

choice but to pay for the care themselves.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, by the way, it is so important that we pass national health insurance that this House passed just a short time ago.

Equally cognizant of difficulties that Iain and his family face, Matt decided to do his part to help. In a noble act of true empathy and friendship, Matt Moniz joined his family and friends in a campaign to climb 14 of Colorado's 14,000-foot peaks in 14 days, covering a total of 42,020 vertical feet and 71 miles. This, in and of itself, would have been an incredible feat, but this extraordinary young man accomplished it in 8 days. His goal was to give each climber a firsthand sense of a typical day in the life of a patient living with PAH while simultaneously raising money to ease the financial burden for his friend Iain and his family.

Well, on Saturday, July 18, 2009, Matt and his fellow climbers completed this extraordinary endeavor, raising a total of \$20,000 for the Iain Hess Breathe Easy Fund and the Pulmonary Hypertension Association. Of course, he could not have accomplished this amazing task without the love and support of his father, Mike, of his mother, Deidra, and of his twin sister, Kaylee—all of whom took part in the climb—as well as Iain's sister, Olivia Hess, and numerous other friends, family, supporters, community partners, and sponsors.

Mr. Speaker, Matt's compassion and tenacity exemplify the best of who we are and what we aspire to be. Matt is in the audience today with his family. I want to applaud Matt for his extraordinary effort, and I look forward to supporting his campaign to raise awareness of PAH so we can work toward a cure for everyone so that everyone can breathe a little easier.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members not to make reference to those sitting in the gallery.

THE DEMISE OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY AND THE ROAD TO SO- CIALISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I get a big kick out of listening to the colloquy between the leadership people every week when we come to the end of the week and we start talking about the program for the following week. If I were an American citizen, sitting at home, watching this, I'd be so confused about what's going on. So I felt compelled tonight to come down here and just talk a little bit about what's going on so my colleagues back in their offices—and if anybody else is

paying any attention—can really find out what's going on in this place.

This last fiscal year just passed. We went in the hole \$1.4 trillion. So far, this fiscal year, in 2 months, we're ahead of last year's fiscal year. We were \$1.4 trillion in the hole this last fiscal year, and we're already ahead of that this year. The health care bill that is pending in the Senate is going to cost between \$1 trillion and \$3 trillion—probably closer to \$3 trillion if it passes. We passed an omnibus spending bill yesterday that cost \$447 billion. Now, these aren't millions. We are talking about billions and trillions. The cap-and-trade bill that they are talking about, which is going to raise everybody's electric bills and gasoline bills and gas bills to heat their homes, is going to cost \$894 billion.

We are digging ourselves into a hole that is unbelievable. Yet I hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle saying, You know, we're going to create jobs; we're going to solve these problems; everything is coming up roses. It isn't.

I talked to some of the pages in the back today, young people who are out here who are getting a chance to see how Congress works. I actually feel sorry for them because we are creating an environment where, when they grow up and get out and get a job, they are going to be faced with very high inflation and with very high taxes. There is no way to pay for all of the things we are doing the way we are going. There is just no way.

With Medicare and Medicaid, Medicare is close to being bankrupt. On the other side, they are talking about lowering the age to 55 of the people who can become participants in Medicare. That's another 30-some million people they want to add to it, and it's supposed to go bankrupt in the next 3, 4, or 5 years. I mean it just does not make sense.

In addition to that—and these are all facts—they want to increase taxes, and they want to let the tax cuts we passed in about 2001 expire, which means that's a tax increase. If they expire, then taxes are going to go up, so they are going to raise taxes that way as well.

They talk about jobs and the economy. Taking money from the taxpayer and throwing it at the economy is not working. They tried that with the stimulus bill—over \$1 trillion, when you include interest—and the jobless rate went up to 10.2 percent. The President said before he took office that he wouldn't let it go above 8 percent. Now they're bragging because it's back down to 10 percent, and it's probably going to go up again.

You can't create jobs with government money and by throwing money at it. You've got to do something to stimulate the small business man and the private sector. The way you do that is the way Ronald Reagan did it.

You come in, and you say to the businessman, Okay. We are going to cut

your taxes so you can keep people on the payroll and can hire people and can produce more product.

You say to the consumer, the guy who is working, We're going to cut your taxes. You'll have more money to go out and buy a refrigerator or a car or something else.

Because of that, you create a demand economy. You start creating people wanting to buy things. Producers are going to produce things. You're going to have more people working because you're going to need people working to produce those things. That's what Reagan did, and we had 20 years of economic growth. They're doing just the opposite right now.

Right now, this administration and the Democrats in Congress are taking over the automobile industry. We all know that. They are trying to take over the health industry with socialized medicine, which is one-sixth of our economy. They are trying to take over the energy area, which is going to raise everybody's cost of electricity, gasoline, and gas with a cap-and-trade bill. They are trying to control completely the financial industry—the banks and Wall Street and everything else.

Socialism simply does not work. Blowing taxpayers' money like we are doing does not work. We are creating an environment right now where we are going to see real economic chaos, and I believe everybody in America feels it. When I go to my town meetings and have 500 or 600 people show up when we used to have 40, they feel it. They know what's going on, and they want government to get out of the way. They want jobs created, but they know that it has to be created through the private sector. Government can't give unless it takes, and it is taking and taking and taking and taking.

So I would just like to say to my colleagues back in their offices and to anybody else who pays attention—and if I were talking to the American people, I'd say—Call your Congressmen and Senators, and tell them to stop this madness.

□ 1530

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING RUTH TIGHE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SABLON. Mr. Speaker, here is a worthy New Year's resolution. "Try to remember to praise people at the time of their praiseworthy performance, instead of years afterwards, or, as is

often the case, after they've died. We should let people know that we appreciate them, that their efforts are noticed, while it still makes a difference to them." These wise words are from the pen of Ruth L. Tighe, citizen, librarian, environmentalist, community activist, and newspaper columnist in the Northern Mariana Islands.

I would like to take Ruth's advice and not wait for the new year by telling Congress about Ruth Tighe herself. She is a person whose efforts have been noticed and noteworthy for more than three decades in the Marianas. She has made a difference, and I want her to know how much she is appreciated.

Even before arriving in the Mariana Islands, Ruth was living a remarkable story. Born in Germany in 1931, Ruth emigrated to the United States with her family in 1934. She grew up in upstate New York, became a naturalized citizen and worked her way through school, eventually earning a master's in library science from Columbia University while raising five children as a single mother.

It was as a professional librarian that Ruth came to our islands. She was there to help the people of Guam, the Northern Marianas and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands prepare for the first-ever White House Conference on Libraries and Information Science held in 1979. Ruth fell in love with the Pacific and soon returned, working for the Marianas Department of Education. She has trained school librarians and raised public awareness about the importance of reading and enriching the quality of our lives.

Ruth eventually turned from managing the written words of others to writing her own. She became a reporter and editor of one of the Marianas newspapers. She also established her signature column, "On My Mind." Over the course of her many years of commenting on island issues, Ruth has always strived to be fair, objective, informative and entertaining. Judging by the popularity of her column, today a much-read and respected blog among people from many diverse backgrounds and walks of life, I believe she has succeeded.

Never afraid of challenges, at the age of 50, Ruth took up scuba diving and has since accumulated a record of over 400 dives. Enamored with the rich coral reefs and colorful marine life Ruth encountered under water, Ruth became a fierce defender of all the natural environment. She has advocated for the protection of coral reefs and native forests, stricter clean-water regulations, the cleanup of PCB contamination in the village of Tanapag, protection of the historic Sugar Dock Beach, and the creation of the national marine monument in the Northern Mariana Islands. Ruth has drawn others to the cause, helping form several community-based environmental groups, including the CNMI Organization For Conservation Outreach, Beautify CNMI, the Friends of the Monument, and the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance.

Here is another familiar view of Ruth. Approaching the microphone at a public hearing and introducing herself, Ruth Tighe, citizen. Through her writing and through her own active participation, Ruth has been an advocate for good governance and a model of informed citizenry. Always, Ruth offers constructive solutions that seek to benefit the islands and all the people, rather than her own personal or professional gain. Among many causes, Ruth has campaigned for the advancement of women's groups, a transparent and accountable government, and a more humanitarian approach to immigration and labor reform.

Ruth's weekly column and other writings have also helped foster and strengthen our sense of community. Often this takes the form of praise to people and organizations in the Marianas for jobs well done, including resourceful teachers, local newspapers for insightful reports, businesses that provided excellent customer service, community volunteers, and numerous individuals who wrote articulate columns or letters of their own.

I feel glad to be able to turn the light back on Ruth herself for the praiseworthy person that she is. Today Ruth is valiantly battling cancer of the lung, successfully, it would appear.

But I want to take her advice and say loud and clear, and on behalf of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, thank you, Ruth Tighe, for all you have done, and, we pray, will continue to do for years to come to make the Northern Mariana Islands a wonderful place to be.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NOVEMBER MASSACRE IN PHILIPPINES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Mr. BERMAN's resolution, H. Con. Res. 218.

On November 23, 57 people were systematically massacred in the southern Maguindanao Province of the Philippines. The massacre is considered the deadliest election-related attack in the country's history.

Reports have alleged that the massacre was a planned ambush by the

Ampatuan clan on a group of journalists and family members of supporters of a gubernatorial candidate, Ismael Mangudadatu. The group was traveling through the Ampatuan township in a caravan to the provincial capital to file candidacy documents on behalf of Mr. Mangudadatu. The 57 victims were covered in a mass grave only a day after they were killed.

Mr. Mangudadatu, the gubernatorial candidate, has stated that he believes it was clear the attack was planned because the huge hole that acted as the mass grave had been dug before the attack.

The Ampatuan clan is one of the most politically powerful in the region and has ruled the impoverished Maguindanao Province since 2001 with brute force and intimidation. The Ampatuans are notorious for running a large pro-government army, which include many militiamen who serve as an auxiliary force to the military and police when battling insurgents in the region.

Andal Ampatuan, Jr., a local mayor and son of the provincial governor, is believed to have ordered the killings and has been charged with 25 counts of murder. He turned himself in late November.

Philippine President Arroyo declared November 26 a national day of mourning and said, "This is a supreme act of inhumanity that is a blight on our nation. The perpetrators will not escape justice. The law will hunt them until they are caught."

I hope President Arroyo stays true to these words. However, the Ampatuan clan is strongly allied with President Arroyo, and human rights groups are concerned that this relationship could hinder an impartial investigation. Additionally, human rights groups and democracy advocates are concerned about a recent decision President Arroyo made to declare martial law in the region, arguing she lacks the constitutional authority.

Mr. Speaker, as the co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Freedom of the Press, there is another element of this attack that is particularly distressing to me. Of the 57 killed in the massacre, 30 were journalists and media workers. According to Reporters Without Borders and the Committee to Protect Journalists, this is the deadliest known attack on journalists in history.

Information is power, which is precisely why journalists far too often become targets for groups like the Ampatuan clan. A free and independent media provides the nourishment for democracy to thrive and grow and expose corrupt factions like the Ampatuan clan. Citizens rely upon credible, accurate information from the media to make informed decisions and hold their leaders accountable. Reporters and editors who demand reform, accountability, and transparency increasingly find themselves at risk. The censorship, intimidation and murder of these