

INTRODUCTION OF THE END THE  
MANDATE ACT**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the End the Mandate Act. This legislation repeals the sections of the health reform law that force all Americans to purchase federally-approved health insurance plans.

As two federal courts have ruled, forcing every American to obtain health insurance is a blatant violation of the Constitution. Defenders of this provision claim the Congress's constitutional authority to regulate "interstate commerce" gives Congress the power to mandate every American obtain a federally-approved health insurance plan. However, even the broadest definition of "regulating interstate commerce" cannot reasonably encompass forcing Americans to engage in commerce by purchasing health insurance.

Forcing every American to obtain a congressionally-approved health insurance plan is not just unconstitutional; it is a violation of the basic freedom to make our own decisions regarding how best to meet the health care needs of ourselves and our families.

Mr. Speaker, the health care law does not just require Americans to buy health insurance—it forces them to obtain what the federal government decides is "minimum essential coverage." Some people may claim that the requirement to have "minimal essential coverage" does not impose an unreasonable burden on Americans. There are two problems with this claim.

First, the very imposition of a health insurance mandate, no matter how "minimal," violates the principles of individual liberty upon which this country was founded.

Second, the mandate is unlikely to remain "minimal" for long. The experience of states that allow their legislatures to mandate what benefits health insurance plans must cover has shown that politicizing health insurance inevitably makes health insurance more expensive. As the cost of government-mandated health insurance rises, Congress will likely respond by increasingly subsidizing health insurance for an ever increasing number of Americans.

When the cost of government-mandated insurance proves to be an unsustainable burden on individuals, small employers, and the government, Congress will likely impose price controls on medical treatments, and even go so far as to limit what procedures and treatments mandatory insurance will reimburse.

Mr. Speaker, Congress made a grave error by forcing all Americans to purchase health insurance. The mandate violates fundamental principles of individual liberty, and will lead to further government involvement in health care. I therefore ask all of my colleagues to join me in correcting this mistake by cosponsoring the End the Mandate Act.

POE POH

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Poe Poh for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Poe Poh is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Poe Poh is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Poe Poh for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 10, 2011, and on Monday, March 14, 2011, I missed a series of votes because I was ill. If I was here, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 168, "no" on rollcall No. 169, "no" on rollcall No. 170, "yea" on rollcall No. 171; "yea" on rollcall No. 175; and "yea" on rollcall No. 176.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, due to my participation in a meeting with some of my constituents, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 174. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on this vote.

NOAH BENNETT

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Noah Bennett for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Noah Bennett is a 7th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Noah Bennett is exemplary of the type of achievement

that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Noah Bennett for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on March 11, 2011, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 172–174 due to a tsunami in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 172, "aye;" rollcall No. 173, "aye;" and rollcall No. 174, "nay."

INTRODUCTION OF THE  
AFFORDABLE GAS PRICE ACT**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Affordable Gas Price Act. This legislation reduces gas prices by reforming government policies that artificially inflate the price of gas. Because of a number of factors, including the instability in the Middle East, the average price of gas has risen approximately 13% since the beginning of the year. In some areas, the price of gas is approaching \$4.00 per gallon. There is thus a real possibility that the American people will soon be once again hard hit by skyrocketing gas prices.

High gas prices threaten our fragile economy and diminishes the quality of life for all Americans. One industry that is particularly hard hit is the trucking industry. The effects of high gas prices on the trucking industry will be reflected in increased costs for numerous consumer goods, thus further harming American consumers.

Unfortunately, many proposals to address the problem of higher energy prices involve increasing government interference in the market through policies such as price controls. These big government solutions will, at best, prove ineffective and, at worst, bring back the fuel shortages and gas lines of the seventies.

Instead of expanding government, Congress should repeal federal laws and policies that raise the price of gas, either directly through taxes or indirectly through regulations that discourage the development of new fuel sources. This is why my legislation repeals the federal moratorium on offshore drilling and allows oil exploration in the ANWR reserve in Alaska. My bill also ensures that the National Environmental Policy Act's environmental impact statement requirement will no longer be used as a tool to force refiners to waste valuable time and capital on nuisance litigation. The Affordable Gas Price Act also provides tax incentives to encourage investment in new refineries.

Federal fuel taxes are a major part of gasoline's cost. The Affordable Gas Price Act suspends the federal gasoline tax any time the average gas prices exceeds \$3.00 per gallon. During the suspension, the federal government will have a legal responsibility to ensure the federal highway trust fund remains funded. My bill also raises the amount of mileage reimbursement not subject to taxes, and, during times of high oil prices, provides the same mileage reimbursement benefit to charity and medical organizations as provided to businesses.

Misguided and outdated trade policies are also artificially raising the price of gas. For instance, even though Russia and Kazakhstan allow their citizens the right and opportunity to emigrate, they are still subject to Jackson-Vanik sanctions, even though Jackson-Vanik was a reaction to the Soviet Union's highly restrictive emigration policy. Eliminating Jackson-Vanik's threat of trade-restricting sanctions would increase the United States' access to oil supplies from non-Arab countries. Thus, my bill terminates the application of title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 to Russia and Khazaskin, allowing Americans to enjoy the benefits of free trade with these oil-producing nations.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Affordable Gas Price Act and end government policies that increase the cost of gasoline.

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SERGIO ALFARO

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sergio Alfaro for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Sergio Alfaro is a 11th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Sergio Alfaro is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Sergio Alfaro for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

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INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 813

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on several occasions when we begin a discussion about taking care of veterans, we sometimes bypass or overlook the veterans' survivors.

Today, I am introducing a bill to help our veterans' survivors.

Mr. Speaker, survivors often serve as the backbone of our veterans. In many instances while they are serving and giving selflessly to their nation, their loved ones are holding down the homefront for when they return.

However, I believe that current law short-changes our survivors.

This bill speaks directly to the appropriateness of our current regulations regarding Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) because it would shorten the time period for which a veteran must be rated continuously totally disabled immediately preceding his or her death before the veteran's survivors are eligible for these benefits from 10 years to 1 year.

DIC is a monetary payment made to survivors of our service-connected disabled veterans. Survivors deserve to be taken care of when their spouse who served and gave their all has died.

Given the current backlog in the VA's claims processing system, veterans wait years, even decades, to receive their final rating. In the case of totally disabled veterans, the resulting benefits may, unfortunately, come too late. These delays should not negate our responsibility to these veterans' families and this legislation would ensure that their survivors receive the benefits due to them.

Mr. Speaker, when we provide for and protect our veterans we must always remember to include their survivors. They cannot be an afterthought.

When I was the Chair of this Committee, I always remembered our veterans' survivors and made them a priority. I hope we continue that tradition in this Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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SALUTING LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
CHESTER L. RICE

**HON. BILL POSEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life and service of Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.) Chester L. Rice for his distinguished service to the U.S. Army and his nation.

LTC Rice honorably served his country for twenty-one years from 1955 to 1976.

Chester served as a member of my Service Academy Nominating Committee since 2009. He also served as a member of Congressman Weldon's Service Academy Nominating Committee from 1997 to 2008. I applaud his commitment to our youth, military and the future of our Armed Services.

On May 15, 2001, Chester was awarded the TROACC Award from the Cape Canaveral Chapter of the Retired Officers Association for his leadership and dedicated work as Vice President and President of TROACC. Under his direction, the Chapter was twice selected as the TROA Chapter of the Year and the chapter magazine, the Intercom, was twice selected as the best in its category.

LTC Rice served as Chairman of the TROACC Student Affairs Committee and is credited for improvements to the program, which recognizes outstanding cadets from the Junior ROTC Programs in eleven Brevard

County High Schools and from the ROTC Panther Battalion at the Florida Institute of Technology. The excellent support that TROACC provided to these Junior and Senior ROTC programs is a direct result of the leadership and dedicated work of LTC Rice.

Born in Lawrenceville, Virginia on Nov. 28, 1933, he attended high school in Derry Township, Pennsylvania and was President of his high school class all four years. All his classmates loved him.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal and the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster.

Chester is survived by his wife, Helen and brother, Donald Rice. He was preceded in death by his brothers, Harry Rice and Robert Rice, Jr. and his sister, Dolores Henderson. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

I am honored to rise and call attention to the service that Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.) Chester L. Rice has provided our nation. I am proud to have known him and to see his commitment to the cause of liberty and freedom.

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RUSLAN PSICHENKO

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ruslan Pshichenko for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Ruslan Pshichenko is a 8th grader at North Arvada Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Ruslan Pshichenko is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ruslan Pshichenko for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

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20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SARASOTA BALLET

**HON. VERN BUCHANAN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2011*

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of The Sarasota Ballet.

Jean Weidner founded The Sarasota Ballet in 1987 as a presenting organization. Her dream of a full resident ballet company was realized in 1990 when The Sarasota Ballet became the first and only professional ballet company on the Gulf Coast of Florida.

Through the seasons, The Sarasota Ballet has become an exceptional company of artistic and talented dancers.