

God bless Benjamin Netanyahu as a leader of the free world.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF SERGEANT FIRST CLASS SHAWN PATRICK McCLOSKEY

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a fallen American patriot.

Thousands of my constituents lined the streets of Peachtree City, Georgia, this week, waving American flags to honor the late Sergeant First Class Shawn Patrick McCloskey. The sergeant, returning home to his final resting place, died while serving in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan.

Before joining the service, Sergeant McCloskey worked for a construction company in Fayette County. Like many of his fellow soldiers, he was a regular American, going to work every day and providing for his family, when he decided to join the military in 2002. At a great time of anguish for our Nation, he heard the call to duty and answered it.

Sergeant McCloskey became a Green Beret in 2004, and his valor won him many medals and awards, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the National Defense Service Medal.

Our Nation mourns the loss of each soldier sacrificed on the battlefield. Today, we remember and grieve this great American hero, Sergeant First Class Shawn McCloskey. He died so that we and his fellow Americans could continue to live in freedom.

We thank the McCloskey family for their gift to us. May God bless them during this hour of grief.

#### SCRAPPING NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, the United States has an operating national missile defense to protect our west coast. Why would we leave our east coast undefended?

In an ABC story today, it reads, "The Obama administration believes Iran has now lied to inspectors three times. In addition to today's news there were revelations in 2002 about a different clandestine plant, and news discovered in 2007 that Iran had been working to design a nuclear warhead."

Our response should be: Don't trust, but defend.

If the Obama administration believes that Iran has lied to the United States on nuclear weapons, why would we drop our defenses on the east coast?

Our national government is constituted to protect our citizens. By scrapping national missile defense for our east coast, we fail in our job.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT SHANNON M. SMITH

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

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a brave young soldier, one of American's fallen heroes, Staff Sergeant Shannon Smith of Ohio.

Shannon was a native of Marion, Ohio, and graduated from Marion Harding High School, where he was an accomplished wrestler, winning his weight class in the Ohio Heartland Conference for 3 straight years.

He joined the service in September 1997, serving stateside as well as in Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia, before joining the 545th Military Police Company, Arctic Military Police Battalion, based at Fort Richardson, Alaska.

Shannon died on September 8, 2009, in Iraq while serving his country in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Aged 31, he is survived by a loving family, including his wife, Cassie, and his parents, James and Deborah.

In the reading of Shannon's life and in speaking with his family members, it was clear that he had a positive impact on the lives of everyone around him. He had the tenacity of a wrestler and a remarkable sense of humor. He was a leader, a family man and a champion in every sense of the word. He was one of the brave few who stood up and volunteered to serve his country.

He fought to protect us. He gave his life in defense of his family, his community, his State, and his Nation. For this, every American owes him and his family a great debt of gratitude.

Shannon will be missed each and every day, but the strength of his character and the courage he demonstrated through his service will live on.

#### NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR MURDER VICTIMS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, this day, we honor the memory of those whose lives are suddenly violently taken by homicide. Everything a person was or ever will be—stolen by the assassin's hands.

Most of us will never lose a loved one to a violent crime. Most of us never even think about murder. Victims don't wake up in the morning knowing they'll be murdered that day, and for their families, it's the most painful and traumatic thing they can ever imagine. Suddenly, their loved one is gone. What takes their place are images of that violent death and of things left unsaid.

Then comes the police investigation—learning more than any layman wants to know about murder—then the trial if the police capture someone, then crime scene photographs; sitting in the courtroom day by day with the one who stole their loved one's life; the

uncertainty, the strain, the verdict. It's not just the one killed who is the victim of murder.

Today, we honor the families who live through the horror of homicide. Families never get over the murder of a loved one. They think about it every day—forever.

And that's just the way it is.

#### ECONOMY

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

Mr. MURPHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I stand today to point to upstate New York's leadership and significant accomplishments in partnering education and 21st-century job creation.

This week, the hard work of the capital region's higher education institutions and businesses were highlighted when President Barack Obama lauded Hudson Valley Community College's great work in preparing young professionals and training leaders for the 21st-century economy.

The President spoke about the vital importance of education and about the role community colleges will play in reviving our economy and in preparing a workforce for the future.

I have spent my entire career working to create jobs and high-tech businesses across upstate New York. One of the keys to preparing our economy for success is having a well-educated workforce.

This week, we heard the President lay out three building blocks for innovation: Education, infrastructure and research. This is exactly what we have been working on and developing in upstate New York, and it is what has made our region a leader in the innovation economy.

As our economy becomes more knowledge-based, the continued leadership of our colleges and universities will be ever more important. Twenty-first century jobs will require increasingly knowledgeable workers in the innovative programs, and our Nation's fine higher education institutions are a key to them.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I was watching the Senate Finance Committee yesterday, and I was pleased to see that they were moving along in adopting health care reform and in moving it out of committee. It couldn't be too soon.

The bottom line is that we've heard more reports about how more and more people have no insurance in this country and that insurance is increasingly becoming unaffordable. I know that the Democrats in both the House and the Senate and, hopefully, some Republicans, are moving forward with health

care reform. We are trying to get it done by the end of this year, and it really is important.

People need to have affordable insurance. They need to have choices. I think we need a strong public option as well because that will create competition with private insurance. It will bring down costs, and it will allow more people to find affordable insurance.

The problem is not getting any better. It's getting worse every day, and health insurance reform needs to be done here in the House, in the Senate, and it needs to be sent to the President as quickly as possible so we can deal with this major problem that we face in this country. I would like to see it done in a bipartisan way.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2918, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 772 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 772

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2918) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the conference report are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. All points of order against the conference report are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

□ 0915

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

Madam Speaker, this rule provides for consideration of the conference report on H.R. 2918, the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act. I rise in strong support of the rule and of the underlying legislation. The bill before us today includes not only the fy 2010 Legislative Branch appropriations bill

but, more importantly, a continuing resolution to keep the government operating for the next 6 weeks.

With a few important exceptions, the continuing resolution provides level funding. In other words, the bill maintains funding levels passed at the 2009 appropriations process levels.

One of those exceptions is in the vital area of veterans health care, which receives an increase in this bill. The VA estimates that it will treat more than 6.1 million patients in 2010, including more than 419,000 veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. That number represents an increase of 56,000 more patients than in 2009.

To ensure that the VA can provide our veterans the care that they need and that they deserve, the bill increases the funding for VA health by \$3.85 billion. I would encourage all Members on both sides of the aisle who wish to provide this needed increase in veterans health care to support the bill.

To address the right-wing talk radio target of the week, no funds in this bill may be provided to ACORN or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries or allied organizations.

In terms of process, Madam Speaker, none of us on either side of the aisle are happy with continuing resolutions. They have been used for years under Democratic and Republican majorities, but they are clearly not ideal.

Here in the House, we have completed our work of passing all of the appropriations bills, and I want to commend Chairman OBEY and his colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for their efforts and all of their hard work.

Unfortunately, it seems that these days that you need 60 votes in the Senate to agree that the sun came up this morning. The Senate has not yet passed all of its bills, and this continuing resolution is necessary to ensure that vital programs continue to receive funding.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Speaker, the end of the fiscal year, as we all know, is just a few days away.

Despite this looming deadline, Congress has not completed action on a single appropriations bill. Let me repeat that, Madam Speaker: we have got within 5 days of the end of the fiscal year, and yet not one single appropriations bill has been completed by this Congress.

As a result, the Democratic majority is scrambling to accomplish two things, two things with this underlying bill that we have. The first is to buy more time to get our work done with the continuing resolution, which will keep the government operating for an additional 38 days beyond the September 30 expiration of the fiscal year. The second is to finally take the first

step towards passing our appropriations conference reports.

Madam Speaker, which spending bill has the honor of being considered first? Which spending bill? Perhaps it's our Homeland Security appropriations bill, which funds our Border Patrol and other Federal agencies charged with protecting our States, cities, and ports from terrorist attacks. Or, perhaps, Madam Speaker it's the very, very important Defense appropriations spending bill, which would provide the funding for our troops.

In fact, the very first spending bill that the House is moving to send to the President is our Congress' own funding bill. The underlying Legislative Branch appropriations bill makes the Democratic majority's funding priorities very, very clear.

Madam Speaker, I describe this as the "putting Congress first" appropriations process. That's really what it is. We remember back in 1992, putting people first was President Clinton's campaign motto. We have now seen this Congress establish a new directive based on what we are doing on this appropriations bill, and that is we are putting Congress first.

As we look at this priority, it is very clear that the continuing resolution will allow for more time to take care of everything else. Now, some would say that we, as Republicans, are just belly-aching. I mentioned President Clinton and his campaign back in 1992 of putting people first, and this now the putting Congress first appropriations process.

Well, back in 1996 after President Clinton had been President for almost 4 years, he vetoed the Legislative Branch appropriations bill when a Republican Congress sent it as the second appropriations bill of that season. Madam Speaker, President Clinton said the following in his veto message: "I believe that it would be inappropriate to fully fund regular funding for Congress and its offices while funding for most other activities of government remains incomplete, unresolved and uncertain. I don't think Congress should take care of its own business before it takes care of the people's business."

Those are the words of President Clinton in his 1996 veto message when the second appropriations conference report sent to him was the Legislative Branch appropriations bill measure. He was right to veto that bill and President Obama would be right to do it now, Madam Speaker, following President Clinton's lead.

Unfortunately, even if the President wanted to veto this bill, there is a problem. A veto, as we all know, would shut down the government, something that no one wants. The Democratic majority has made sure that our offices don't have to worry about working within temporary funding; but our veterans, Homeland Security personnel, the fighting men and women will just have to make do.