mental health clinicians for newly created positions and 800 Peer Specialists and Peer Apprentices.

Since 2009, Congress has increased the mental health budget by 42 percent, and VA has treated 1.4 million Veterans with specialty mental health services in fiscal year 2013 (FY13) alone. Under Secretary Shinseki's leadership, the VA has expanded access to mental health services with longer clinic hours, telehealth capability to deliver services, and standards that mandate rapid access to mental health services.

In July 2010, VA published a historic change to its rules, streamlining the process and paperwork needed by combat Veterans to pursue a claim for disability pay for PTSD.

After Secretary Shinseki made it easier for those claiming Agent Orange and PTSD injuries, the claims backlog had major increases. With his work to have overtime and sharing of records, the claims backlog has been reduced by more than 50% in the past 14 months. The VA has shown an unwavering commitment to improving the delivery of benefits to Veterans. With input from all of it veteran partners, the VA created and is implementing a comprehensive plan to end the Veterans disability benefits claims backlog.

When Secretary Shinseki took office, he set a goal of ending Veterans homelessness by 2015. The VA, along with local, state, and federal partners has decreased the number of homeless Veterans on a given night by 24 percent since 2010 and are continuing to work to keep bringing this number down.

The VA provides quality and timely healthcare and benefits to our veterans. We have a duty to make sure that all those who have defended this country when called upon receive the care they have earned through their service. The VA is better for Secretary Shinseki's service to our veterans.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE
(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of Ukraine on conducting free and fair elections that the world watched closely. As a beloved friend of mine from Ukraine wrote me:

These elections were amazing. People were standing in long lines with the purpose to vote. And we did it. We do hope that we will start to live in a new way. Ukrainians deserve much better in life and in leaders. Thank you.

With a nearly 60 percent turnout, and despite the fearful invasion by Russia of Ukraine's eastern provinces, the election proceeded on schedule and without major disruption. This is a living testament to the future and the hopes the Ukrainian people invested in their new government.

The people of the region send heartfelt congratulations to the incoming Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. A successful businessman in his own Nation, he now holds a historic opportunity to lead Ukraine to write a new era of stability, prosperity, and future success. It will be a major undertaking. May the hopes of the Ukrainian people for a better life be realized in our time.

Ukraine can rise to be one of the greatest nations on the European continent. Her time is now.

VETERANS TIMELY ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE ACT

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

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a new bill that has just been introduced entitled the Veterans Timely Access to Health Care Act. Our veterans have waited too long.

If you have served our country and if you have gone to the VA center, we need to make sure you have got access to the VA. We will say to the VA that it is primary care or urgent care, if it is beyond 7 days, you can go see a new doctor, and if it is beyond 14 days for specialty care, you can go see a new doctor at the VA's expense.

We owe our veterans nothing less than to make sure that they have got world-class health care and that they have it immediately.

MAYA ANGELOU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designer of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon to say a few words in tribute to the great Maya Angelou, who just this week died at 86 of cancer. She will be the one of truly millions of tributes that have begun.

President Obama said of Maya that she helped generations of Americans “find their rainbows amidst the clouds and that she inspired the rest of us to be our best selves.” I think many would agree with that.

Attorney General Holder named one of his daughters “Maya” after Maya Angelou. We have a charter school here in the District of Columbia named for her. She visited that school. That is the kind of woman she was.

It is almost impossible to describe this life, all 86 years of it. She drew from it all that you can draw from one life.

Yes, we know her, perhaps, best as a poet and as a writer and as, some would say, an autobiographer because most of her writing comes from her own life in successive memoirs, in successive autobiographies, but much of her fame came when she was middle age and beyond.

Until that time, she embarked on a far-flung career wherever it would take her, dancer—yes, dancer—singer, composer, actress. She was Hollywood’s first Black female director, but she was most devoted to the printed word as an essayist, as a playwright, as a poet; and that came out of her own love of books, of words.

Maya Angelou was active until the end of those 86 years. When she died, she was the Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University in North Carolina.

I will have some words later in these remarks to say about that, since I visited there, it was a most memorable time for me.

Carol Neubauer of Southern Women Writers writes, I think, intelligently, of Maya, saying:

Angelou has been recognized not only as a spokesperson for Blacks and women, but also for all people who are committed to raising the moral standards of living in the United States.

That is just how broad was Maya’s mission. I am very grateful that she was recognized as I believe she should have been.

Well before she died, President Clinton gave Maya Angelou the National Medal of Arts, and then, President Obama gave her the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Some of us in the House are trying to give her, posthumously, the Congressional Gold Medal.

It seems as if there are not enough honors that one can come forward with for a woman with so many talents and with so great a love for humanity, who kept pouring it out, so that we could partake as well, but I think we learn most from her by understanding how hard was her early life and how she rose.

It is interesting that, at President Clinton’s inauguration, those lines “And Still I Rise,” which are from the poem she wrote for his inauguration, are best remembered—perhaps most remembered—than President Clinton’s words themselves at his own inauguration.

Yes, she rose. She rose from the bottom of society. She worked in places many of us couldn’t conceive of. She was a dance dancer in nightclubs. She was a fry cook. She worked in hamburger joints. She worked as a dinner cook in a creole restaurant.

Let me say, as someone who tasted Maya Angelou’s cooking, she was a master cook. She once worked in a mechanic’s shop, taking the paint off of cars with her hands, not with an instrument.

She was married, and she had a son. Through all of the traditional phases of a woman’s life, she managed to do many things.

In San Francisco, she sang at the Purple Onion Cabaret. She toured with “Porgy and Bess.” In the 1950s, Maya Angelou was in the Harlem Writers Guild. That is where she first met Jimmy Baldwin, the great African American poet.

That friendship was very important for the inspiration it gave her to write her own first autobiography. Don’t think there could have been a civil rights struggle without Maya Angelou.

Indeed, she worked directly with Dr. King, and she was the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
This woman who wrote about Black people, even as she wrote about all people, would, of course, find her way to Africa, to Cairo—with her son—and to Ghana and, indeed, to working in Africa as a freelance writer, but it all began, perhaps, out of the experience at the age of 7, the years when she was mute, unable to speak, became the most memorable of her books. That is the memoir that begins when she is 17 and, at 17, a new mother. That is Maya Angelou, not reading, trying to make a path for someone who is yet to come.

Somehow good attracts good and, in turn, you do get some external power. If you start with the power, you won’t abuse external power when you get it. Be prayerful that your use of it will be constructive rather than destructive. Be careful and diligent and watchful that you don’t abuse power to the detriment of others who have less.

This is off the top of Maya Angelou’s head, you understand, these pearls of wisdom for which she became so well known, because she was a deep woman and you couldn’t have her without her. And she lived it. And it proved profoundly. And her life proved it profoundly.

At one point in the conversation, I said that the difference between Maya and me is that, though she may not speak for people in some formal sense, and I, my God, she speaks to them. And they listen. I believe that profoundly. And her life proved it profoundly.

Maya Angelou has a way of speaking about those two little holes in the wall, and light up this room. You can light up a surgery. Or, you can electrocute and strap a man on a chair. Power makes no demands. It says, “If you’re intelligent, you will use me intelligently. If you’re not, you will use me destructively.” It’s up to you.

Maya said: You use power according to how you acknowledge it inside of yourself. She is telling us that your execution of power is a statement about yourself. That ought to make all of us stop and think: What I am saying or doing, in the name of what I have, to be taken as meaning who I am. She hinted, really, as to how she got the power within herself to rise and to make something of herself. She said she was in San Francisco with her mother, and she wanted to be a conductor on one of those wonderful streetcars in San Francisco.

And here I am quoting Maya: So I went down to the streetcar offices, and the people just laughed at me. They wouldn’t even give me a job. I came back home crying. My mother asked me, “Why do you think they didn’t give you an application?” I said, “Because I’m a Negro.” She said, “Do you want it?” I said, “Yes.” She said, “Go get it. I will give you the money every morning. You get down there before the secretaries are there. Take yourself a good book. Now, when lunchtime comes, don’t leave until they leave. But when they leave, you go and give yourself a good lunch. But be back before the secretaries, if you really want it.”

Three days later, said Maya Angelou, “I was so sorry I had made that commitment, but I couldn’t take it back. Those people did everything but spit on me. I took Tolstoy—the heavy Russian writers—and I sat there. The secretaries would bump up against my legs as they were leaving. They stood over me. They called me every name you could imagine.

Finally, I got an application. Within a month, I had a job. I was the first Black conductor on the streetcars of San Francisco. It cost me the Earth, but I got the job.” That is Maya Angelou, not reading, just recalling. I tell you, if you could tell that story to every kid in this country who has no mother or father, who was left in poverty and hears the television talk about the income gap and how miserable things are in the Congress and the world, if that story could be told to that kid, I know of no story that could inspire such a child as that story, because it was a real story. It was real life. It was the life of Maya Angelou.

My friend Maya needed every single one of her 86 years to live such a rich life—to come from utter poverty and to become the Nation’s renaissance woman, writer, poet, actor, dancer, screenwriter, professor, and civil rights activist. And I am here to attest, on top of all that talent, a master, magnificent cook extraordinaire. She found her voice early in life, and then she kept singing, kept speaking, kept telling. She found it, to be sure, after being molested as a child and immersing herself in books, as if to
find words, as if to find her voice, as if, she thought that, if she read, fer
tilizing her own mind she would find
her own voice. And she did.

When she found that voice, it was one of those voices that carried. Was there ever a performance like hearing Maya Angelou read her own poetry? That voice carried across lines that typically divide people, using her poetry, using her writing. And it was poetry and writing and essays that spoke to President and to poor people alike.

This woman had range. Maya’s life experience was so full that it kept feed-
ing memoirs. It took six of them to tell it all. Prolific until the very end, Maya Angelou lived to become a seer, the Na-
gress of my time.

Angelou read her own poetry? That ever a performance like hearing Maya

of those voices that carried. Was there

inspire the lives of countless others for

tragedy from repeating itself.

As a Holocaust refugee from Bul-
garia, he fought in Israel’s War of Inde-

sity student from Argentine authori-

ties, and saving a Jewish univer-
sity student from Argentine authori-

His involvement in every local, re-

ional, and national cause concerning the

And Mr. Royce. Mr. Speaker, I rise
today to honor the life of my neighbor

friend, Rabbi Haim Asa, who passed
away at the age of 83 on May 28, 2014. His
presence in the Jewish commu-

community of Orange County and beyond

will be greatly missed.

Rabbi Asa’s contributions as a spir-
utual leader date from the mid 1960s and as
Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth Tikvah
in Fullerton have had a strong and positive impact on the community. His
life story is full of remarkable accompl-
ishments.

As a Holocaust refugee from Bul-
garia, he fought in Israel’s War of Inde-

pends. Additionally, Rabbi Asa contributed
to building the Holocaust memorial
called Garden of the Righteous. It
stands to educate people on the Ho-
caustraff in order to prevent a historic
trauma from repeating itself.

I know that Rabbi Asa has touched
thousands of lives over the years. Many
in the community share my apprecia-
tion for his work to bring people to-
gether, always done with humor and insight. Victory is the secret of deep loss. His achievements have left a perma-

nent mark on the community and will
improve the lives of countless others for
years to come.

TLEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of ab-
sence was granted to:

Mr. CLYBURN (at the request of Ms.

PELOSI) for today on account of a fu-

eral.

Mr. FATTAH (at the request of Ms.

PELOSI) for today.

Mr. LEWIS (at the request of Ms.

PELOSI) for May 29 and today.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills

which were thereupon signed by the

Speaker:

H.R. 1726. An act to award a Congressional

Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the

Riggins’ Rangers, in recognition of their heroic role in the

preservation, protection, and resti-

tution of monuments, works of art, and arti-
facts of cultural importance during and fol-

lowing World War II.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move that
the House do now adjourn.

The motion to adjourn is agreed to (at 12 o’clock and 42
minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, June 2,
2014, at noon.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the
Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

5831. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of the Interior, Trans-
mitting the Department’s report on the amount of pur-

chases from foreign entities in FY 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5832. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, trans-
mitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Cargolux Airlines International S.A.

Cargolux announces the maintenance of VOR Federal Airways V-35 and V-25; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5833. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, trans-
mitting Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms

Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5834. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of

Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5835. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursu-
ant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5836. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regu-
lation, Department of the Treasury, transmitt-
ing two reports pursuant to the Federal

Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Com-

mittee on Oversight and Government Re-
form.

5837. A letter from the President, Inter-
American Foundation, transmitting the

Foundation’s annual report prepared in accordance with Title II of the Noti-
fication and Federal Employee Antidiscrimi-

nation and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No PEAR

Act), Public Law 107-174; to the Com-

mittee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5838. A letter from the Secretary, Depart-
ment of the Interior, transmitting an

report to Congress on a gift of land in San Diego County, California, from the Mohave Desert Land Trust, pursuant to Public Law 96-632; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5839. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department’s report on the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program, managed by the Office of Justice Programs’ Na-

tional Institute of Justice, pursuant to Public

Law 96-351, section 2808(b); to the Com-

mittee on the Judiciary.

5840. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitt-
ing the Department’s final rule — Regu-
nated Navigation Area; Arthur Kill, NY and New Jersey; to the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure.

5841. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-
mitting the Department’s final rule — Modifi-
cation of Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q-29; to Docket No. T-286-84; to the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure.

5842. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-
mitting the Department’s final rule — Rev-

ocation of Class E Airspace; Kwilgillingock, AK; to Docket No.: FAA-2013-1893, FAA-2013-1838; to the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure.

5843. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-
mitting the Department’s final rule — Modifi-
cation of Navigation (RNAV) Route T-265; to Docket No.: T-286-19; to the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure.

5844. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-
mitting the Department’s final rule — Modifi-
cation of Navigation (RNAV) Route T-265; to Docket No.: T-286-19; to the Committee on Transpor-

tation and Infrastructure.

5845. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-
mitting the Department’s final rule — Modifi-
cation of Class E Airspace; Sitka, AK

H5062

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

May 30, 2014