

return to the Clinton-era rates. This is a plan which will protect 98 percent of the tax filers in this country from any tax increase. It will help balance the budget and will give confidence to the financial markets, which are terrified of the inability of this town to get its business done.

We should act on the Senate's plan. The House Republican leadership has a choice: let's compromise; let's get something done; let's help the economy—or let's push this country into brinksmanship, which for the last year and a half has been the trademark of the 112th Congress.

We can do better as the House of Representatives. Let's pass the Senate measure. Let's provide some confidence for the American people and for the U.S. economy to grow.

THREATENING CONGRESS DOES NOT SOLVE THE ISSUE OF SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in a recent opinion piece submitted to Politico, Jeffrey Zients, the Acting Director for the Office of Management and Budget, wrote:

As President Barack Obama has said many times, the sequester wasn't meant to be implemented. It was designed to cut so deep that just threatening them would force Congress to meet and agree on a big, balanced package of deficit reduction.

If the President actually believed the Budget Control Act would destroy jobs and threaten our national security, why did he sign the legislation into law? Additionally, if he believed the proposed cuts would frighten Members of Congress, why has he remained silent on this issue?

House Republicans have acted and passed bipartisan legislation several times replacing the sequester with responsible reforms as well as calling for more government transparency to stop the destruction of 200,000 jobs in Virginia alone.

I urge the President to support this bill in order to promote peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETBAO DAILY NEWS

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the achievements of VietBao Daily News. They are celebrating their 20th anniversary in the Vietnamese American community. For 20 years, VietBao Daily News has served its readers with comprehensive

news, current affairs, as well as information from the broader community and from Vietnam.

VietBao Daily News is also a venue for the Vietnamese people to preserve the Vietnamese language and cultural values through the Writing on America Award initiative. This is a writing competition that they hold every year that allows the Vietnamese American community to write short stories about their experiences, whether their experiences are those of coming over from Vietnam or of their experiences here. They judge it. They have winners. Then they make a compilation of these written stories. It's for the archives. It's for the future. It's for their community to understand where they come from. It's also for the broader American community to understand.

So I would like to congratulate all of the winners and the participants of the 2012 Writing on America and Teen Writing awards for submitting so many incredible stories, some of which I have had the opportunity to read. Again, congratulations to your staff and for your dedication towards the community on this 20th anniversary.

PROVIDING A ONE-YEAR EXTENSION FOR MEDICARE PHYSICIAN PAYMENT RATES

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, as a physician and now as a legislator, I, frankly, do not understand the way our government continues to treat those who care for America's patients.

Earlier this month, I introduced legislation, H.R. 6142, to provide a 1-year extension for Medicare physician payment rates. This allows patients to continue to have access to their physicians in the next year.

Look, this is no mystery. We all know the last patch is going to expire on December 31. We all know that before December 31 of this year that somehow we'll cobble together and provide another patch. Why not do that now? Why make them wait until the deadline? They can't plan. They can't grow their practices. They can't expand because they don't know what their government is going to do to them.

Further compounding the problem this year is the specter of sequestration that occurs on January 1. No matter how you slice it, it's another 2 percent cut on top of the 27 to 29 percent cut they are already going to get under the SGR.

Let's do the right thing. We could pass this bill under suspension this afternoon. We could provide our Nation's physicians the stability and the certainty that they need to continue to see the patients we've asked them to serve.

□ 1410

SAIPAN SOUTHERN HIGH SCHOOL MANTA RAY CONCERT BAND

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, here's a story to make us all cheer: 46 high school musicians from America's smallest insular area raise a quarter of a million dollars to go to London and perform during the Olympics where they win a silver medal.

This is the story of the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Concert Band, who played their hearts out at the London Celebration Music Festival this week in Central Hall Westminster. We are all cheering in the Northern Mariana Islands because the Manta Rays represent us all.

We're the only U.S. insular area that did not send athletes to London. We sent our student musicians, and they came away with silver. It took bake sales, rummage sales, garage sales, a bowling tournament, tree plantings, car washes, a radio telethon, lunches, and raffles. It took business, government, civic organizations, and individual donors all chipping in because these kids dared us to dream.

Ten years ago, there was no high school band in our islands. Most families could not afford to buy an instrument. Today, through the faith, effort, and determination of the students, we're all inspired, confirming the belief that there is no better investment than in our children.

Congratulations, Manta Rays.

RUSSIA AND THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, August 22 is a very important date.

The reason I say that is that August 22 is the date that Russia will become a member of the World Trade Organization. It's a done deal. Both Houses of the Russian Parliament have passed it, and it's been agreed to.

I point to this day because there are many who believe that as we look at a vote on permanent normal trade relations with Russia that will be on the horizon—we're not going to be able to do it this week; I hope we will do it shortly after we come back in September—there are some who believe that we are playing a role in getting Russia into the World Trade Organization. That is not the case.

All we're saying, Mr. Speaker, is that since Russia is already going to be a member as of August 22 of the World Trade Organization, we want to make sure that U.S. workers and U.S. businesses will have the opportunity to have access to the 140 million consumers in Russia.

Mr. Speaker, it's important for us to note the question is not whether or not Russia will be a member of the WTO, because I believe that our access will play a role in undermining the policies of Vladimir Putin. The question is: Are we going to get our Western values into Russia? We need to say "yes."

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, July 26, 2012.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
*Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On July 26, 2012, pursuant to section 3307 of Title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider resolutions to authorize 12 lease prospectuses included in the General Services Administration's (GSA) FY2011 and FY2012 Capital Investment and Leasing Programs (CILP) and one resolution to authorize the exercise of a purchase option on cur-

rently leased space for \$14 million below fair market value.

Our Committee continues to work to cut waste and the cost of federal property and leases. The resolutions approved by the Committee will save the taxpayer \$10.3 million annually or \$178 million over the terms of the leases. These resolutions ensure savings through lower rents, shrinking the space requirements of agencies, avoidance of hold-over penalties, and efficiencies created through consolidation. In addition, the Committee has included space utilization requirements in each of the resolutions to ensure agencies are held to appropriate utilization rates.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 26, 2012.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. MICA,
Chairman.

Enclosures

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 89,000 rentable square feet of space for the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, currently located at 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW, Washington, D.C. at a proposed total annual cost of \$4,361,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply a utilization rate of 202 square feet or less per person as detailed in the Housing Plan contained in the prospectus.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in a utilization rate of 202 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.