

and demands a bipartisan view to see exactly what the churches' or religious leaders' complaints are because I have one, too; and that is, at a time when this country is facing a fiscal, as well as moral, obligation to the most vulnerable people among us, I see the battle between the haves and the have-nots, the 1 percent and the 99 percent.

I hear the disputes as to whether or not the capitalistic system is fair, but I always took the position that the capitalistic system is an invitation of how Americans and others can invest and make money; and the question of compassion, the question of taking care of your own, the question of illness and jobs and the social issues of today, that it was the Congress that had the responsibility to deal with that rather than to be condemning those who seek to get returns on their investments.

Having said that, let's take a look and see what issues are biblical, what issues are in the Mormon faith, the Muslim faith, the Buddhist faith, the Jewish faith, Protestant and Catholic. It seems to me that throughout every one of these texts, there are things that say that we have a responsibility as human beings and God-fearing people to protect the vulnerable. It is abundantly clear, even in the story about the Good Samaritan. It is also a mandate that when someone is sick that we have a responsibility to assist them.

Certainly, when we talk about Jesus Christ in Matthew where these wealthy people are attempting to get into Heaven and Jesus tells them he was hungry, thirsty, unclothed, in jail, and they didn't do anything to assist him and they said that they don't remember Jesus ever coming asking for anything. Then of course the international world-famous biblical expression is that it wasn't how you treated Jesus, the Son of God, but it was how you treated the lesser of our brothers and sisters.

I think everyone would agree that whether you want to accuse the President of being the food-stamp President or saying he wants to bring socialism to the United States, all of that rhetoric doesn't hide the fact that the poorest of the poor now are suffering more than the people that caused this fiscal crisis.

If we are going to do something about the deficit, we just can't say we've got to cut spending, especially when that spending is exactly for the people that the spiritual leaders have made vows to protect.

□ 1020

Oh, we don't call it the sick and the disabled and the uneducated, but we do call it Medicaid; we do call it Medicare; we do call it Social Security; we do call it education; and we do call it the ability to get a job so that a person can have not only the income for his family to be able to have the dignity and respect it deserves, but we also have to recognize that from an economic point

of view, it is the people who are in the middle class who are slipping into poverty that makes the difference. I hope that people will give serious thought to the accusation.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Girl Scouts of the USA, which will be celebrating its 100th anniversary on March 12, 2012.

For 100 years, the Girl Scouts have fostered an environment that has created generations of women with sound character and strong leadership skills. Founded by Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, Georgia, the first troop consisted of just 18 Girl Scouts. Today, there are more than 3.7 million Girl Scouts and more than 100 councils across our Nation. Since its start, more than 50 million women have been a part of this extraordinary organization.

The Girl Scouts of America teaches young women the importance of leadership and of community service. This past Sunday, I proudly participated in Troop 21292's Girl Scout Gold Award ceremony in honoring seven young women from Bucks County, Pennsylvania. It pleases me to recognize these Girl Scouts for their exceptional accomplishment: Christine DiPierro, Catherine Silvernail, Charlotte Triebel, Emily Kraeck, Emily Nowalinski, Kimberly Wodzanowski, and Margaret Zelin. These young ladies exemplify courage, confidence, and character, and have made the world a better place, which has been the mission of the Girl Scouts of the USA for 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, on March 16, 1950, the United States Congress chartered the Girl Scouts of the USA. Today, as the Member of the United States Congress representing Pennsylvania's Eighth District, it is my privilege to congratulate the Girl Scouts of the USA as they commemorate 100 years of building girls of courage, confidence, and character who have truly made the world a better place. Best wishes for success in the next 100 years.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, as a proud graduate of St. Symphorosa Grammar School and St. Ignatius College Prep, and as a strong supporter of Catholic education, I have again this year introduced a resolution in honor of Catholic Schools Week to highlight the contributions Catholic schools make, not only to the students who attend them, but to our entire Nation.

Since 1974, the National Catholic Educational Association and the

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have provided leadership in planning and organizing Catholic Schools Week. This year, it is celebrated from January 29 through February 5. The theme, "Faith, Academics, Service," celebrates the broad educational experience Catholic school students receive. Catholic school students are not only focused on academic excellence but also on enriching the spiritual character and moral development of young Americans.

America's Catholic schools produce graduates with the skills and integrity needed by our businesses, governments, and communities, emphasizing a well-rounded education and instilling the values of giving back to the community and helping others. Nearly every Catholic school has a community service program, and their students volunteer half-a-million hours every year to their parishes and communities. My own decision to pursue a career in teaching and then in public service was fostered in part by the dedicated teachers throughout my years in Catholic schools.

Today, over 2 million elementary and secondary students are enrolled in nearly 7,000 Catholic schools, where these students typically excel. They surpass their peers in math, science, reading, history, and geography in NAEP tests. The graduation rate for Catholic high school students is 99 percent, and 85 percent of the graduates of these schools attend a 4-year college. As we continue to hear disturbing reports about our national test scores, these statistics are truly remarkable and should be commended.

Notably, the success of Catholic schools does not depend on selectivity. These academic achievements are realized by students from all walks of life. Catholic schools accept 9 out of every 10 students who apply, and are highly effective in providing a quality education to students from every socioeconomic group, especially disadvantaged youths in underserved urban communities. Over the past 30 years, the percentage of minority students enrolled in Catholic schools has more than doubled, and today they constitute almost one-third of all Catholic school students. In times of economic hardship, Catholic schools provide an affordable alternative to other forms of private education.

In addition to producing well-rounded students, Catholic schools save taxpayers billions of dollars each year by lowering the number of students in already overburdened public schools. It is estimated that taxpayers save over \$1 billion from students attending Catholic schools in the Chicago area alone and approximately \$20 billion nationwide. The importance of these savings is undeniable as we in Congress and as lawmakers across the country struggle with deficits.

I was born and raised and live in the Chicago Archdiocese, home to one of the most successful Catholic school

systems in the Nation, and my parish school at St. John of the Cross has one of the best schools in the archdiocese. Right next-door, the Joliet Diocese also has a thriving Catholic school system. The focus of this year's Catholic Schools Week, "Faith, Academics, Service," reflects my own Catholic education. The knowledge, discipline, desire to serve, and love of learning it instilled in me enabled me to earn my doctorate and to become a teacher before being elected to Congress.

In recognizing Catholic Schools Week, we pay a special tribute to dedicated teachers and administrators who sacrifice so much, in most cases working for less than they could earn elsewhere. I have many fond memories of my teachers, including those of many nuns, who taught me the value of faith, learning, and service. Throughout the United States, millions of others have similar memories of dedicated sisters, priests, and lay teachers who gave their hearts and souls to their students.

This week, I had the honor of celebrating Catholic Schools Week at a number of schools, including St. Andrew School in Romeoville, Everest Academy in Lemont, St. Michael School in Orland Park, Cardinal Joseph Bernadine School in Orland Hills, and my alma mater, St. Symphorosa in Chicago. I also joined St. Linus School in Oak Lawn in celebrating, not only Catholic Schools Week, but also the school's prestigious Blue Ribbon award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the outstanding education Catholic schools provide to Americans across the country as we celebrate Catholic Schools Week.

SUSAN G. KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise quite saddened by the news that the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure has made a political decision—a fine nonprofit that I have been associated with for years. I've run in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. I've walked in the Race for the Cure. I have been the emcee of a number of events locally that they have held. So I have been a big booster of the Susan G. Komen organization. But not anymore. Their announcement yesterday that they are no longer going to fund any organization that is being investigated by a Federal, State, or local body means that Planned Parenthood is no longer going to receive \$600,000 a year. Now, ironically, yesterday, the Komen organization also announced, and with great concern in a statement, that the dismal rate of breast cancer screening with women who do not have insurance is something like 38.2 percent.

□ 1030

Last year, the Planned Parenthood organization was responsible for over

700,000—700,000—breast cancer screenings for women who are poor, for women who don't have insurance, for women who seek to get the health care they get through Planned Parenthood. So over the last 5 years, there have been 4 million breast cancer screenings by Planned Parenthood. Komen has funded about 170,000 of them through Planned Parenthood.

So what does this mean? Well, I guess it means that Susan G. Komen has decided to become a 501(c)(4), because no longer do they want to be providing nonprofits. They want to become a political advocacy group.

Last time I checked, we were all presumed innocent until proven guilty and we looked to investigations in the Federal judicial branch; we looked to investigations by the U.S. Attorney or the district attorney. Far be it from us to rely on the House of Representatives holding a hearing as being emblematic of justice, because oftentimes it's a political sandbox.

Now, this ostensible investigation is one that has been called on by Mr. STEARNS, who is the subcommittee chair of Energy and Commerce on Oversight. The hearing has never been held. So why would Susan G. Komen take the remarkable step of saying they are no longer going to fund Planned Parenthood?

I suppose when we review NIH and bring them under some investigation that they will stop funding NIH to the tune of a million dollars, or I suppose that when we have a pharmaceutical company that we bring to the Hill to ask them questions about a particular activity that they will stop accepting sponsor money from that particular pharmaceutical company.

All of you across this country that feel that Susan G. Komen should stick to what it knows, and that is breast cancer research, breast cancer screening, and support and promote those activities by organizations that do the research and do the screening, I ask you to call them at 1-877-465-6636 and tell them that you want them to stick to what they know.

Let's not make this a race to the political bottom.

POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as the founder of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise today to continue talking about the tide of poverty sweeping across this country.

Americans who are struggling to find work cannot wait. Americans whose homes are underwater cannot wait, and the nearly 50 million Americans who are living in poverty cannot wait.

We must act, and we must act now to extend vital unemployment benefits and the temporary payroll tax reduction while our economy continues to recover. We should be coming together

now to enact bold programs and policies that provide equal opportunity and equal access for every single American, no matter their race, no matter their employment status, and no matter their humble beginnings. Instead, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this Tea Party-led Congress continues to do nothing but distract from the real issues and waste the American people's time.

The Republican caucus failed to pass a single jobs bill last year, and by the looks of this week's calendar, it looks like they might be committed to doing more of the same. This Nation cannot afford any more of this do-nothing Tea Party Republican House. Instead of passing a jobs bill, Republicans in the House today are attacking American families in need.

This bill that's coming up today, H.R. 3567, is really a distasteful and misleading bill that tries to make it seem to like every low-income family is somehow criminal. Nothing could be further from the truth. Very few people want to qualify for welfare. They don't want to be distressed enough to meet these qualifications. This is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act which is being attacked today. That's what it's called today. Actually, it's called TANF.

TANF recipients are struggling through the most difficult time of their lives, and they want nothing more than a good job to support their families. This bill that's coming up again today is really a sad attempt to re-create the Ronald Reagan era about the Cadillac-driving welfare queen. It wasn't true then nor is it true today. TANF benefits did not pay for Cadillacs to fund lavish lifestyles.

Mr. Speaker, as a single young mother who once relied on food stamps and public assistance during a very difficult period, I'm really appalled to see Republican politicians attack these families just because they are facing hard times and need a helping hand. TANF benefits keep children in homes and in schools. They keep American families from suffering abject poverty.

What we should be doing is helping these families by creating jobs, by removing these obstacles and barriers, and we should be helping them to reignite the American Dream, not insulting them, which is what this bill does. This Congress should be working together to create more opportunity for the long-term unemployed and the millions of Americans suffering in poverty.

We should at least extend unemployment benefits for the chronically unemployed who have hit the 99-week limit, can't apply anymore because they are ineligible, and we should be voting, for example, for the bill, which Congressman SCOTT of Virginia and myself have written to help those looking for a job and who can't find a job. We have to remember now that there is only one job for every four individuals looking for a job.