevin Sanzenbacher became the Chief of Police of the City of Winchester in November of 2008, and in eight remarkable years, he has led the department to a new level of public service and professionalism.

As a strong advocate of community policing, Chief Sanzenbacher set the example for his officers by constantly being a part of the community, extending himself beyond what would be expected of a police chief by taking on responsible roles in charitable organizations such as the United Way and participating in community meetings to learn from average citizens how they and the police could work together to make their neighborhoods more safe. As a proactive leader, Chief Sanzenbacher also implemented a Teen Night at the Youth Development Center and a Teen Citizen's Academy to develop a closer bond between law enforcement and young people and give them a good place to spend some time each week. He also responded to society's challenge of dealing with the mentally ill, by assigning officers to the City's award-winning Community Response Team that has developed personal relationships of trust with the mentally ill citizens of the city.

In response to the devastating impact of the heroin epidemic, Chief Sanzenbacher organized a variety of informational meetings about the epidemic, including one that I requested, and played a leading role in establishing the Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition and the Drug Court that has followed. He also took action to establish a partnership with the local chapter of the NAACP to deal with a police incident that divided the community and to develop greater long-term harmony among various racial groups.

As a champion of greater professionalism for his officers, Chief Sanzenbacher led the effort to attain accreditation by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice in 2009 and to be reaccredited in 2013; he took the lead in forming the first Winchester Police Department Honor Guard in 2014; he implemented a standardized fitness testing program for all sworn officers through which all were declared "fit for duty"; he managed to obtain a grant for the purchase of body-worn cameras and he created defensive tactics training and fitness rooms for the employees of the Department. In 2009, Chief Sanzenbacher, Jim Wilkins, Jr. and other community leaders started the Winchester/Frederick County Law Enforcement Foundation in order to provide funding for National Night Out, Kids and Cops Camp, law enforcement training and scholarships for worthy students.

Chief Sanzenbacher is the first to acknowledge that his many accomplishments were the result of efforts of his entire team of capable, energetic professionals, yet, despite his self-effacing humility, there is no doubt that it took his special quality of leadership to accomplish these things. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in honoring and thanking Police Chief Kevin Sanzenbacher for his extraordinary contributions to the City of Winchester and to our nation, and in wishing him and his wife, Estelle, great success and happiness in the next chapter of their lives.

TRIBUTE TO JILL AND LARRY HAMMITT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jill and Larry Hammitt of Minden, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They were married on January 28, 1967 in Missouri Valley, Iowa.

Jill and Larry's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th Anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

CONGRATULATING KATHLEEN THOMAS BENAVENTE ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 HOME-BASED BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Kathleen Thomas Benavente on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Home-Based Business Champion of the Year Award for Guam. This award honors individuals who have experienced the rewards and difficulties of owning a home-based business and have worked voluntarily to improve the climate for other home-based businesses.

Kathleen is the Founder and President of The Occasion-Event Coordination and Decorating Co. Kathleen started the business as a side job to supplement her family's household expenses ten years ago and it grew into a fulltime success. Kathleen has since created over 200 events for people from all walks of life. Kathleen has always been known to have talent for organizing creative and successful events and was encouraged by friends and family to charge for her services. Kathleen and her family made substantial sacrifices and worked as the first employees to get the business going and they began to grow from word

of mouth referrals. In 2011, Kathleen took a year off from the business for reflection after her foster mother passed away. She used the time to take a class at the University of Guam Small Business Development Center and began to make changes. Kathleen changed the name of the business and created a website for the business. She also sought out a long time event planner to be her mentor. In 2015, she began to see profits and she now employs 8 part time employees and purchases supplies from local companies. Additionally, Kathleen uses the knowledge and tools she has gained from the University of Guam's Small Business Development Center and the Pacific Island Network SBDC in her business and shares them with her employees and networks.

Kathleen is also an active member of our community. Inspired by her experience as a foster child from the age of 4 to 16, Kathleen is now the President of Guam Foster Families Association. Kathleen is also the Vice-President of Soroptimist International Guam working to transform the life of women and girls. She has also served as a board member of Payu-ta, Guam's umbrella organization of non-governmental organizations since 2011.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Kathleen Thomas Benavente on her selection as the SBA's 2017 Home-Based Business Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

RECOGNIZING HALL COUNTY VETERANS

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize five residents of Hall County who left school to serve their nation in foreign wars and who have recently received honorary high school diplomas from the district. On March 27 at Gainesville First Baptist Church, Larry Dean Martin, Jimmy Arnold Thompson, James Curtis Reed, Lee M. Cain and Jerry Harold Peck received the diplomas they had previously sacrificed in order to fight for their county.

Hall County Schools Superintendent Will Schofield commended these men for contributing to a number of initiatives in the Hall County community, including handing out Constitutions and participating in an educational veteran graduation ceremony.

Mr. Martin and Mr. Thompson attended East Hall High School, Mr. Cain and Mr. Peck attended North Hall High School, and Mr. Reed attended Johnson High School. Mr. Cain served during WWII, while the other men all fought in Vietnam.

Although the many years have passed since their military service, Mr. Schofield says that the men are gratified to be recognized by their community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize these Georgians for their selfless service and their community involvement. They deserve our recognition and the diplomas that have been awarded to them because they chose to put others before themselves in our nation's time of need.

TAIWAN CAUCUS LETTER

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 38th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the pillar upon which our robust friendship with Taiwan stands.

The United States and Taiwan share the common interests and values of freedom, democracy, rule of laws, human rights and free market. Our security commitment has helped Taiwan become one of the most free and prosperous societies in the world. The United States enjoys cooperation with Taiwan on a broad range of concerns, including security, economic cooperation and development, global engagement, humanitarian relief, counter-terrorism, people-to-people exchanges—and the list goes on. It is my firm belief that a strong and prosperous Taiwan will guarantee peace and prosperity in the region.

As we commemorate the 38th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, it is in the national interest of the United States to take decisive action to strengthen U.S.-Taiwan relations.

I also noticed that the President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping is visiting the United States to visit with our President. It is my hope that the upcoming meeting is positive and constructive: U.S. engagement with the PRC is important to the peace and stability of the region. We should always hope and insist that the U.S.-Taiwan relations, and Taiwan's security and interests, are not in any way compromised.

Taiwan is a great friend of the United States. Taiwan is and will continue to be a friend of the United States.

RECOGNIZING JOHN ALBAN FINCH

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of John Alban Finch.

Fifty years ago today, on April 5, 1967, a fire broke out at Cornell Heights Residential Club, an off-campus student dormitory in Ithaca, New York. The fire claimed the lives of eight students and one professor from Cornell University.

Mr. Finch was the professor who perished in the fire. On the night of the tragedy, he immediately took action by awakening his neighbors in the building and calling the Cornell Safety Division. Despite heavy smoke, Mr. Finch ran back into the building to help other occupants escape to safety. A total of 62 people escaped the fire, many of whom attributed their survival to Mr. Finch's heroic and selfless actions. Tragically, Mr. Finch did not survive.

Mr. Finch gave his life to save those in need—the true definition of a hero.

Mr. Finch was an assistant professor and faculty advisor for the Ph.D. program at Cornell University. He originally came to Cornell in 1960 as a graduate student on a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. Mr. Finch earned a master's degree in 1961 and a Ph.D. in 1964. The following year, he began working as an Assistant Professor of English and an instructor in the English honors program. Mr. Finch was a distinguished scholar and highly valued faculty member.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of John Alban Finch and recognizing his lifelong commitment to serving others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote numbers 209, 210, 211, 212, 213 and 214. Had I been present, I would have voted aye on votes 209, 210, 215 and 216. I would have voted nay on votes 211, 212, 213, and 214.

HONORING JOSEPH KOLB

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Joseph Kolb, a native Chicagoan, who is set to retire after a lengthy and illustrious career in law enforcement.

Mr. Kolb began his career in 1983 as a Deputy Sheriff with the Cook County Sheriff's Department. In 1987, Mr. Kolb began his federal government service career with the former United States Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) and during his tenure was promoted to the rank of the Assistant Port Director for INS at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, Illinois.

When Congress created the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in March of 2003, Mr. Kolb was selected by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) Assistant Commissioner in Washington, D.C. as the interim Assistant Director for Immigration Policy and Programs at the Chicago Field Office. His vast knowledge of immigration law and policies combined with experienced leadership skills proved invaluable during the creation and implementation of the newly created agency.

Assigned as the Chief CBP Officer Program Manager for Admissibility Passenger and Programs, Mr. Kolb served as a subject matter expert, administering admissibility and immigration policy, managing and developing admissibility programs for the Chicago Field Office 12 state area.

He also performed the important role of liaison to the Foreign Consular Corp, Immigration Law Advocate groups, Community Based Organizations, U.S. Department of State, FBI, City of Chicago and Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

Later, Mr. Kolb was assigned to Washington, D.C. for CBP and DHS Headquarters to author and administer national immigration policy, as well as provide guidance to the field. This latter task involved contributing to a number of national programs along with writing recommendations to Congress regarding special projects.

Mr. Kolb's long career took him to international posts throughout the world, working with the U.S. Department of State and DHS Headquarters in London, Amsterdam, Rome, Dublin, Helsinki and Tallinn, Estonia.

For his outstanding service, Mr. Kolb was nominated in 2016 by the Chicago Federal Executive Board as Employee of the Year.

Mr. Kolb graduated from Gordon Technical High School and holds a Law Enforcement degree from Oakton College. In 2001, he received the Alumni of the Year Award from Oakton College.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Kolb's distinguished service to our country and his exemplary career as a law enforcement official.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN ROSS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kevin Ross of Minden, Iowa, for being named the Iowa Delegate to the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CADET). Kevin will represent Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

CADET was originally organized in 1982. According to the Neola Gazette, ''the organization works closely with the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and advocates for support of the land grant university food and agricultural research, extension, and teaching programs that enhance the quality of life.'' Kevin holds a degree in agricultural studies, operates the Ross Land & Cattle LLC, a family farm and cow-calf operation, and is a licensed crop insurance agent. Kevin serves on the board of Iowa Energy, LLC, the National Corn Growers Association Board, and the West Pottawattamie County Extension Council.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Kevin on his many years of dedicated service to the agriculture community. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kevin for his accomplishments and in wishing him and his family nothing but the best.

RECOGNIZING DERRICK MUNA QUINATA ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Derrick Muna Quinata on being awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Small Business Person of the Year Award for Guam. Derrick is being honored and recognized as an individual who has demonstrated outstanding skills, savviness, and ability to create success in the small business community. He holds a degree in Business Administration from the University of Guam and is a Masters of Business Administration candidate with the University of Phoenix. Derrick is currently the President of Monster Auto Corp dba Guam Autospot, a family-owned automobile dealership that he built from the ground up.

Derrick opened Guam Autospot in 2008 after working in the automobile industry for several years. Derrick dreamt of owning his own dealership as a young child accompanying his mother to work selling cars. Additionally, Derrick successfully negotiated with General Motors to be named the exclusive distributor for Buick GMC for Guam and the CNMI. He is one of the youngest General Motors franchise holders in the nation. Guam Autospot is also an authorized Mitsubishi Dealer for Guam. In just eight years, Guam Autospot has grown from an operation with five vehicles on consignment to becoming a major competitor in Guam's automobile industry. Since its humble beginnings in 2008, Guam Autospot has grown to have a net profit of $1.7 million, and much of its growth can be attributed to their use of social media, technology, community outreach and customer engagement.

In particular, a hallmark of Derrick's business philosophy has been his commitment to Guam and the region by hiring local and supporting philanthropic initiatives that strengthen our communities. He was recently featured as one of Guam Business Journal's 40 under 40 who are making their mark in the Guam business community. Additionally, Derrick is a member of Dukduk Goose, Inc. Foundation that produces a local children television show that teaches children the Chamorro language and culture.

Derrick is a successful business man and family man. He is a leader in our local community and a role model for others in the private business sector. Derrick and his company are committed to Guam and the region, and to improving the community through hiring local and boosting the economy. Derrick proudly supports the local workforce and currently employs 165 people. Backed by the sustained growth of his business over the years, I look forward to continued success for him and our entire community.

I congratulate Derrick on receiving the 2017 U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Person of the Year Award for Guam. I join the people of Guam in commending him on this award and thanking him for his many contributions to our island community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATOMAS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th Anniversary of the Natomas Unified School District. As staff, families, and community members gather to celebrate this momentous occasion, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding school district and all that it has accomplished over the past 25 years.

On March 5th in 1991, the Natomas community overwhelmingly voted in support of a proposed Natomas Unified School District. It is hard to believe that 25 years have passed since July 1992, when the Natomas Unified School District officially was born. Today, the Natomas Unified School District serves over 15,000 students and their families in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The school district now offers countless programs and services that help students be successful in school and ultimately graduate college and enter the workforce.

I have seen firsthand the incredible impact the Natomas Unified School District has on our community. For 25 years, the dedicated staff of the Natomas Unified School District has carefully selected qualified and passionate teachers, involved the community in the education process, and worked tirelessly to meet the needs of students. These staff and teachers help create a safe and welcome learning environment for their students, and that important work truly has a positive impact on our community as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, as the Natomas Unified School District and the community it serves gather to celebrate the District's 25th Anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring 25 years of providing high quality education for children and adults in Natomas.

ARTHUR C. BUTLER'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. NEAL P. DUNN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Arthur C. Butler, Sr. of Lake City, Florida who turns 100 years old today.

Mr. Butler has led a life of service to this country and represents the best of America. He served as a Technical Sergeant in the 10th Fighter Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps.

In 2015, Mr. Butler was awarded the French Legion of Honor for his role in the liberation of France and the Battle of Rhineland. During his tour he witnessed General Patton and troops march through his base outside Paris on their way to the Battle of the Bulge.

Mr. Butler is also a Knight Chevalier in the French Legion of Honor.

Mr. Butler has been a pillar of the community and a member of the Lake City Lions Club for over 60 years.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Mr. Arthur C. Butler a Happy 100th Birthday and thanking him for his service to our great country.

THE RETIREMENT OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEF MARC BASHOOR

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my gratitude and congratulations to an outstanding public servant and firefighter, who

has been truly a gift to the people of Prince George's County, Maryland. Chief Marc Bashoor retired in February after leading the Prince George's County Fire Department for the past six years and following a career in the fire service that has lasted more than three decades. Throughout that time, he has won well-deserved praise from county, state, and national officials for his skill at management and his efforts to streamline operations and provide steady leadership. Chief Bashoor has also received high marks from residents across the county, grateful for the peace of mind that comes with a well-run fire department.

Chief Bashoor, a native of Bowie in Prince George's County, came to the fire service at the young age of sixteen, when he began as a volunteer firefighter there. It was there at Station No. 39 that he met his wife, Laura, a fellow volunteer firefighter. Their wedding celebration prominently included a County fire truck, naturally. Chief Bashoor became a paid firefighter with the Prince George's County Fire Department in 1987 and served until 2004, when he retired and took a job as Director of Homeland Security for Mineral County in West Virginia. Thankfully, Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker was able to convince him to return in 2010 as Fire Chief. I, and so many in my district, am very glad that he did.

During his tenure in office, Chief Bashoor oversaw a major expansion to meet the needs of the growing county. He hired more paid firefighters, recruited more volunteers, purchased more vehicles and equipment, and worked to bring new fire stations online. He advocated for the Department to have a budget increase of 30 percent. It paid off, with response times to emergency calls going down measurably. We cannot even begin to speculate how many lives and properties were saved as a result.

I've been fortunate to work closely with Chief Bashoor throughout his tenure. As a Co-Chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, I've worked to increase F.I.R.E. and S.A.F.E.R. grants and ensure that the Prince George's County Fire Department and departments all across the country have the resources they need to keep their communities and their personnel safe. I've also joined with him to advance the work of ensuring that the families of fallen firefighters receive the benefits they deserve as well as the honor and gratitude they are owed.

Mr. Speaker, our nation counts on dedicated fire service leaders like Chief Bashoor every day, and I join in thanking him and all who work or volunteer on the fire line. I hope my colleagues will join me in wishing Chief Bashoor well in his retirement and in thanking him for his extraordinary service to Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, and our nation.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF DOROTHY A. SMITH

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I recognize the significant and rich life of a beloved woman, Dorothy A. Smith. Mrs. Smith was a religious woman, whose dedication to the many churches and communities she was a part of in her life was outweighed only by her constant warmth.

She was born on August 11, 1930 in Meridian, Mississippi to her parents, Otis and Maggie. Dorothy was one of eight children. She married Edward in Meridian, MS on February 8, 1948 and they had 6 children from this union. She was educated in the public schools in New Orleans, LA. She worked for the Department of the Army for 40+ years when she retired as a Hospital Medical Records Specialist in 1993. She spent the last 15 years as a resident of Wylie, Texas. Dorothy was a member of Secondary Missionary Baptist Church in Junction City, KS, Fifth Street Baptist Church in Meridian, MS; Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Farmersville, TX; and at the time of her death a member of Christ Unveiled Ministries, Garland, TX. Dorothy enjoyed working as a Deaconess, Trustee, Choir Member, and an Usher in the churches she attended. She spent most of her time encouraging Senior citizens and young people to have a better quality of life.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her loving husband, Edward. She will be remembered by her loving children Gloria Richardson of Manhattan, KS; Mae Smith of Bossier City, LA; Edward R. Smith, Jr., Cedar Hill, TX; Audray Lincoln (Charles) of Rowlett, TX; and James Foster, Sr. of Colorado Springs. She is also survived by 20 grandchildren, 63 great grandchildren, 2 great, great grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and many ''adopted kids'' of all ages. She was preceded in death by her son Joseph F. Smith; her daughter Lue E. Foster; her grandchildren Joseph Smith and Tiphanie Lincoln, her sisters Pauline Phillips and Josephine Smith, and her brother Robert Gordon.

Dorothy passed away peacefully on April 1, 2017, and will be missed dearly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I regrettably missed votes on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 that occurred while I was attending a meeting at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call 185 (the motion to recommit H.R. 1101), No on Roll Call 186 (passage of H.R. 1101) and Yes on Roll Call 187 (passage of H.R. 1238).

BILL ORCHARD, REBEL RODRIGUEZ, RANGER AND DOT MILLER, RON SLINGER, BOB DYER, ANDREW HEESAKER, JILL HARTMANN, MADDIE SCHMIDT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Bill Orchard, Rebel Rodriguez, Ranger and Dot Miller, Ron Slinger, Bob Dyer, Andrew Heesaker, Jill Hartmann and Maddie Schmidt for being honored by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce for their service and dedication to the community.

Man of the Year Bill Orchard: The Man of the Year Award is a long standing tradition in Arvada recognizing an outstanding man for his amazing community involvement, generosity and overall impact on Arvada. Bill Orchard is being honored by the Arvada Chamber for his years of dedication and support of the community through Arvada Gardener's, Arvada Festivals Commission, Bike Friendly Arvada and much more.

Woman of the Year Rebel Rodriguez: The Woman of the Year Award is a long standing tradition in Arvada recognizing an outstanding woman for her amazing community involvement, generosity and overall impact on Arvada. Rebel Rodriguez is being honored by the Arvada Chamber for her years of dedication and volunteerism serving children at Ralston House and supporting homelessness efforts in Olde Town Arvada.

Image Award Ranger and Dot Miller: Image Award winners are selected for their commitment to Arvada and the overall positive image they portray within the community. Ranger and Dot Miller are being honored by the Arvada Chamber for their commitment to Arvada through their outstanding community leadership and volunteerism with countless organizations including Jefferson County Business Education Alliance, Arvada Vitality Alliance and Blues and BBQ for Better Housing.

Image Award Ron Slinger: Image Award winners are selected for their commitment to Arvada and the overall positive image they portray within the community. Ron Slinger is being honored by the Arvada Chamber for his commitment to Arvada through his engagement with countless organizations including Arvada Vitality Alliance, AWRSAY, Red Rocks Community College, Arvada Chamber of Commerce and many more.

Pioneer Award Bob Dyer: The Pioneer Award is given to an exceptional leader in the community who has served Arvada for many years and contributed in ways that are unprecedented. This award is only given as needed and is regarded with the highest level of accolades for the recipient's accomplishments. Bob Dyer is being honored by the Arvada Chamber for his incredible commitment to Arvada through civic and community leadership with the City of Arvada, Arvada Vitality Alliance, The Arvada Center For The Arts and Humanities, The Arvada Chamber of Commerce and much more.

AYP Leadership Award Andrew Heesaker: The AYP Leadership Award is based on the selected individuals innovation, entrepreneurship, professional accomplishments and/or community leadership. Andrew Heesaker is being honored by the Arvada Chamber for his extraordinary leadership and volunteerism with organizations including Arvada Chamber of Commerce, Arvada Young Professionals and Arvada Economic Development Association. Andrew also works with countless local nonprofit organizations to support their events and efforts through Arvada Rent Alls.

AYP Leadership Award Jill Hartmann: The AYP Leadership Award is based on the selected individuals innovation, entrepreneurship, professional accomplishments and/or community leadership. Jill Hartman is being honored for her willingness to contribute to her community and provide exceptional Leadership within

the Arvada Chamber of Commerce, Arvada Young Professionals and at Jefferson Center For Mental Health.

Rising Star Award Maddie Schmidt: Each year the Arvada Chamber of Commerce and the Arvada Young Professionals select a High School student who lives or attends school in Arvada who has exemplified extraordinary skills in entrepreneurship, innovation, community impact and leadership. Maddie Schmidt is being honored for her incredible involvement at Pomona High School and in her community through Westminster Youth Advisory panel, Denver Homeless Shelter, Baton Twirling and the Executive High School Internship Program.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Bill Orchard, Rebel Rodriguez, Ranger and Dot Miller, Ron Slinger, Bob Dyer, Andrew Heesaker, Jill Hartmann and Maddie Schmidt for these well-deserved honors by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce and their outstanding commitment to the community.

TRIBUTE TO MARILYN AND LARRY LARSEN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Marilyn and Larry Larsen of Underwood, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They celebrated their anniversary on January 28, 2017.

Marilyn and Larry's lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 50th Anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger, as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion and in wishing them both nothing but the best.

CONGRATULATING GYONGI ''PIKA'' PILAR FEJERAN ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 WOMEN IN BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Gyongi ''Pika'' Pilar Fejeran on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Women in Business Champion for Guam. This award honors an individual on Guam who, as an advocate for women entrepreneurs, has fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership.

Pika graduated from St. John's School in Guam and later from the University of Southern California. She worked as an urban planner and project manager in Pasadena, California before returning home to help fulfill her husband's dream of owning a restaurant.

Pika and Lenny opened Pika's Café in 2010 and in 2015 they opened Kitchen Lingo with their partner Lingo Quichocho. Pika is the President of Pika's Café and Managing Partner/Secretary-Treasurer of Kitchen Lingo. Since entering the Guam restaurant scene six years ago with her husband and business partner, Lenny, they have since inspired a restaurant evolution in Guam. In these short six years, the restaurant space has tripled in size, while opening a second location. Pika's businesses are known for ''buying local'' and are known for preparing food with the freshest ingredients on the island. Pika's success is coupled with her family focused philosophy. Upon opening the first restaurant, Pika and Lenny made a conscious decision to only open for breakfast and lunch Monday through Thursday. They chose to close on Sundays and at dinner throughout the week to ensure they always had time to spend with their three children. Pika is also deeply involved with several community organizations on Guam and is a staunch supporter of women in business. She is a board member of the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce. Pika believes in promoting sustainable economic growth and the development of women to help them integrate into leadership roles. Her service in the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce is evidence of her commitment to supporting the promotion of women in business on the island. Pika was recently nominated by the Guam Business Magazine for the Industry Influencer Award for her restaurants' support of buying from and supporting local farmers and businesses. Pika is also a member of the Imagine Guam Core Values Committee and Policy team, creating a vision and planning for Guam in 2065. She also serves as a Commissioner of the Chamorro Land Trust.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Gyongi ''Pika'' Pilar Fejeran on her selection as the SBA's 2017 Women in Business Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, I was not present for roll call vote 215. If I had been present for this vote, I would have voted: Yea on roll call vote 215.

CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. AUSTIN SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 38th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, key legislation that was signed into law on April 10, 1979.

The Taiwan Relations Act has served as the foundation of U.S.-Taiwan relations for 38 years as Taiwan's democracy has flourished in peace and social harmony. This extraordinary and historic relationship between countries has been possible, to a large extent, because of the passage of the Taiwan Relations Act.

Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit the United States this week. I see the summit between President Trump and President Jinping as a constructive opportunity to continue to build diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China. However, I believe it is imperative that the vital interests of our security partner Taiwan not be marginalized through these meetings.

Taiwan is a great friend of the United States. It is appropriate and just that we continue to value our relationship and honor our commitments made in the Taiwan Relations Act and President Ronald Reagan's ''Six Assurances''.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL RETIREMENT PLANNING WEEK 2017

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Retirement Planning Week. This is the perfect opportunity to remember that planning for retirement is not just an issue for older Americans.

The National Retirement Planning Coalition has consistently provided support and resources to engage people of all ages to encourage them to ensure their financial future is planned and protected. Preserving Americans' access to income options and workplace savings plans will restore and improve our society's financial security.

I am truly grateful for the hard work of everyone who made the events and activities of this week a success in motivating individuals across the country to plan for retirement. In today's economy, it is more important than ever that Americans start saving for retirement early. Through National Retirement Planning Week, the National Retirement Planning Coalition has created an innovative approach designed to help us 'Rethink Retirement.'

National Retirement Planning Week is an important initiative that is sure to have a positive impact on many lives. The educational opportunities throughout this week will provide a foundation for the invaluable asset of early, holistic financial planning.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the National Retirement Planning Coalition for encouraging early and responsible planning, and for working with my colleagues and me to find bipartisan solutions to make it easier to plan for retirement.

HONORING APOSTLE THEODORE THOMAS HERRING, SR. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 40 YEARS IN MINISTRY

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate my constituent, Apostle Theodore Thomas Herring, Sr. for 40 faithful years in the ministry. Apostle Herring has used his ministry to inspire and uplift people for decades. He has honored God and his community in immeasurable ways.

Apostle Herring holds a master's degree in Theology from St. Paul's Bible Institute. He accepted the call to the ministry in April of 1977. On September 1, 1979, he was ordained pastor of Salvation and Deliverance Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. Since his ordination, Apostle Herring has received numerous accolades for his work, including being named Pastor of the Year. He was named an ''Apostle of the Lord'' by the Chief Apostle of the Salvation and Deliverance Churches Worldwide in 2005. Apostle Herring also received an honorary certificate from Governor James B. Hunt for extraordinary services rendered at the Caledonia Correctional Institute.

Salvation and Deliverance Church's first location was a small room in a pool hall located on Main Street in Tarboro. The church's first members were Apostle Herring, his wife, First Lady Evangelist Elizabeth Herring, and their four children. Despite these humble beginnings, Apostle Herring preached diligently every Sunday and utilized the singing talent of his sons to bring in more members.

As time went on, the church began to grow by leaps and bounds. People were drawn to Apostle Herring's dynamic sermons and the church's critically acclaimed Salvation and Deliverance Choir. Under the guidance of Apostle and Evangelist Herring, the SDC Choir won numerous awards from various competitions including the Quaker Oats Voices of Tomorrow Youth Gospel Choir Competition, the Pathmark Gospel Choir Competition, UPN's Most Soulful Gospel Sound, Verizon's How Sweet the Sound Competition, and McDonald's GospelFest. In addition, the SDC choir has shared the stage with gospel artists such as Shirley Caesar, Yolanda Adams, Byron Cage, and Marvin Sapp and released its debut recording, ''More Than Conquerors.''

Mr. Speaker, Apostle Theodore Thomas Herring, Sr. is an inspiring teacher and dynamic minister of the Gospel. His faithful service to God and the ministry deserve of all his previous accolades and those yet to come. I ask my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives to please join me in expressing sincere appreciation for Apostle Herring's faithfulness and extraordinary service to communities across our state and Nation.

RECOGNIZING APRIL 9–22, 2017 AS NATIONAL YOUNG AUDIENCES ARTS-FOR-LEARNING WEEK

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April 9–22, 2017 as National Young Audiences Arts-for-Learning Week. Young Audiences (YA) Arts for Learning was established in 1952 and is the nation's largest arts-in-education learning network. Young Audiences currently serves over 5 million children and youth each year in 8,300 schools and community centers across the country, through its diversified network of 30 local affiliates. This year, Young Audiences, and its affiliates, will be celebrating ''Young Audiences Week'' with numerous community events, educational programs, and initiatives across the country, culminating on April 21st and 22nd, at the Digital Transformation National Arts-in-Education Conference.

Young Audiences empowers our nation's next generation of scientists, mathematicians, entrepreneurs, artists, writers, parents, and community leaders, to be innovative, creative and critical thinkers. YA partners with nearly 9,000 local and national organizations, corporations, foundations, and government agencies, to create community-wide collaborations on behalf of arts-in-education. These partnerships enable YA to extend their work and reach more children year by year.

Young Audience's network strives to connect 4,600 teaching artists with over 80,000 educators to provide in-depth arts-in-education opportunities that raise academic and artistic achievement, while enhancing and developing learning skills that translate across curricula.

In my district, Young Audiences of Rochester, established in 1962, is upstate New York's oldest and most comprehensive arts-in-education organization, having worked with over 186,000 students in the past year.

As co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, I understand firsthand the benefits that comprehensive arts education has on our nation's youth. Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, stronger critical thinking skills, better decision making skills, and lower drop-out rates. Participating in the arts can have incredible benefits on our nation's students.

I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing National Young Audiences Arts-for-Learning Week.

TRIBUTE TO TINA AND JEFF RUSSELL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Tina and Jeff Russell. The Russells were honored by the Adams Community Chamber of Commerce with the Entrepreneur of the Year Award at their annual banquet on January 26, 2017.

Tina and Jeff reopened the marina at Lake Icaria near Corning, Iowa, under the name Bobber's Down. They provide rental options and fishing advice for all who come to enjoy the lake. They also represent Adams County at trade shows all throughout the Midwest.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Tina and Jeff for receiving this outstanding award and for committing themselves to making their community a better place to live, work, and raise a family. I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress and I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating them and in wishing them both nothing but continued success.

CONGRATULATING MONITO S. CO ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Monito S. Co on receiving the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Minority Small Business Champion of the Year Award for Guam. This award honors an individual on Guam who has fulfilled a commitment to support and assist minority entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Monito is the General Manager of Benson Guam Enterprises, Inc., a Minority Small Business entity and one of the largest construction and building material stores in Guam. Benson Guam Enterprises, Inc. engages in retail and wholesale of materials, supplies, and equipment to construction companies, homeowners, local and federal government in Guam and customers in neighboring island communities. Monito oversees overall operations of the company and ensures that customers receive quality service, have access to a fully stocked store, and employees maintain high morale and are working diligently. Monito also serves as the company's liaison to various community, government, military and charitable projects.

Monito has been a driving force in his company's advancement of business activities and community service throughout the region. He has provided outstanding assistance to many local businesses building and renovating to improve services for everyone. Further, Monito and Benson Guam Enterprises, Inc. have worked tirelessly to support minority businesses through various charitable and community organizations. He generously volunteers his time with the Guam Chinese School Foundation, United Chinese Association of Guam, Metro Manila Association of Guam, Filipino Community of Guam, Lions Club International District 204, Make a Wish Foundation Guam Chapter, Guam Workforce Investment Board, Guam Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Guam, Guam Contractors Association and Guam Chinese Association.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Monito S. Co on his selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Minority Small Business Champion of the Year Award for Guam. I commend him for his many contributions to our island and community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SHERIFF BOB VASS

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the courageous life of Bob Vass, who was a true public servant to the Hall County community.

Mr. Vass was elected to be the sheriff of Hall County in 1992 and held that position for eight years before becoming a member of the State Board of Pardons and Parole. Our community will remember his dedication to the department and the citizens whom he served for years to come.

When he wasn't enjoying his favorite meal at the Longstreet Café, Sheriff Vass was continuously telling his neighbors stories of his time in law enforcement and his work for the Georgia Olympic Games. During the Atlanta Olympics he was in charge of studying terrorism in preparation for welcoming the centennial games to our great state. No matter the capacity, Bob's contagious smile and great sense of humor made him a bright figure around Hall County.

In addition to his work as a sheriff, he was a member of the Lanier Technical College Advisory Board, Edmonson-Telford Center for Children, and the Boy Scouts of America Board of Directors. In each of these roles, he worked selflessly to change the lives of hundreds of individuals in the northeast Georgia community.

Mr. Speaker, while we mourn the loss of Sheriff Vass, we celebrate his many contributions to our state and the life of service that he led.

THE BOSTON CONSERVATORY AT BERKLEE'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Boston Conservatory at Berklee on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary. The Boston Conservatory, founded by violinist and composer Julius Eichberg in 1867, has a long and rich history of educating undergraduate and graduate students in music, dance and theater. The school has always set itself apart by the strength of its instructors and its distinctive, multidisciplinary structure. Indeed, the Conservatory has trained generations of talented performing artists. Today, the school's highly sought-after instructors are distinguished artists and leading practitioners in their fields, holding positions with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops orchestras, the Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Ballet and a host of other prominent local and national companies.

Founder Julius Eichberg was a former Conservatoire of Geneva professor who immigrated to the United States from Germany, who founded the Boston Conservatory as a professional training academy and a community music school. It was one of the first conservatories to admit African-Americans and women, and featured in 1873 an opera performance by the first African-American opera company in the U.S., as well as the establishment of the first professional female string quartet in 1878. The Conservatory's commitment to equal opportunity continues through our times: the Conservatory earned the 2015 Commonwealth Award, Massachusetts' highest honor in arts, humanities and sciences in recognition of the school's music programs for students on the autism spectrum and with special needs.

The Boston Conservatory is the oldest performing arts conservatory of its kind in the United States. Its recent merger with the world renowned Berklee College of Music, which fosters unparalleled access to a broad range of academic and creative opportunities for students in both schools, is a final example of the forward looking, progressive approach that the Conservatory has always taken.

I thank the Boston Conservatory at Berklee's faculty, students, administration and alumni for their dedication, commitment and positive impact they have had on American performing arts. I also congratulate the school on 150 years of service and wish them well as they continue their fine traditions.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS BASKETBALL TEAMS

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the University of South Carolina Gamecocks basketball team. It was the thrill of a lifetime to attend the NCAA women's basketball national championship game last Sunday at the American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas. The Gamecocks have electrified Columbia and the entire state of South Carolina, and we are all incredibly proud of what these coaches and players have achieved.

For Head Coach Dawn Staley, winning the national championship is the latest in a string of achievements that she has accumulated in her lifetime and in South Carolina over the last nine seasons. Under her leadership, the Gamecocks have made the NCAA Tournament six years in a row and went to the final four in 2015. This year, they finally got over the hump and are national champions. Her coaching staff, Lisa Boyer, Nikki McCray-Penson, Fred Chmiel, Melanie Balcomb, Cynthia Jordan, Freddy Ready, Ariana Moore, Hudson Jacobs, Marcella Shorty, and Katie Fowler have done an impressive job, and I congratulate each of them.

The team Coach Staley has built is an incredible group of young women from South Carolina and around the country. A'ja Wilson, a Junior from Hopkins, South Carolina, won the Most Outstanding Player of the Final Four award and was named to the All-SEC First Team this season. Wilson was joined on the All-SEC First Team by Senior Alaina Coates from Irmo, South Carolina. Unfortunately, Coates missed the NCAA tournament with an ankle injury and has concluded a fantastic career with the Gamecocks. In addition to making All-SEC First team this year, she did so last season as well, and was All-SEC Second team in her first two years in the program. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she has as much success in the future as she has had with the Gamecocks.

The full roster of this championship team includes: Victoria Patrick, Bianca Cuevas-Moore, Kaela Davis, Doniyah Cliney, Allisha Gray, Araion Bradshaw, Tiffany Davis, Mikiah Herbert Harrigan, A'ja Wilson, Alexis Jennings, Alaina Coates, and Tyasha Harris.

The Gamecocks finished 2017 with a 33–4 record and won their third consecutive Southeastern Conference Championship en route to this national championship. The Gamecocks have developed an incredible fan base. They have led the nation in attendance for women's basketball over the last several years. In addition to their success on the court, these coaches and players are role models off the court.

I especially want to acknowledge Assistant Coach Nikki McCray-Penson. Diagnosed with cancer three years ago, she has been a real inspiration to many. Throughout her treatment she remained totally committed to the team, and never missed a day of work. Thankfully, she is now cancer free.

I also wish to congratulate the Gamecocks Men's team. After winning their first NCAA tournament game in 43 years they reached the final four for the first time in their program's history. Having both men and women from the same school reach the Final Four is pretty uncommon.

Coach Frank Martin and his assistants and staff consisting of: Matt Figger, Perry Clark, Bruce Shingler, Andy Assaley, Scott Greenawalt, Doug Edwards, Mark Rodger, Jay Gibbons, Dushawn Davis, Jarett Gerald, Brian Steele, and Ryan McIntyre recruited and molded an incredible group of young men including TeMarcus Blanton, Tommy Corchiani, PJ Dozier, Rakym Felder, Hassani Gravett, Khadim Gueye, Evan Hinson, Kory Holden, Jarrell Holliman, Sedee Keita, Maik Kotsar, Justin McKie, Duane Notice, John Ragin, Christian Schmitt, Chris Silva, Sindarius Thornwell, and Ran Tut. Although they came up five points short of a victory in the semi-championship game they proved themselves a team of champions.

Mr. Speaker, although representing the University of South Carolina in this august body is a singular honor for me, I feel certain that the 2017 NCAA Final Four appearances by these young men and women are the beginnings of many more to come. Coach Frank Martin and Coach Dawn Staley are truly a dynamic duo.

STACEY TEJADA-SANDOVAL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Stacey Tejada-Sandoval for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Stacey Tejada-Sandoval is an 8th grader at Shaw Heights Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Stacey Tejada-Sandoval is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Stacey Tejada-Sandoval for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO JUDY LOONAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Judy Loonan, of Loonan Stock Farm in Corning, Iowa, for being named Iowa's Seedstock Producer of the Year.

This award is sponsored by the Iowa Beef Breeds Council and was presented at the Iowa Beef Expo Kick-Off Program. This award is given to honor outstanding cattle producers in the seedstock industry. Judy has been in the cattle business for 42 years, raising Red Angus, Simmental and Red SimAngus Cattle.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Judy demonstrates the rewards of hard-work and determination. Her efforts embody the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent her, and Iowans like her, in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Judy for her achievements and in wishing her nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING AND JOINING AUTISM COMMUNITY TOGETHER (ACT) IN CELEBRATING THE MONTH OF APRIL AS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Guam's Autism Community Together (ACT) as they join Autism Speaks and the international community in celebrating the month of April as Autism Awareness Month to shine a light on autism. I also join the pledge to ''Light It Up Blue'' throughout the month of April to support autism awareness and autism acceptance.

World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) was established by the United Nations in 2007 to raise awareness of the issues surrounding people, particularly children with autism worldwide. World Autism Awareness Day has since been commemorated throughout the world by communities wearing blue. Autism Community Together is Guam's local organization leading the efforts to increase autism awareness and promoting World Autism Awareness Day. Autism Community Together is an organization based in Guam as a support group for families with autistic children. Though we have made great strides as a nation to improve services and opportunities for peoples with disabilities, there are still improvements that can be made. ACT is dedicated to helping individuals and parents find resources, support, and training while making diligent strides to increase the awareness of autism spectrum disorders and advocating for effective services and the unique needs of individuals with autism and their families.

During the month of April, I also encourage those throughout the Guam community and the nation to participate and pledge to ''Light It Up Blue.'' Individuals and organizations can show their support by asking friends, family, and colleagues to wear blue or accessorize with blue; light up homes and businesses with blue lights and decorations; and turn social media pictures blue. These are just small acts that we can do as a community to show our support for autism awareness and acceptance.

Additionally, I commend Autism Community Together as it hosts the 10th Annual Autism Awareness Fair ''Acceptance in Action'' to coincide with World Autism Day. The Autism Awareness Fair is the largest outreach event hosted by ACT throughout the year and brings together government agencies, non-profit organizations, service providers, support vendors with the intent to provide information and resources on the various disability related programs and services available on Guam.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I thank the Autism Community Together organization and all government agencies and community partners for their assistance to spread autism awareness and acceptance. I join ACT in pledging to light up the island of Guam blue throughout the month of April and look forward to their future contributions in opening more opportunities to those in our community living with autism.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ARAB AMERICAN COMMUNITY DURING ARAB AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Arab American community during Arab American Heritage Month. Arab Americans embody the core values of our country through their initiative, work ethic and dedication to faith and family, and their contributions to the United States are worthy of commendation.

April is widely recognized as Arab American Heritage Month, and it is important that we acknowledge the vital role that this community plays in our country's civic life. According to the Arab American Institute, almost four million Arab Americans live and work through the United States, with a variety of backgrounds and cultures. These individuals have made vital contributions across a variety of fields, including medicine, business and government. Arab Americans represent individuals from all backgrounds and walks of life, and their family values, strong work ethic, dedication to education, and diversity in faith and creed that have added strength to our great democracy.

I am fortunate to represent one of the largest Arab American communities in the country in Dearborn, Michigan. Dearborn is a diverse blue-collar city that is home to a branch of the world-class University of Michigan and an iconic American auto company in Ford Motor Company, and the Arab American community continues to play a key role in their successes and other endeavors in the city. These hard-working individuals exemplify the values that make America great, and we must continue to recognize the heritage and contributions of the Arab American community to the United States. During Arab American Heritage Month, it is my hope that the contributions of Arab Americans throughout the country will be given the recognition and acclaim that they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Arab American community and their accomplishments during Arab American Heritage Month. Their positive impact on the United States' civic life is deserving of recognition.

HONORING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SURETY BONDS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th Anniversary of the National Association of Surety Bond Producers (NASBP). Formed in 1942, NASBP is a national trade organization representing firms employing licensed surety bond producers and allied professionals. NASBP producers specialize in providing surety bonds for construction contracts and for other purposes to companies and individuals needing the assurance offered by surety bonds. The NASBP bond producer stands as the bridge between the construction firm and the surety company and works closely with the construction business to position the business to meet underwriting requirements to obtain surety credit for bonded work. Surety bonds are a time-honored, vital component of federal and state procurement systems, where a furnished surety bond evidences a contractor's qualifications to undertake the contract sought and taxpayer funds are protected through the surety bond's guarantee of performance. Mr. Speaker, I want to again extend my good wishes and recognize NASBP on its 75th Anniversary, and I encourage my colleagues in the House of Representatives to do the same.

SPECIAL ENVOY TO COMBAT AND MONITOR ANTI-SEMITISM ACT OF 2017

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that I have introduced the bipartisan Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Act of 2017 (H.R. 1911), along with my colleagues and lead

original cosponsors, BRAD SCHNEIDER, PETER ROSKAM, ELIOT ENGEL, RANDY WEBER, NITA LOWEY, TED DEUTCH, GUS BILIRAKIS, and MARC VEASEY are also original cosponsors.

I wrote the provisions of the Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004 to create in the State Department the Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism and the Special Envoy to lead it. President Bush signed the bill into law and since then the Special Envoy and Office have been crucial tools in our global fight against Anti-Semitism.

However, as witnesses testified at a recent hearing I chaired on ''Anti-Semitism across Borders,'' the ninth hearing I have chaired on Anti-Semitism, Anti-Semitic hatred has metastasized across the ideological spectrum. Secularists, Islamists, extremists on the right, and extremists on the left, propagate Anti-Semitism. Violent Anti-Semitic attacks have become more frequent and perpetrators are learning from and sometimes even cooperating with each other across national boundaries.

It's urgent that we enhance the position of Special Envoy to match the threats to Jewish communities and make sure our response is strong and focused. This legislation:

Elevates the position of Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to the rank of Ambassador;

Directs the Special Envoy to report directly to the Secretary of State;

Prohibits the Special Envoy from being double-hatted with another portfolio of issues;

Emphasizes that the Special Envoy should be a person of recognized distinction in the field of combating Anti-Semitism or religious freedom; and

Clarifies that Special Envoy shall be the primary advisor and coordinator for U.S. government efforts to monitor and combat Anti-Semitism and Anti-Semitic incitement in foreign countries.

Mr. Speaker, many leading groups support this bill, including Agudath Israel of America, American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith International, The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, The Jewish Federations of North America, National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry, Orthodox Union, Secure Community Network, Simon Wiesenthal Center, and the World Jewish Congress of North America.

I call on my colleagues to cosponsor this bill so that it moves through the Congress and gets to the President as soon as possible. With these enhancements, and full staffing, the Special Envoy can help ensure that America continues to lead the world toward defeating the ancient, unique evil of Anti-Semitism and keeping Jewish communities throughout the world safe and secure.

HONORING MR. JEAN DECURTINS

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the last surviving member of the Stillwater, Minnesota ''Last Man's Club'' of World War II veterans, Mr. Jean DeCurtins.

At age 98, Mr. DeCurtins is the only survivor of the 180 men who left Stillwater in February 1941 as part of the Minnesota Army National Guard's 34th Infantry Division Red Bulls mobilization for World War II. The A&D Last Man's Club was named for the A and D Army Companies in which members served and in honor of Stillwater's original Last Man's Club of 34 Civil War veterans.

Private DeCurtins served in Company D, the heavy-weapons company of the 133rd Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division. He fought in six battles and 14 engagements in North Africa and Italy, including the Battles of Monte Cassino and the Gothic Line. Injured twice during his service, taking shrapnel to his hand at the Battle of Kasserine Pass in Tunisa and in the head at the Anzio beachhead in Italy, DeCurtins returned to the battlefield both times. For his brave service, DeCurtins was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

The day after Christmas in 1944, Mr. DeCurtins returned to his parents' home in Stillwater, a decorated Army Private First Class. He took a job on a line crew for Northern States Power Co. where he worked until he retired in 1981. He still lives in his parents' home with his brother Johnny, also a World War II veteran, a home he has lived in for over 90 years. Still active in his community and an avid reader, DeCurtins visits the Stillwater Public Library twice daily and attends Mass at the Church of St. Michael every Saturday evening.

His humility, perseverance, and sacrifice certainly personifies those known as ''the Greatest Generation,'' and we are proud to recognize him today as we remember all with whom he served. Mr. Speaker, please join me in rising to honor Mr. DeCurtins's courage and commitment to our nation.

TRIBUTE TO DEB WHEATLEY FIELD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Deb Wheatley Field of Atlantic, Iowa, for her recent retirement after 35 years of dedicated service to the City of Atlantic as the City Clerk.

Over her 35 years as City Clerk, Deb was able to calculate that she attended around 950 City Council meetings. Her expertise has been an invaluable tool for the city throughout her career. Not only is Deb an expert on all things Atlantic, but she has also exhibited ethical standards and professionalism second to none. As Atlantic moves forward after Deb's retirement, Deb's legacy will, with no doubt, continue to have a lasting impact on the way the city is run for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, Deb has made a difference in her community by helping and serving others. It is with great pride that I recognize her today. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Deb on her accomplishments and in wishing her nothing but continued success in her retirement.

RECOGNIZING JACINTA ELM ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2017 FINANCIAL SERVICES CHAMPION AWARD FROM GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Jacinta Elm on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2017 Financial Services Champion for Guam. Jacinta is being honored for her work in assisting small business owners through advocacy efforts to increase the usefulness and availability of accounting or financial services for small businesses.

Jacinta is the Assistant Vice President of the Anti-Money Laundering and Fraud Division for the Bank of Guam, the largest financial institution on Guam, serving individual clients, small businesses, middle-market and large corporations, and government entities. She is responsible for conveying awareness of the threat of cybercrime facing small businesses. Jacinta is one of only two Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists on Guam. Her training included identifying money laundering and terrorist financing methods, the best practices to stop these and other financial crimes, as well as key related legislation in place worldwide, and Anti-Money Laundering standards and developing defenses for financial institutions to stop terrorist financing and money laundering. Through Jacinta's certification, the Bank of Guam and its customers have access to the most reputable and recognizable network of specialized knowledge.

She is a cancer survivor who lost the ability to walk and had to re-learn how to walk. Jacinta has used the lessons she learned in fighting cancer and applies that same passion to helping others within the Bank of Guam and the community to identify and manage risks that could lead to unintended, potentially catastrophic consequences. Jacinta leads the Bank of Guam's regular outreach program for Money Services Businesses which provide services such as check cashing, money transfer, prepaid store value cards, money orders, travelers' checks, and tax preparation for clients. This is an outreach provided by the Bank of Guam to enhance awareness, which no other local financial institution provides. Jacinta helps Money Services Businesses meet their Bank Secrecy Act compliance obligations, protect the community and customers they serve and maintain strong relationships with their financial and banking partners.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Jacinta Elm on her selection as the SBA's 2017 Financial Services Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MIDDLETOWN VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE COMPANY, INC.

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 75th anniversary of the Middletown Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, Inc. in Frederick County, Virginia. Established in April of 1942, the Company formed in response to a devastating fire that nearly destroyed an entire block in Middletown, including the land where the Fire Station stands today. The original membership of the Company of a mere twenty-two has nearly tripled over the past 75 years. I would like to personally commend the courageous men and women who so selflessly volunteer their time and put themselves in danger on behalf of their neighbors, friends, and strangers, without asking for anything in return.

Through both exemplary leadership and community support, the Middletown Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company has grown exponentially since its inception in 1942. Under the longtime leadership of Fire Chief Emeritus Henry Shiley, who only recently retired after 53 years of service, the Company transformed into a full-service emergency relief unit, and I have great confidence that the Company will continue to prosper under Chief Mark Dalton. Additionally, one support organization that has contributed to the growth of the Company immensely is the Lady Auxiliary, which formed in 1943 with the intention of providing both financial and moral support to the Company. Over the years, they have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars through community events and fundraisers, and their service to the Company is invaluable.

Today the Middletown Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, which in 1942 only had one firetruck, is now a full service Company that protects the lives and properties of individuals from fires, accidents, illnesses and other emergencies in the Town of Middletown, Frederick County, and the surrounding vicinity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the Middletown Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, Inc. for their years of selfless service and heroism and to again congratulate them on this tremendous milestone. I wish them all the best in all of their future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE CHANGE OF COMMAND OF COLONEL MARTINE KIDD

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the change of command of Colonel Martine S. Kidd, the 34th Commander of the Anniston Army Depot.

Colonel Kidd enlisted in the Army Reserve as a Supply Specialist in 1989. She was commissioned as a Quartermaster Officer in 1994.

Her first assignment was to the 7th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, Illesheim, Germany, where she worked as a Supply Platoon Leader and Battalion S1, and later deployed to Operation Joint Endeavor. Next, she was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division, holding several positions including Main Support Battalion S3, Company Commander, and Division Support Command S4. Later, she served as the Aide-de-Camp for the Commanding General of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, also deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in Kuwait and Iraq. In April 2007, she deployed as the Logistics Planner for the 3rd Infantry Division during the OIF Surge in Iraq. Afterwards, she was a Logistics Instructor at the Command and General Staff College, and was the Executive Officer to the Deputy Commandant/Deputy Commanding General for the Combined Arms Center. In July 2010, she deployed again, serving as the Executive Officer to the Deputy Commanding General for Support, United States Forces-Iraq. In June 2011, she assumed Command of the America's East Battalion for the Defense Logistics Agency-Energy, in Houston, Texas. Later, she transitioned to Fort Belvoir, Va. working as the Executive Officer to the Commanding General of U.S. Army Cyber Command. In July of 2015, Col. Kidd became the 34th Commander of the Anniston Army Depot in Anniston, Alabama.

Among her awards and decorations are the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Meritorious Service Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, three Army Commendation Medals, and the NATO Medal. In April of 2015, she was selected as a Distinguished Member of the Quartermaster Regiment.

Colonel Kidd is married to Justin E. Kidd who is an Assistant Professor at the Army's CGSC, a former U.S. Marine and a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Colonel Kidd on her change of command and wishing her the best in her future endeavors.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS BUDGET PROPOSED BY THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the draconian 31 percent cut to the international affairs budget proposed by the Trump Administration.

President Trump's budget would starve our nation's diplomacy and development efforts at a time of increased challenges to global security and stability.

Strategic investments in development and diplomacy, alongside a strong defense, are essential to fight terrorism, support our allies, and uphold America's leadership role in the world.

If the United States retreats from our global commitments, then we cede ground to countries that do not share American interests and pose a risk to American values.

You do not make America great again by unilaterally withdrawing from the world.

Since World War II, we have been and we remain the essential nation. Ronald Reagan used to talk about making America that shining city upon a hill.

What he meant was a beacon, a place people could look to for succor, human rights advocacy, and protection. That is who we are.

Yesterday, the Trump Administration announced that it was ending all funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which works to provide access to contraceptives, prevent unsafe abortions, and stop maternal deaths around the world.

Cutting these funds threatens the lives of millions of girls and women.

Throughout U.S. development operations, we are fostering American values through support for civil society, free markets, independent media, and democratic institutions.

At a time when countries like Russia and China are undermining democratic institutions and the post-WWII international order, we need robust diplomatic and development operations more than ever.

Foreign assistance is not just a nice thing to do. It opens foreign markets for American businesses and creates enduring partnerships abroad.

For example, what began as a donor-recipient relationship between the United States and South Korea in the wake of the Korean War has since blossomed into an unbreakable alliance bound by shared military, diplomatic, cultural, and economic ties. South Korea is now our sixth largest trading partner.

We turn to diplomacy to solve our most intractable national security challenges.

It is a political solution we seek in Syria, not a military one. It is the JCPOA, a multilateral diplomatic effort, that has effectively reversed the Iranian nuclear threat.

It is our aid and reconstruction efforts that will eliminate terrorists' sanctuaries in Afghanistan, not a permanent military presence.

Pulling out the rug beneath our nation's diplomats not only makes their efforts less effective, but it also further exposes our military by shifting the entire burden to them.

More than 120 retired generals and admirals recently wrote a letter to Congress on this matter saying "the State Department, USAID, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps and other development agencies are critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm's way."

This is no longer a battle about numbers or a budget. This is a battle about who we are as a people and what role we will play in shaping the world we hand over to our children and grandchildren.

There are people who benefit from the United States' diplomatic and foreign aid efforts, who are fighting for democracy as we speak, putting their lives on the line counting on us to have their backs.

This is not the time to retreat. But that is what this budget does. We must fight this budget for the sake of that shining city upon a hill.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference.

This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2257–S2381

Senate continued in the session that began on Tuesday, April 4, 2017. See next volume of the Congressional Record.

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine protecting our midshipmen, focusing on preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, after receiving testimony from Joel Szabat, Executive Director, Maritime Administration, and Calvin Scovel, III, Inspector General, both of the Department of Transportation; and Rear Admiral James Helis, Superintendent, United States Merchant Marine Academy.

INTELLIGENCE PROGRAMS AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a closed hearing to examine intelligence programs and threat assessment, after receiving testimony from Mike Pompeo, Director, Central Intelligence Agency; and Admiral Michael S. Rogers, Director, National Security Agency.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Policy concluded a hearing to examine the current state of retirement security in the United States, after receiving testimony from former Senator Kent Conrad, Bipartisan Policy Center's Commission on Retirement Security and Personal Savings, Bismarck, North Dakota; and Walter Russell Mead, Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 763, to improve surface and maritime transportation security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 61, to remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105–384 and for other purposes;

S. 701, to improve the competitiveness of United States manufacturing by designating and supporting manufacturing communities; with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 756, to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris;

S. 770, to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to disseminate resources to help reduce small business cybersecurity risks, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

The nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 518, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide for technical assistance for small treatment works, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 692, to provide for integrated plan permits, to establish an Office of the Municipal Ombudsman, to promote green infrastructure, and to require the revision of financial capability guidance, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 675, to amend and reauthorize certain provisions relating to Long Island Sound restoration and stewardship; and

An original bill entitled, "Wildlife Innovation and Longevity Driver (WILD) Act".

CONFLICT MINERALS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy concluded a hearing to

examine a progress report on conflict minerals, after receiving testimony from Rick Goss, Information Technology Industry Council, Mvemba Phezo Dizolele, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, and Arvind Ganesan, Human Rights Watch, all of Washington, D.C.

BORDER SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine improving border security and public safety, after receiving testimony from John F. Kelly, Secretary of Homeland Security.

NOMINATION

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Murphy, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 63 public bills, H.R. 1902–1964; and 5 resolutions, H.J. Res. 94; H. Con. Res. 47; and H. Res. 249–251, were introduced. **Pages H2750–53**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2755–56**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 1667, to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy (H. Rept. 115–80). **Page H2750**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Webster (FL) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2699**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:49 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2705**

Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 242, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1219) to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company, by a recorded vote of 240 ayes to 181 noes, Roll No. 218, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 231 yeas to 182 nays, Roll No. 217. **Pages H2708–15, H2720–22**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2017: H.R. 1667, amended, to amend title 11 of the United States Code in order to facilitate the resolution of an insolvent financial institution in bankruptcy; and **Pages H2715–20**

Amending Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program: S. 544, to amend Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program. **Pages H2722–26**

Question of Privilege: Representative Jeffries rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted a resolution. The Chair ruled that the resolution did not present a question of the privileges of the House. Subsequently, Representative Jeffries appealed the ruling of the chair and Representative Foxx moved to table the appeal. Agreed to the motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair by a yea-and-nay vote of 228 yeas to 185 nays with 2 answering ''present'', Roll No. 219. **Pages H2729–31**

Self-Insurance Protection Act: The House passed H.R. 1304, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from the definition of health insurance coverage certain medical stop-loss insurance obtained by certain plan sponsors of group health plans, by a yea-and-nay vote of 400 yeas to 16 nays, Roll No. 220. **Pages H2726–29, H2731–32**

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. **Page H2726**

H. Res. 241, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1304) was agreed to yesterday, April 4th.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, April 6. **Page H2732**

House Democracy Partnership—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority

Leader, in which she appointed the following Members to the House Democracy Partnership: Representative Price (NC), Ranking Member; Representatives Ellison, Davis (CA), Moore, Titus, Roybal-Allard, Connolly, Ted Lieu (CA), and Torres.

Pages H2740–41

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Member on the part of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Representative Ted Lieu (CA).

Page H2741

Discharge Petition: Representative Eshoo presented to the clerk a motion to discharge the Committees on Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform from the consideration of H.R. 305, to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes (Discharge Petition No. 1). **Page H2712**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2720–21, H2721, H2731, and H2731–32. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

AGRICULTURE AND TAX REFORM: OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL AMERICA

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Agriculture and Tax Reform: Opportunities for Rural America". Testimony was heard from James M. Williamson, Economist, Economic Research Service, Department of Agriculture; and public witnesses.

FEDERAL RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID ABUSE CRISIS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies held a hearing entitled "Federal Response to the Opioid Abuse Crisis". Testimony was heard from Barbara Cimaglio, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department of Health; and public witnesses.

CONSEQUENCES TO THE MILITARY OF A CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Consequences to the Military of a Continuing Resolution". Testimony was heard from General David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force; General Mark A. Milley, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; General Robert B. Neller, Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Navy.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness held a hearing entitled "The Current State of the U.S. Marine Corps". Testimony was heard from the following officials from U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters: Lieutenant General Ronald L. Bailey, Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations; Lieutenant General Michael G. Dana, Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics; and William E. Taylor, Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing on H.R. 1180, the "Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FACILITATING THE 21ST CENTURY WIRELESS ECONOMY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled "Facilitating the 21st Century Wireless Economy". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE 2016 SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "The 2016 Semi-Annual Reports of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection". Testimony was heard from Richard Cordray, Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

TURKEY'S DEMOCRACY UNDER CHALLENGE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing entitled "Turkey's Democracy Under Challenge". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a markup on H. Res. 235, directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to transmit certain documents to the House of Representatives relating to the Department of Homeland Security's research, integration, and analysis activities relating to Russian Government interference in the elections for Federal office

held in 2016. H. Res. 235 was ordered reported, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1842, the ''Strengthening Children's Safety Act of 2017''; H.R. 1862, the ''Global Child Protection Act of 2017''; and H.R. 659, the ''Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2017''. H.R. 1842, H.R. 1862, and H.R. 659 were ordered reported, without amendment.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing on H.R. 1731, the ''Revitalizing the Economy of Coal Communities by Leveraging Local Activities and Investing More Act of 2017''. Testimony was heard from Representative Rogers of Alabama and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on H.R. 218, the ''King Cove Road Land Exchange Act''; H.R. 497, the ''Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act''; H.R. 1157, to clarify the United States interest in certain submerged lands in the area of the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, and for other purposes; and H.R. 1728, to modify the boundaries of the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, and for other purposes. Testimony was heard from Representatives Young of Alaska; Simpson; Keating; Cook; and Aguilar; Seth T. Taylor, Selectman, Chatham, Massachusetts; and public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE BATON ROUGE FLOOD DISASTER: PART II

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Response to the Baton Rouge Flood Disaster: Part II''. Testimony was heard from John Bel Edwards, Governor, Louisiana; Robert J. Fenton, Jr., Acting Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency; Mark Harrell, Emergency Coordinator, Livingston Parish, Louisiana; and a public witness.

IMPROVING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT NATIONAL PARKS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment held a hearing entitled ''Improving the Visitor Experience at National Parks''. Testimony was heard from Glenn Casamassa, Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Linda Lanterman, Director, Division of State Parks, Kansas; and public witnesses.

ASSESSING THE IRAN DEAL

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled ''Assessing the Iran Deal''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

TAKING CARE OF SMALL BUSINESS: WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER SBA

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Taking Care of Small Business: Working Together for a Better SBA''. Testimony was heard from Linda McMahon, Administrator, Small Business Administration.

FAST ACT IMPLEMENTATION: STATE AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing entitled ''FAST Act Implementation: State and Local Perspectives''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 105, the ''Protect Veterans from Financial Fraud Act of 2017''; H.R. 299, the ''Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017''; H.R. 1328, the ''American Heroes COLA Act of 2017''; H.R. 1329, the ''Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2017''; H.R. 1390, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay costs relating to the transportation of certain deceased veterans to veterans' cemeteries owned by a State or tribal organization; H.R. 1564, the ''VA Beneficiary Travel Act of 2017''; and a draft bill entitled ''Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act of 2017''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Bost; Brownley of California; Banks of Indiana; Bergman; and Valadao; Beth Murphy, Director, Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

DECLINE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN THE U.S.

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the decline of economic opportunity in the United States, focusing on causes and

consequences, after receiving testimony from Timothy Kane, Hoover Institution JP Conte Fellow on Immigration Studies, Stanford, California; and John W. Lettieri, Economic Innovation Group, and Jared Bernstein, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, both of Washington, D.C.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine United States Southern Command and United States Northern Command, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, to hold hearings to examine FAA reauthorization, focusing on perspectives on rural air service and the general aviation community, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider the nomination of Robert Lighthizer, of Florida, to be United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, 9:30 a.m., SD–215.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the 2017 tax filing season, focusing on Internal Revenue Service operations and the taxpayer experience, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: business meeting to consider an original resolution entitled, ''Condemning the Assad Regime for its Continued Use of Chemical Weapons Against the Syrian People'', Time to be announced, S–216, Capitol.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Evaluating the Defense Contract Auditing Process'', 9 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, hearing entitled ''Examination of the Federal Financial Regulatory System and Opportunities for Reform'', 9:15 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Enforcement is Not Optional: The Goldman Act to Return Abducted American Children'', 12 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''The Best and Worst Places to Work in the Federal Government'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Scam Spotting: Can the IRS Effectively Protect Small Business Information?'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, markup on H.R. 91, the ''Building Supportive Networks for Women Veterans Act''; H.R. 95, the ''Veterans' Access to Child Care Act''; H.R. 467, the ''VA Scheduling Accountability Act''; H.R. 907, the ''Newborn Care Improvement Act''; H.R. 918, the ''Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act''; H.R. 1005, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans; H.R. 1162, the ''No Hero Left Untreated Act''; H.R. 1545, the ''VA Prescription Data Accountability Act 2017''; H.R. 1662, to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit smoking in any facility of the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes; and H.R. 1848, the ''Veterans Affairs Medical Scribe Pilot Act of 2017'', 8 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Joint Meetings

Joint Committee on the Library: organizational business to consider committee rules for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., SC–4, Capitol.

Joint Committee on Printing: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules for the 115th Congress, 10:10 a.m., SC–4, Capitol.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, April 6

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Neil M. Gorsuch, of Colorado, to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, April 6

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 1219—Supporting America's Innovators Act of 2017.

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