

the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, it is my strong belief that the pre-eminent reason a majority of Northern Michigan's citizens selected me to be their representative in Washington was to do everything possible to rein in out-of-control Federal spending. My focus has been to support such efforts while working to ensure that policies coming out of the Nation's Capital—tax, monetary, and regulatory—serve to encourage private enterprise so Northern Michigan has the chance to experience economic growth.

My first 44 days in office have taught me a great deal about the budget process and the “spending ways of Washington.” Each day we have been in session I have typically had 5–10 meetings with organizations, companies and Washington reps all seeking to keep their programs free of any spending cuts. No one in Washington has asked me to spend less. In fact, it seems in every Washington meeting while there occasionally is a recognition of the doom America faces if the current spending continues, each meeting usually closes with an expected refrain “. . . yes we need to spend less but not our program.”

By contrast, during my first visit home, just about everyone in the First District asked me to make sure the Federal Government spends less. In Northern Michigan there seems to be a strong consensus that Federal budget red ink can no longer continue at record pace.

Here are my guiding “spend less” principles in this 112th Congress:

**Shared Responsibility:** Before there is any comprehensive entitlement reform effort, every Federal department should be prepared to live with less money in 2012 than it received in 2011.

**Sunlight and Transparency:** All spending decisions should be made in a fully transparent legislative process. No backdoor earmarks, no special interest amendments. If a program has merit its supporters should defend the program in public floor debate.

**Tighten the Revenue Spigot:** Simply sending more money to Washington is not going to solve the problem of unchecked spending; every year the U.S. Treasury receives more money; every year the Federal Government spends more than it takes in. Consequently, increasing taxes is not the answer.

If not now, when? I have publicly promised to limit my career in Congress to just three terms. America's future is more important than any one of us in Congress, certainly more important than any political job. I'd rather do what I think is right than simply keep this position. I trust the voters.

In my view, the debt is not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue. It is an American issue.

The failure of previous Congresses to act means America now faces a \$14 trillion debt. For every dollar Congress allocates the U.S. Treasury has to borrow up to \$.40 to pay for it. That means indenting ourselves to countries like China and mortgaging our children's future.

Let me be clear, this will not be easy. To stem the tide, many tough decisions will need to be made. Northern Michigan—like the entire country—has a backlog of worthy projects and its people have benefited from admirable public programs. The reductions in H.R. 1 affect

every community in the nation. These are hard decisions for Congress to make, and not everyone will be happy with everything that has been proposed. This is understandable, but I believe these reductions are necessary to show that Congress is serious about returning our country to a sustainable financial path.

The Continuing Resolution to be considered on the House Floor this week is just the first step. Fortunately, the President's budget proposal is merely a suggestion that Congress can improve upon. In my view, Congress needs to offer a more fiscally sound budget for FY 2012.

Additionally, it is my view that Congress will need to consider reforming entitlements programs. Social Security and Medicare are important programs that millions of Americans depend on. Without reform, both of these programs face bankruptcy. In my opinion, Congress needs to consider solutions to avoid this crisis that ensures benefits under Social Security and Medicare are not reduced for those Americans currently receiving benefits.

And I think most of my colleagues agree this is not a time to play politics. The inflamed rhetoric and scare attacks on cutting grandma's benefits have no place here. This week's vote will not take away benefits for anyone receiving benefits. Instead, Congress will have completed the first step and as the Constitution dictates, the Senate and the President will have their say.

#### TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM “BILLY” LYON

#### HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a longstanding business leader in South Alabama, Mr. William “Billy” Lyon, who recently passed away at the age of 80.

A native of Mobile, Mr. Lyon graduated from Murphy High School in 1944 and attended the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina before joining the Navy in 1945, where he served on the USS *Chicago*. Following the end of the war, he attended Auburn University and the University of North Carolina.

A natural entrepreneur, Mr. Billy became a homebuilder with a lifelong passion for commercial and residential real estate development in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and Georgia.

He developed scores of local residential subdivisions, including Brookwood, Blacksher Downs, Tuthill Lane Estates and Carriage Hills, and sold lots to nearly every builder in Mobile. He also partnered and developed numerous commercial shopping centers, including Mobile's Bel Air Mall, which opened in 1966.

He was one of the founding board members of Commercial Guaranty Bank in Mobile, which later became SouthTrust Bank, and also served on the Boards of Bel Air Corporation, Mobile Gas Company, First Southern Federal, Altus Bank, the Drug Education Council, and the Alabama School of Math and Science.

Mr. Billy was the longest active member of the Home Builders Association of Mobile and received the E. L. Jones award in 2002. He witnessed and played a vital role in Mobile for

many years, helping countless individuals, bankers, builders, realtors, friends and associates along the way.

On behalf of the people of South Alabama, I extend my condolences to his wife, Patricia; their two sons, BJ and Jimmy; their four daughters, Tricia, Nancy, Victoria and Ashley; nineteen grandchildren and their entire family. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

HONORING DR. MICHAEL COLLINS

#### HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Dr. Michael Collins. For more than 25 years, he has exhibited a drive and work ethic on and off the ice that serves as inspiration to his colleagues and friends.

Dr. Collins, a Chicago native, attended the University of Notre Dame. In South Bend he played varsity hockey and shoveled furnaces to pay the bills, but still graduated in three and a half years. Upon graduation, Michael spent several years driving a cab, and working construction before entering medicine. After returning to college for another two years to take pre-med courses, he attended the Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine followed by five years at the Mayo Clinic. He is now a full-time, board-certified orthopedic surgeon.

In addition to his medical practice, he has written professionally for more than 30 years. His first book, *Hot Lights, Cold Steel*, continues to be a best-seller in the medical memoir field. Since its publication, Michael has lectured extensively on topics relating to medicine and writing.

Dr. Collins' hard work and accomplishments have earned him national attention, and in 2010 he received the American Hockey Coaches Association Lou Lamoriello Award. The Lamoriello Award recognizes a former college hockey player or coach who goes on to a distinguished career in or out of hockey.

Michael and his wife, Patti, have raised 12 children and today he still plays hockey twice a week. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Michael Collins and his life of achievement. His career has inspired many and continues to impress.

RECOGNIZING TIFFANY MCKINNIE AS THE 2011 WASHINGTON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSON OF THE YEAR

#### HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tiffany McKinnie as the 2011 Washington County, Florida Educational Support Person of the Year. I am honored to recognize her achievements and her dedication to the students of Northwest Florida.

Mrs. McKinnie is an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) paraprofessional at Roulhac Middle School. ESE paraprofessionals serve an integral role in the development of ESE

students. They are responsible for assisting teachers in a variety of ways to implement the instructional program. They work directly with children in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, and through this close interaction, they foster strong bonds that motivate pupils to develop the knowledge needed to provide a solid educational foundation.

Mrs. McKinnie and her husband, Albert, have three sons and one daughter, and her time outside the classroom is spent enjoying quality time with her family. She is currently enrolled at Chipola College, where she is pursuing a degree in Exceptional Student Education.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Tiffany McKinnie for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence at Roulac Middle School. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. McKinnie, and we wish her all the best.

**FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011**

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 15, 2011*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York, the Honorable CAROLYN McCARTHY, to provide needed funding for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS. The intent of the amendment is for the Department of Justice to use \$20 million appropriated in the State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account to provide grants to States and tribal areas to implement the NICS Improvement Amendments Act, Public Law 110-180.

Representative McCARTHY and I have worked together to improve the national instant check system since 2002. It was obvious to us at the time that the National Instant Check System was not working as Congress had intended it should. However, it was the tragedy of Virginia Tech that spurred Congress to act unanimously to update the instant check system. The perpetrator of that violent attack was adjudicated a danger to himself and others—therefore, legally prohibited from possessing a firearm—but was able to pass a background check because his name was not in the NICS database.

It is estimated that there are still millions of qualifying records that should be in NICS but are not. A study by the National Center for State Courts found there should be roughly twice as many mental-health records in NICS as there currently are, based on responses from 42 of 56 States and territories.

At the time we enacted the NICS Improvement Amendments Act, we found that there were two primary reasons there were delays in NICS background checks: the lack of updated and available State criminal disposition

records and insufficient automated access to records pertaining to mental illness, restraining orders, and misdemeanor convictions for domestic violence.

The NICS Improvement Amendments Act sought to address these inadequacies by authorizing grants to States and tribal areas to upgrade their electronic records and technologies, enhance their capacities to perform background checks, supply accurate and timely criminal history disposition records, and improve reporting and transmitting to the NICS database. This amendment would allow the Department of Justice to continue making these grants. Adequate funding for NICS must be part of the equation to improve it. Between FY 09 and FY 11, the NICS Improvement Amendments Act authorizes appropriations of over \$900 million. Yet, in FY 09 and FY 10, just \$30 million has been appropriated.

Mr. Chair, all Members of Congress can agree that we must confront our budget and deficit. However, at a time when States' budgets are more strained than ever, the federal government must be ready to help protect public safety, enforce the laws on the books, and in turn, serve our national interest.

Funding for NICS is not only an important tool to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and those mentally unfit to possess them, but also to ensure individuals' Second Amendment rights are protected, as States are required to remove obsolete or erroneous records from the database. This common-sense amendment is supported by the National Rifle Association, an organization whose top priority is protecting the Second Amendment rights of Americans. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

**HONORING MINNIE B. YOUNG**

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 16, 2011*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Minnie B. Young. Mrs. Minnie B. Young was born on March 11, 1937, outside of Leland, Mississippi. She is the youngest of five children. Mrs. Young was married twice; both husbands are deceased. Mrs. Young is the proud mother of five children.

Mrs. Young attended elementary school in Dunleith, MS, then on to Abraham Lincoln Attendance Center in Leland, MS.

In 1965, Mrs. Young and others went on a strike for a pay increase from A.L. Andrew Plantation, located in what was then Tent City, MS. It was called Tent City because they lived in tents. However, there were no raises and the strikers eventually quit their jobs at the Plantation. The strikers then changed the name of the town from Tent City to what we now know as Strike City in 1966. Also, she was one of the marchers in Greenville, MS, during the Civil Rights Era in 1966.

Mrs. Young worked in the Head Start program from 1966–1980. She went from Head Start to Witte Memorial Hospital, in Leland, MS, from 1980–1985.

Mrs. Young enjoys writing poems. She considers this a hobby, which she has been doing since she was a little girl. Both she and her daughter, Maxine Johnson, call themselves

"Strike City's Finest Poets." They published a book of poems called Real Talk. Mrs. Young considers herself a religious poet. Today, she still writes poems, mostly for her church, Greater St. Matthew M.B. Church, located in Strike City, MS.

**HONORING THE CHELSEA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNERS**

**HON. TIM WALBERG**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 16, 2011*

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, 2010 Business Leadership Award winners. The Large Business Award winner is Cleary's Pub and the Small Business Award winner is True North Jerky Co. These annual awards are presented by the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce and the Ambassador Club of the Chamber.

The formal presentation of each award will be during the February 17, 2011, Annual Meeting for the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. Each of these award winners was judged in several areas that include; displaying innovative ideas and services, demonstrated leadership in the Chelsea business community, support of the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, and contributing to the economic impact of the City of Chelsea.

Cleary's Pub is owned by Pat Cleary, Meg Boomer, and Joan Henry. This brother and sister team of owners has been in business for 20 years in their familiar Main Street location in downtown Chelsea.

True North Jerky Co. is owned by Phil and Jennifer Tolliver. Phil and Jennifer also are the franchisee for Bearclaw Coffee Drive-Thru located adjacent to the Jerky Co.

These local businesses in the 7th Congressional District have established themselves as true leaders and entrepreneurs who continue to spur economic growth even during these tough economic times.

I would like to commend and congratulate these businesses owners on their successful business ventures that have contributed greatly to the City of Chelsea, Michigan, and the 7th Congressional District.

**HONORING JOHN DAVID MERCER FOR HIS HEROIC ACTION IN SAVING LIVES**

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 16, 2011*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of the House the heroic efforts of a constituent of mine whose quick thinking saved lives during a recent pre-dawn Mobile, Alabama motel fire.

On the early morning of December 21, 2010, John David Mercer, a staff photographer with the Mobile Press-Register, was driving home after shooting the historic lunar eclipse when his eye caught sight of another target. While glancing over at the battleship USS Alabama, a local landmark, Mr. Mercer noticed