

on the latest weather conditions and provide support after the storms pass.

I want to thank all of the local radio and TV stations across the country, especially those in the Joplin area, for the great public service they provide their communities before, during, and after these weather emergencies.

GETTING THINGS DONE

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, like so many of us, I am back from 10 days in my district and the constant question of: Why can't Congress come together to get some things done?

I was thinking about that because the Republican majority says we passed the Violence Against Women Act. We passed an extension of the lower student interest rate bill. But when you look at those bills, you really have to scratch your head. The Violence Against Women Act that they passed was opposed by not dozens but by hundreds of women's organizations. Let me say that again: the Violence Against Women Act was opposed by women's organizations from one coast to the other.

I say all of this not to strike partisan points, but because on July 1, student loan interest rates double, putting \$1,000 of additional cost on each and every student in this country. The Republicans said let's pay for that by removing preventive health care. To my mind, health care and education are what create jobs. It is time for this institution to act intelligently and help the true job creators in this country.

HONORING PATRIOT GUARD RIDERS

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

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, just a few days after Memorial Day, I rise in support of a new resolution introduced by Mr. GINGREY to honor America's Patriot Guard Riders. The Patriot Guard started in August of 2005 in Mulvane, Kansas, the southern part of the district which I represent, with a group of folks from VFW Post 136; and it now numbers over 220,000 patriotic Americans.

These great Patriotic Guard Riders attend funerals and protect the families from unwanted intrusion during this important time after the service-members have fallen. They visit veterans at hospitals and meet with the family members of the soldiers, and they contribute their time and their dollars to scholarships for the families of America's fallen soldiers.

I urge my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring Mr. GINGREY's resolution, H. Res. 669, and in honoring this group of patriotic Americans known as our Patriot Guard Riders.

CHALLENGES FACING AMERICA

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, faced with a number of challenges, I have lived through hurricanes Rita, Katrina, Ike, Storm Allison; and I realize the importance of emergency radio and television giving us the information as a lifeline, and I rise to thank Charity Productions going on in my district right now, the Sixth Annual Ecumenical Hurricane Forum. Thank you so very much for educating our public.

I also wanted to rise today to congratulate CNBC and the Congressional Black Caucus Faith Forum that has been going on for the last 2 days. We realize that America's faith institutions, and in this instance African American denominations, are crucial, coming together to reach out for empowerment, for social justice, and certainly freedom. We thank them so much for the work that they do.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me say that in this particular body, and in the Judiciary Committee, we are facing the question of FISA and the impact of the FISA amendments, as it has reversible impact on spying on Americans. We must look to get the data and insist that we are securing the homeland, but we must also ensure that Americans are not in essence spied upon, are not surveilled by the impact of international needs.

□ 1220

HONORING SERGEANT JABRAUN S. KNOX

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, on May 18, 2012, Sergeant Jabraun Knox from Auburn, Indiana, died at the age of 23 of injuries sustained when his unit received indirect fire in Kunar Province in Afghanistan.

Sergeant Knox joined the Army in January 2009 and reported to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, and was assigned to 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade in June 2009. Within a month, Sergeant Knox was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom until May 2010. His unit was then deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in November 2011.

Sergeant Knox's awards and decorations include the Army Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon, and the Marksmanship Qualification Badge.

Sergeant Knox and his wife, Courtney, married on November 9, 2009 in the

middle of his deployment to Iraq. Their first child, Braylon, was born October 17, 2011, just 2 weeks before Sergeant Knox was deployed to Afghanistan.

Sergeant Knox selflessly gave his life as a service to defend our country's freedom in support of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. My heart goes out to his family, and I want to express my gratitude to them both for the service they have made for our Nation.

REVERSING PROGRESS ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, during this Congress, we have seen numerous bills that would reverse decades of progress for women's health. Today we take our ninth such floor vote.

We have seen H.R. 358, which permits hospitals and hospital workers to choose to deny women care that would save their lives, putting ideology above all. We have seen H.R. 3, a bill that would cause insurers to start refusing to cover a legal and safe procedure. We have seen bills that would restrict women's access to preventive care, and efforts to eliminate all funding for the only Federal program dedicated to providing comprehensive family planning services.

At home, our constituents are pleading for us to focus on job creation, but here we are again today about to debate H.R. 3541, yet another ideologically driven bill that intrudes on the relationship between a woman and her doctor. In particular, this bill puts doctors in situations where they would be forced to report confidential conversations with women to law enforcement.

Let's reject H.R. 3541 and start looking at bills that can solve problems for women.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, June 1 marks the start of another Atlantic hurricane season. The time to prepare for hurricanes—or any natural disasters—is now.

The Federal Government, led by FEMA, is gearing up to respond to hurricanes that may impact the United States and is working with State and local emergency management officials, first responders, and nonprofit partners to make sure all are prepared.

The private sector also plays a vital role by preparing their businesses and often donating goods and services to response and relief efforts. Broadcasters and wireless providers work to ensure communication systems are up and running to provide vital information during an emergency.

We all play a role in preparedness, and I urge Americans to pledge to prepare—put together an emergency kit,

develop a family plan, encourage others to prepare. Taking those steps now will make a huge difference should disaster strike.

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, during the last 2 months, students from my district have spoken out about their struggles to afford college, to pay their loans, to keep up their grades, and to maintain their jobs. Many of them are working multiple jobs and still graduated with \$20,000 to \$30,000 in debt, and it's way too much for them.

So now they're just watching as the days tick by, and we're getting closer to July 1, when student loan interest rates will actually double if Congress doesn't act. They are understandably scared and frustrated.

At Middlesex Community College recently, the students that I met with added their voices to the debate and signed their names on the "Wall of Debt." In the days following, hundreds of students, parents, and even grandparents added their names to what has now become the virtual "Wall of Debt." They're letting Congress know that we can't let those interest rates double on July 1.

So, again, I'm standing here today on behalf of 177,000 students from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and 7 million students across the country whose student loans rates are set to double if Congress doesn't act, and I call upon my Republican colleagues to put the partisanship and the political games aside and take real action on this important issue.

While I believe the bill that I put forward a month ago to prevent the interest rate from doubling to 6.8 percent and was fully paid for by just one tax subsidy to Big Oil was fair and reasonable, I continue to be open to find other ways to compensate for that bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in doing that and make sure that this interest rate does not double.

REPUBLICAN PLAN FOR AMERICA'S JOB CREATORS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, in 2009, the Obama administration said unemployment would never reach 8 percent if the stimulus was approved. Three years and \$1.2 trillion in spending later, unemployment has remained above 8 percent for 39 consecutive months, the longest span since the Great Depression. Even more alarming is that 8 percent doesn't illustrate how grim the situation really is.

More than half a million more Americans are out of work since President Obama took office, and currently the percentage of working Americans is at

a 30-year low. Unemployment would be 40 percent higher if more Americans hadn't given up looking for jobs.

With these numbers, it is clear that President Obama's policies have failed and are making the economy worse.

House Republicans have a plan for America's job creators to help turn this economy around. It's time for the President and Senate Democrats to stop blocking our jobs bill and help us put Americans back to work.

PRENATAL NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

(Ms. BONAMICI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act, which is yet another misleading bill that purports to help women, when in reality it takes away their freedom to control their own reproductive health. Mr. Speaker, we should be talking about jobs, but instead we're spending time on this divisive issue.

We can all agree that women should not choose to terminate a pregnancy based solely on gender, but this bill criminalizes a legal procedure and puts doctors in the role of legal and moral arbiter, and could give almost anyone who asserts an interest an effective veto over a woman's intimate personal health care decision.

This bill is another attempt to limit a woman's ability to make her own decisions about her life and her health. It will restrict the rights of women to obtain a completely legal and constitutionally protected medical procedure. If we want to truly and effectively address the issue of gender-selective abortion—a problem much more pervasive in other parts of the world—there are much better ways to do it than making suspects out of women and criminals out of doctors.

WAR ON WOMEN LEGISLATION

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this week, Republicans are bringing to the floor a bill that purports to stop abortions based on sex selection, but it is so broadly written and so clearly unconstitutional that it is obvious that they are really after rolling back the clock and undermining comprehensive health care for women.

The bill includes a provision that would allow a woman's husband or parents—by merely alleging that an abortion is because of gender—to seek injunctive relief to prevent the doctor from performing abortion procedures, sending an incredibly private and personal decision into the courts and potentially forcing women against their will or health to go through with a pregnancy.

Republicans oppose protections for immigrant women under the Violence

Against Women Act, they oppose pay equity and access to contraceptives, but with this bill they claim to be defenders of women?

Today marks the third anniversary of the death—and the murder—of Dr. George Tiller of Wichita, Kansas, who performed legal abortions. His motto was "Trust women." He believed that women—not the government—should make the decisions about their health and their lives. I'm not fooled, and American women aren't fooled. This bill is just the latest strike by Republicans in the war on women.

□ 1230

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

(Ms. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, from an early age, my parents instilled the importance of obtaining a quality education. They cultivated a love of learning and made it clear how important an education is to success in life. They could not have been more right. Higher education is the single biggest determining factor for lifetime earning potential, with those holding a bachelor's degree earning double the yearly salary of someone with a high school diploma.

And yet, while the benefits of education are clear for America's families, my Republican colleagues seem deaf to the message. Even as college tuition has increased 28 percent in the last decade, Republicans continue to play partisan and ideological politics that will only ensure that 7 million students across the country will see their interest rates double in July. They're more concerned with gutting health care reform and protecting the wealthiest 2 percent and Big Oil and corporations than making college more affordable for America's students. And the one time House Republicans put the student loan issue to a vote, they insisted on slashing critical funding for women and children's preventative health care in exchange.

If you're thinking, "Oh, no, not again," you're right. It's time for my Republican colleagues to recognize that students deserve better, and it's time to take action to ensure that student loan rates don't increase, don't double by July. Actually, time is running out.

PASS THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely appalling that in the year 2012 women still make 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male peers.

This isn't just an issue of fundamental fairness. With so many women