

On behalf of Bobby and his family, I stand before you today to briefly discuss this growing trend and associated symptoms, as well as highlight prevention efforts within my district and nationwide by both the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

More than 2 million troops have served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that's a lot of people who have seen war up close and personal. It can affect some of them adversely when they come back home.

In fiscal year 2009 alone, 1,868 veterans of these wars made suicide attempts.

Faced with the stigma of post-traumatic stress disorder, unemployment rates tipping 12 percent for our veterans, and a loss of the military camaraderie, many veterans report feeling purposeless upon returning home.

We are aware of three conditions that contribute to many of the suicides of our veterans, and they are post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD; traumatic brain injury, TBI; and depression. We know that veterans with these three medical conditions are at a higher risk of succumbing to suicide behavior.

As friends and family members of our veterans and those serving our country, there are some things that we can do: first, recognize the symptoms that could lead to serious problems; understand where and how to get assistance while still part of the military; and know the availability of treatment after service.

As members of the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee, my colleagues and I on both sides of the aisle have had the opportunity to meet and discuss some of these very important issues, and I'm pleased with Secretary of the VA Shinseki's recent outreach efforts such as Stand By Them and Side By Side.

The purpose of the joint DOD and VA Stand By Them campaign and public service announcement, Side By Side, is to increase awareness with focus on support networks for military members.

Detection and treatment are key components required for resolution. Those closest to the military member can often see signals of distress before the member recognizes it himself or herself. The quicker the detection, the quicker the treatment.

Yesterday, I joined back in my home district Director Costie and Dr. Napp at the Dayton VA Medical Center to bring awareness to Suicide Prevention Month. With a large geographic span of responsibility in my district, the Dayton VA Medical Center provides services to veterans from 16 counties.

□ 1100

During the joint press conference at the VA, we announced the ongoing efforts and helped in the promotion of the VA and DOD programs. I know communities across our Nation are doing similar awareness and education programs.

As our young men and women are fighting to protect our freedoms, while

they're often faced with multiple and lengthy employments, exposed to stressful situations in combat—including death—we cannot look the other way and hope that these issues disappear. The reality is we are faced with a growing number of PTSD, TBI, depression, and suicide within our military and veterans. This is a real problem. And if we can alleviate one of the symptoms and causes of suicide, PTSD, we may see a change in the current trendline before the problem becomes completely systemic across our fighting force.

Let me just say, as members of the grateful communities to which our brave men and women return, we need to do whatever is possible to recognize these veterans at risk and help them get the assistance they need.

NEW MEXICO CENTENNIAL RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a proud milestone in the history of the great State of New Mexico. This year marks the centennial anniversary of the "Land of Enchantment."

Filmmakers have spent years documenting the history and beauty of New Mexico, sharing the importance of our acequias, stories of history and tradition in "Canes of Power," stories and tales told by Rudolfo Anaya, and art and landscapes captured by Georgia O'Keefe.

New Mexico has a long and rich heritage that is rooted in the shared history of a diverse population, a history that respects diversity and language, a land whose State constitution was drafted and adopted in both English and Spanish. And while Santa Fe, the City of Faith, holds the distinction as the oldest capital city in the country, celebrating 400 years last year, statehood came later in 1912, when a territory known for its beautiful scenery, natural wonders, and pristine landscapes was admitted into the Union as the 47th State.

New Mexico is blessed with rich cultural landmarks: Chaco Canyon, Bandelier, the Taos Gorge and Blue Lake, and the Plaza in Santa Fe. Thousands of visitors each year travel to learn of the unique traditions and spirit that make New Mexico such a special place with blue skies, sunsets and sunrises and starry nights you won't find anywhere else in the world.

The Land of Enchantment is home to a diverse population that can trace its roots back to Spanish, Mexican, and Native American cultures, amongst others. As home to one of the richest indigenous tribal populations in the United States, New Mexico is proud of the influences and contributions of the 19 Pueblo Nations, two Apache Nations, and the Navajo Nation. These diverse cultures coming together to

share a common bond of calling New Mexico home has served as a source of strength for our State, as the influence of art, agriculture, and architecture can be felt to this very day.

During the past 100 years, New Mexico has had a proud tradition of service to our country. In World War II, Navajo Code Talkers contributed to victory for the Allied Forces, while many native sons of New Mexico sacrificed in the Battle of Bataan. In the Korean Cold War, Hiroshi Miyamura of Gallup was awarded the Medal of Honor for his distinguished service. Most recently, Santa Fe native Sergeant Leroy Petry earned the Medal of Honor for his courageous actions in the face of great danger in Afghanistan. And in every war in between, New Mexicans have proudly defended our Nation and answered the call of duty when they were needed most.

New Mexico has also served our Nation as a center for scientific innovation and research. Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories have been home to a number of scientific endeavors that have been important priorities for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, as New Mexico celebrates 100 years of statehood, we're reminded of how special this beautiful land we call home is. As a native New Mexican, it is with great pride in our past and hope for our future that I come to this floor to recognize the enduring contributions of New Mexicans during the course of our State's history.

A special love for our land and water helps shape our lives. A land of faith and family, culture and tradition—and, Mr. Speaker, the best chili found anywhere in the world—ours is a special story, an American story, one passed from one generation to the next, with our most precious lessons coming from our elders: our parents and our grandparents. In the words of my parents, Ben and Carmen, when they send me off on any journey when I depart from home: *Y que Dios les bendigan*—may God bless you.

SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY ACT

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, during the month of August, I had held several town hall meetings throughout my district in Oregon. In these meetings, I've done a summary of the work that we're doing here in Congress and then opened the floor for questions from and discussions with my constituents.

Without fail, in every town hall meeting at least one person would ask about the partisan rancor and the gridlock that's come to characterize Washington. They would ask me: Can you tell us something that's bipartisan that you've done, something where you've worked together, some achievement that everyone's agreed on.

Now, in responding to them, I've often discussed a piece of legislation that's very important to the debate on budget priorities and the so-called "fiscal cliff"; that's the Sequestration Transparency Act. This bill passed the Budget Committee by voice vote and was later approved in the House, with only two in opposition. After the Senate passed it with unanimous consent, the President signed it into law. So this was truly a bipartisan effort, a statement by almost every one of us working together that we're concerned about the impact that sequestration might have on our constituents, and an effort to get more information about the true harm that that sequestration will cause.

Now, following the administration's recent report detailing those cuts that would come under sequestration, I am even more concerned than before, and my constituents are concerned. And I know constituents all across this country are concerned as well. Mr. Speaker, there is bipartisan concern about the impact that sequestration might have, and yet we haven't been able to come to a bipartisan consensus to avoid it.

We've identified a problem; now we must identify a solution. This should be a balanced solution, working together, and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to arrive at that solution. It's a solution for my district in Oregon, for all of the great State, and, importantly, for all of this great Nation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Steven Weil, Orthodox Union, New York, New York, offered the following prayer:

Master of the Universe, today we stand before You in this hallowed Hall, grateful for the freedoms we have been granted here, grateful for the men and women in this room who You imbued with wisdom and blessed with the courage to make the difficult decisions that will impact the destiny of all humanity.

Allow the Members of Congress to be Your partners in making a more perfect world, and grant them the insight and the vision to always be mindful of the responsibilities they bear. We implore You to guide and strengthen

them so that they can do what must be done to save the world from those who wish to perpetrate terrorism and evil.

Dear God, enable them to do what must be done to plant the seeds for a brighter and more prosperous economic future. Dear God, support them in providing our children with a strong education to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Thank You for giving us such wonderful shepherds and allowing us to be their cherished flock.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VOICE OF TEXAS: ELIZABETH FROM HOUSTON, TEXAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth from Houston wrote me this about her business:

My immigrant parents came to the United States legally. They had to learn English. My dad worked very hard. He opened several bars and restaurants, hired wait staff, cooks, bartenders, and cleaning people. There was never a dime of government assistance. Hard work, long hours, and sleepless nights were the norm for all of us. I learned their work ethic early, and I also have worked very hard for my family. No welfare, no government handouts.

This is my country, and I love this country as much as my parents did. But I do not respect the current President or his administration. They want to be in charge of all of us, from cradle to grave. That is not the American way. That is exactly what my parents and grandparents fled from. Please take us back to the right way.

Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth's family did it the right way—and without Big Government getting in the way. They built their American Dream all on their own.

And that's just the way it is.

ALL THE APPEARANCES OF A SWINDLE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Did Peabody Energy Company deliberately unload a bad investment on public power organizations serving 217 cities and villages across the Midwest? Congress must find out because Peabody Energy lured public power organizations into contracts that forced municipal utilities to pay up to twice the market rate for electricity. At a time when private funding could not be had for new coal-fired utilities, Peabody Energy unloaded 95 percent of its investment onto public power customers in what became an almost triple cost overrun, with a coal mine that lasts 22 years, instead of 30 years as promised, and an ashfill that was supposed to last 23 years, and will last only 12 to 14 years.

The contract which municipals are tied into forces them to pay for power 42 percent above the market rate, whether the plant is producing energy or not. Billions of dollars were issued for bond financing for the project, and utility customers are vulnerable to huge costs for debt retirement. Wall Street wouldn't invest in the project, so Peabody went to Main Street, and now millions of public power customers will pay sky-high electric rates in what has all the appearances of a swindle.

SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY REPORT SHOWS LACK OF LEADERSHIP

(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, on Friday, the administration released a report on how the President plans to implement the \$600 billion defense sequester, threatening service-members, military families, and veterans. Politico explained it "shed little new light on the sword of Damocles." This report, required by the passage of the Sequestration Transparency Act, arrived 1 week late, confirming that the President and the liberal-controlled Senate have refused to take sequestration as a top priority.

Today, the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing to receive testimony from key government officials who will implement sequestration. Based upon the minimal information provided, it's clear the administration has not made appropriate plans for the drastic budget cuts, even though the White House is responsible for proposing the disastrous proposal. House Republicans have voted five times, led by Chairman BUCK McKEON, to replace sequestration with commonsense reforms to avoid the threat to national security or destroying jobs. I urge the President and the Senate to begin working with the House before it's too late.

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