

to achieve throughout their lifetimes. This continues to be my guiding principle, inspired in me by my many great teachers, allowing me to work tirelessly for my community. Today's students will undoubtedly be inspired to even greater heights with unwavering commitment to bettering our community and our country.

For the professionalism and care that our teachers have shown in the pursuit of this most noble of professions, I thank each of them from the bottom of my heart. They have shaped the lives of countless students, and we are truly privileged to have such wonderful individuals taking on this great challenge.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I will submit in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of the teachers who have received awards for excellence in education throughout South Florida and the Florida Keys in this past school year.

From Centennial Middle School: Frederic Gabriel, Teacher of the Year.

From Citrus Grove Elementary School: Edward Slater, Teacher of the Year; Jonny Junes, Rookie Teacher of the Year.

From Coconut Grove Elementary School: Emely Yanes, Teacher of the Year.

From Coral Shores High: Nancy Ellsworth, District Teacher of the Year.

From Excelsior Language Academy: Ms. Reagan Weissenberg, Teacher of the Year.

From Fairlawn Elementary Community School: Ileana Estrella, Teacher of the Year.

From Gerald Adams Elementary: Gloria Pascual, Teacher of the Year; Michael Sommer, Inclusion Teacher of the Year.

From Glynn Archer Elementary: Terri Sims, Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Lottie Edwards, Teacher of the Year; Jalynn Frazier, Beginning Teacher of the Year.

From Horace O'Bryant Middle School: Christina Beza, Beginning Teacher of the Year; Kristen Condella, Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Stephanie Manaher, Teacher of the Year.

From Henry M. Flagler Elementary School: Marielena Lago, Teacher of the Year.

From Kensington Park Elementary School: Maria D. Reinoso, Teacher of the Year; Kendra Ceasar, Rookie Teacher of the Year.

From Key Largo School: Laura Lietaert, Teacher of the Year; Eva Brown, Elementary School Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Nicole Elliot, Middle School Inclusion Teacher of the Year.

From Key West High School: Dina Kinnune, Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Rebecca Provost, Teacher of the Year.

From Kinloch Park Elementary School: Felicia Fina, Teacher of the Year.

From Marathon Middle/High School: Andreea Rapach, Beginning Teacher of the Year; Mike Lettau, Teacher of the Year.

From Merrick Educational Center: Maude Weiss, Teacher of the Year; Krista Caballero, Beginning Teacher of the Year; Lydia Chico, Paraprofessional of the Year.

From Miami Lakes K-8 Center: Ada Romeu, Teacher of the Year; Amy Castillo, Rookie Teacher of the Year; Rosy Calvo, Miami-Dade Public Schools District Principal of the Year.

From Plantation Key School: Barbara Berry, Teacher of the Year; Amy Bence, Inclusion Teacher of the Year.

From Poinciana Elementary: Jessica Eden Lockwood, Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Martha Wyker, Teacher of the Year.

From Ruth Owens Kruse' Educational Center: Dr. Ana Menedez-Londono, Teacher of

the Year; Mr. Luis Farach, Paraprofessional of the Year.

From Sigsbee Elementary: Ellie Riley, Inclusion Teacher of the Year; Lynly Hill, Teacher of the Year; Callie Hubble, Beginning Teacher of the Year.

From South Dade Middle School: Ronald Dennis, Teacher of the Year; Susana Skinner, Rookie Teacher of the Year.

From Somerset Academy Silver Palms: Adreia Da Costa, Young Student Teacher of the Year; Alejandra Guzman, Middle and High School Teacher of the Year.

From South Florida Autism Charter School: German Garcia, Teacher of the Year; Roxana Rojas, Teacher Assistant of the Year.

From Stanley Switlike Elementary: Suzanne Terpos, Teacher of the Year; Erin Voelliger, Inclusion Teacher of the Year.

From Sunny Isles Beach Community School: Ms. Christine Peck, Teacher of the Year; Rose Belizaire, Rookie Teacher of the Year.

From Sylvania Heights Elementary School: Anna-Maria Losada, Teacher of the Year.

From Vineland K-8 Center: Ms. Laurie Sharron, Teacher of the Year.

SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS—RECOGNIZING THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, last week we celebrated the 45th anniversary of the adoption of the Older Americans Act. Later this month we will celebrate the 45th anniversary of Medicare and next month the 75th anniversary of Social Security.

Seniors are vital to our communities, having spent a lifetime building and shaping this Nation. Increasingly, our seniors have been able to continue to make important contributions throughout all of their lives, volunteering their time, mentoring our youth, and often remaining active in the workforce.

As a former Chairman of Fairfax County, Virginia, I was proud of the work I helped lead in the creation of a 50+Plus Action Plan outlining more than 60 initiatives to support our senior population. We expanded transportation opportunities, ensured communities were planned to provide housing options for all ages, pursued respite options for caregivers. And it was necessary to bring that focus to Washington.

This Congress has made strategic investments to assist these efforts through actions such as the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act that expanded opportunities for seniors to remain active. But it wasn't always this way, which is why we needed the Older Americans Act.

The Older Americans Act facilitates the provisions of necessary social services and nutritional support to seniors through a partnership with various State agencies. In addition to establishing the Administration on Aging, the act established the National Family Caregiver Support Program, recog-

nizing the critical role that family caregivers provide and the need to make sure they have the necessary resources. That act also provides for home-based services, disease prevention and wellness programs to promote better health.

The Older Americans Act was a continuation of the improvements in the quality of life begun in 1935 when Congress enacted the Social Security Act. The poverty rate among seniors in 1935 exceeded 45 percent. Today it is 10 percent. Few acts of Congress have made such a dramatic difference on a single demographic group.

In addition to the Older Americans Act, in 1965 Medicare was established to protect seniors' health. Before its enactment almost half of all senior citizens lacked health insurance. Given the traditionally higher costs of senior health care without Medicare, for many Americans there was no prospect of health insurance. Our efforts to further enhance the quality of life for our Nation's senior citizens continue to this day. The Health Care Reform Act enhances Medicare benefits.

What's interesting to me is I was a young high school debater when Medicare was adopted, and the national high school debate topic that year was, Would the adoption of Medicare constitute socialized medicine in America? Would it, in fact, discourage the private sector? Would it, in fact, make us look a lot more like the health care system in the United Kingdom or Canada?

Much of the rhetoric we hear today about health care reform was echoed 45 years ago against Social Security, and much of it came from the same sources who oppose health care reform today. They consistently opposed Medicare. Yet when you go to a retirement community, when you meet with seniors across this country, certainly in my district, I can't find one who thinks that we ought to repeal Medicare. They know that Medicare has made a huge difference in the quality of their lives, and going from being maybe the most vulnerable demographic group in America in terms of health care coverage, today they have the most protected. That's the efficacy of an effective government program that has made a difference in the quality of lives.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the anniversaries of the Older Americans Act, the Social Security Act, and Medicare, we also celebrate the adoption of the Health Care Reform Act that will make the same kind of difference in years to come in millions of lives now and in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to not traffic the well while another Member is under recognition.

UNCERTAINTY—THE ENEMY OF JOB CREATION

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

Mr. STEARNS. Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

With the United States unemployment rate steadily hovering around 10 percent, Americans are continuing to ask, "Where are the jobs?" The response to this jobless crisis from congressional Democrats and the Obama administration seems to be focused on higher taxes, increased government spending, and more government mandates and regulation. All of this has led to great uncertainty in the business community, especially among small businesses which employ over half of all private sector employees.

In a recently released letter, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce explains how the current policies of the administration and congressional Democrats are not working. The high spending and high tax agenda has created an atmosphere of uncertainty. As the Chamber's letter correctly states, "Uncertainty is the enemy of growth, investment, and job creation. Through their legislative and regulatory proposals—some passed, some pending, and others simply talked about—the congressional majority and the administration have injected tremendous uncertainty into the economic decision-making process and business planning. This is why banks are reluctant to lend and why American corporations are sitting on well over a trillion dollars. It is why America's small businesses and entrepreneurs, the engines of innovation and job creation, are starving for capital and are either struggling to survive or simply unable to expand. In the process, we are also eroding our competitive position globally, as other nations take steps to cut taxes, reduce regulations, and restrain the appetites of big government. For all of these reasons, the known and unknown costs that come with expanding operations and adding to payrolls in the United States are simply perceived to be too high."

As the Chamber's letter highlights, the continued expansion of the Federal Government into all areas of our economy is stunting economic growth and prohibiting private sector job creation. The Democrats' congressional agenda includes one piece of job-killing legislation after another. The new health care law includes thousands of expensive and burdensome mandates and hundreds of billions of dollars in business taxes and penalties. It contains thousands of pages of new regulations to be followed by individuals, employers, health care providers and States.

The House passed climate change bill, the cap and trade bill, would create nearly 1,500 new regulations and mandates and carry a price tag of well over a trillion dollars, according to the Chamber. Furthermore, the Environmental Protection Agency is engaging in an unprecedented level of regulatory

action by moving forward with 29 major economic rules and 173 major policy rules.

The list keeps going. The recently passed financial regulatory reform legislation creates 243 new formal rule-makings by 11 different Federal agencies, 47 studies and 74 reports. It is really no wonder American businesses are hesitant to expand and hire.

In addition to the regulatory uncertainty, the Federal Government's appetite for spending needs to be controlled. American families and small businesses are simply making tough choices in this economic climate but Federal spending continues to soar. The Federal Government is spending \$31,000 per household, the highest ever, and running up a \$1.5 trillion deficit in 2010, the largest deficit since the end of World War II.

Recent yearly budget deficits have reached unprecedented levels, accounting for 11 percent of the GDP. By comparison, the historical average budget deficit is only 2.9 percent of the GDP. In 2008, publicly held debt as a percentage of the GDP was about 21 percent, nearly five points below the post-war average. Under President Obama's budget, this figure would more than double to 90 percent of the GDP by the year 2020. This continued structural debt poses serious economic risks to this country. As the Chamber's letter notes, "By crowding out available capital for business expansion and eventually triggering increases in interest rates and inflation, rising deficits and debt add to uncertainty, inhibit growth, and smother job creation."

The way out of this recession and toward job creation is to get Federal spending under control and enact policies that free up capital and encourage businesses to grow. We need to reduce uncertainty and restore confidence in our economy. We cannot do this if the administration and congressional Democrats continue to impose more and more burdensome mandates and increase taxes on job creators. It's time to reduce the unnecessary meddling of the Federal Government and let the American entrepreneurial spirit flourish.

THE 9/11 HEALTH AND COMPENSATION ACT

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

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, for too long the heroes and survivors of the 9/11 attacks have struggled to receive the health care and compensation that they need and deserve. They came to Ground Zero to aid in America's recovery. Now we must aid in their recovery.

After 8½ years of hard work, we are closer than ever to passing H.R. 847, the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. The bill, which would provide health care and compensation, is nearing consideration on the House floor next week.

But another tragedy threatens the health of cleanup workers. The warnings from 9/11 must be heeded as crews restore the gulf after the BP oil spill.

I urge my colleagues to remember and support those who aid our country in time of need. They were there for us; we must be there for them, with their health care and with support.

STOP THE DROP HOUSES ACT

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of bipartisan legislation I introduced yesterday with my colleague Congressman Brian Bilbray: the Stop the Drop Houses Act.

The Federal Government's failure to secure the border and fix our broken immigration system has allowed smugglers and Mexican cartels to set up vast networks of drop houses, which operate as way stations for criminal enterprises. In Phoenix we have as many as 1,000 drop houses. They are dangerous magnets for violent crime.

Even more alarming is the fact that a loophole in Federal law prevents authorities from using civil forfeitures to seize these houses. Authorities can seize vehicles or even airplanes, but they can't use civil forfeiture against the actual drop house itself. The Stop Drop Houses Act would close the loophole and allow authorities to use civil forfeitures to seize these drop houses.

Obviously it will take much more to fix our broken system, but this is one obvious and important step that Congress can take right now to make our communities safer.

I urge my colleagues to pass the Stop the Drop Houses Act.

EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is critical to our economic recovery to extend unemployment benefits for several more months and assist struggling States and local governments so that they can avoid layoffs of teachers, police officers, firefighters, and others.

Right now there are 15 million out-of-work Americans who are waiting on the Senate to extend unemployment benefits, which contribute to paying mortgages, health care, utility bills, and the cost of food. The Democratic unemployment bill would provide unemployment checks averaging about \$300 to people whose 26 weeks of State-paid benefits have run out. The benefits would be extended through the end of November.

We know these benefits not only are a much-needed lifeline for jobless Americans and their families. They also provide a proven boost to our struggling economy.