

information. The Chinese government recognizes that ideas have consequence and they go to great lengths to restrict Chinese citizens' access to information through the "Great Firewall" which censors so-called "offensive" speech.

It is estimated that China employs between 30,000 and 50,000 special Internet police. These police were notably active in the aftermath of the "Arab Spring" as the government blocked Internet search requests for key words like "Egypt" and "Jasmine."

As far back as 2008, Amnesty International rightly noted that "In China the Internet has become a new frontier in the fight for human rights."

And yet the Obama Administration has paid mere lip-service to Internet freedom boasting in speeches of the priority it places on the issue when in fact nearly all of the money they've spent on Internet circumvention has been as a result of congressionally-mandated funding targeting closed societies and the State Department has actually sought to redirect the funding toward less threatening research initiatives as opposed to actual hard-hitting circumvention which poses a real threat to authoritarian regimes.

This is not surprising given that this administration seems less concerned with bringing about reform and change on the part of the Chinese government than it does with embracing the current leadership.

On January 19, 2011, I spoke at a Capitol Hill press conference regarding the visit of then-Chinese president Hu Jintao to the U.S. in which I strongly criticized the administration for granting the Chinese president the distinction of an official state dinner—something which had not happened for 13 years—given that the regime had done nothing to deserve such an honor.

We were joined at the press conference by the wife of Gao Zhisheng. Gao is one of the most respected human rights lawyers in China. He has defended activists and religious minorities and documented human rights abuses in China, including a number of high-profile human rights cases, involving Christians in Xinjiang and Falun Gong practitioners. He has been disbarred and subjected to forced disappearance, torture, illegal house arrest and detention as a result of his work. Currently he is imprisoned in Shaya County Prison in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China, after being incarcerated in December 2011 for allegedly violating the conditions of his suspended three-year sentence. Prior to this, his whereabouts had been unknown for almost 20 months. He has been tortured repeatedly since 2006 and continues to be at high risk of further torture. Nearly eight months ago his older brother was able to visit him in prison. Prior to that it had been nine months since anyone had had confirmation he was even alive. He has not been seen or heard from since.

I have "adopted" Gao as part of a recently launched initiative, the Defending Freedoms Project, led by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission which seeks to draw attention to the plight of persecuted prisoners of conscience and I am committed to pressing for his release and ultimately his freedom.

Gao is but one of many high profile dissidents presently languishing in prison. In December 2009, the government sentenced human rights and democracy activist Liu

Xiaobo to 11 years in prison due to his involvement in drafting Charter '08, a historic manifesto advocating for democracy and a greater respect for human rights in China. Liu's courage was recognized by the Norwegian Nobel Committee when they awarded him the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. However, the award ceremony was held with an empty chair as a solemn reminder that the 2010 Nobel Laureate remains behind bars.

Many have predicted that the 21st century will be the Chinese century, but absent dramatic reform at the heart of the Chinese government, such Chinese ascendancy is deeply problematic and America must be clear-eyed about its implications.

This administration has been anything but.

Last year, Chinese dissident Yu Jie wrote an unsettling piece in the Washington Post where he stated, "China is a far greater threat than the former Soviet Union ever was," and "unfortunately, the West lacks visionary politicians, such as Ronald Reagan, to stand up to this threat."

While this administration and this president lack vision, the Chinese people do not.

Before President Obama's recent meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, I joined a leading group of human rights organizations and activists in pressing him to raise the fate of a group of Chinese prisoners of conscience dubbed the "China 16," and to call for their immediate and unconditional release. Each has suffered for courageously challenging "the status quo at great cost and peril to themselves and their families."

As is characteristic, their names were never publicly uttered by the president. And we can only guess what happened privately.

Are their names being raised this week in Kunming, China? Are they being quietly whispered in closed door meetings? Will a single person's life change for the better as a result of the human rights dialogue?

Today, in China, there are men and women whose names we do not yet know but who stand shoulder to shoulder with the likes of Sharansky and Solzhenitsyn and other famed dissidents throughout history who have dared to question the tyranny which enslaved them.

Does the Obama Administration stand with them?

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF LILLIA ALINE HARRIS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for the House's attention today to recognize Lillia Aline Harris who will celebrate her 90th birthday on August 28th.

Lillia Aline Harris was born to Chester and Estella Warren on August 28, 1923. She was the firstborn of six children, and had three sisters and two brothers. Mrs. Harris worked on her parents' farm while still attending school. She graduated from Heflin High School in 1942.

In May of 1945, Aline married Robert Freeman Harris. Together, Aline and Robert had 3 children, 8 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Aline has been an active member of Coldwater United Methodist Church for over 60 years. She is a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and all who know her speak of her kindness.

Mr. Speaker, please join Mrs. Harris's family, friends, and myself in wishing Aline a Happy Birthday.

48TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, for the past 48 years, Medicare has provided seniors and the disabled with the quality health care, economic security and peace of mind they deserve. Because of Medicare, millions of Americans have been able to grow old with respect and dignity instead of mounting medical debt and uncertainty.

Let's not forget: Medicare is a family benefit. As a caregiver for my mother, I know firsthand just how important this benefit is to families all over New Mexico and America. Without Medicare, my mother would not be able to get the health care she needs, and there is absolutely no way I would be able to take care of her. Medicare has always been personal to me. It's personal to this day.

This week, House Republicans will vote for the 40th time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Every vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act is a vote to undermine Medicare. The Affordable Care Act has already strengthened Medicare and saved seniors money by eliminating co-pays for preventive care services, closing the prescription drug 'donut hole' and extending the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by nearly a decade.

Mr. Speaker, on this day and every day, we must remain committed to protecting and strengthening Medicare for today's seniors and for future generations.

HONORING AMBASSADOR LINDY BOGGS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Ambassador Lindy Boggs. I was profoundly saddened to learn of her recent passing. Ambassador Boggs was deeply respected for her civility, dignity, and political acumen by those across the political spectrum.

A nine-term Member of Congress and champion of women's rights, Congresswoman Boggs spent much of her time working for civil rights and to address poverty. She and her husband, Congressman Hale Boggs, welcomed civil rights activists into their New Orleans. I personally worked with Congresswoman Boggs on the successful Head Start program when she was a Member of the House of Representatives. I am pleased to recall that I was in consultation with her back when she was working on her Head Start legislation.

Congresswoman Boggs was also responsible for successfully amending the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to protect women from lending discrimination.

After retiring from Congress in 1990, Ambassador Boggs worked with civic and cultural institutions in New Orleans and nationally. More recently, Ambassador Boggs was appointed by President Clinton to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See at the Vatican. She continued her record of excellence in this role, and I was honored to have had the opportunity to visit her in Rome during her service.

Ambassador Boggs is survived by two children, Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. and Cokie Roberts, whom I have had the privilege of meeting, as well as eight grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren. She will always be remembered in Washington for her extraordinary service and dedication.

IN SUPPORT OF THE NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 850, the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act. As the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran looms over the security of the international community, it is essential that the U.S. prevent Iran from realizing its dangerous ambitions. This legislation will broaden economic sanctions, target human rights violators and increase pressure on the Iranian regime to abandon its dangerous pursuits. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation.

Despite existing sanctions, Iran continues to advance its nuclear program with determination. Since 2011, Iran's number of installed centrifuges has doubled and it continues to obstruct international inspectors. The country continues to evade sanctions to profit from its oil production, which in turn funds its nuclear program and state-sponsored terrorism organizations like Hezbollah. In fact, Iran remains the number one state-sponsor of terrorism around the world.

If Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons goes unchecked, the security of our crucial allies like Israel, the United States and the global community will be in grave danger. With this bill, Congress is sending a clear message to Tehran to abandon its nuclear weapons program, or face the economic consequences. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, on the 48th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, I rise to voice my strong support for these national treasures and to share with my colleagues the voices of older Americans from around the nation who rely on them.

Before 1965, nearly half of all seniors were uninsured. If they became sick or injured, they were forced to use their savings, rely on their family, or go without needed medical care. Today, Medicare serves over 50 million seniors and persons with disabilities, providing them with the guaranteed benefits that they have earned over their working lives.

Medicare is literally a life-saver. It can be improved—and we did so in Obamacare by lowering drug costs, eliminating cost-sharing for preventive services like colonoscopies and cancer screenings, and coordinating care to improve quality.

Unfortunately, there are some who want to change Medicare not by making it better, but by shifting costs to those who cannot afford it. Some of those proposals involve increased premiums, deductibles and new cost-sharing requirements for home health services. Others—like those in the Republican-passed budget resolution—would radically change Medicare's very structure by turning it into a voucher program and leaving seniors and people with disabilities to bear dramatically higher costs.

I urge my colleagues to consider the critical importance of Medicare and to join me in opposing proposals that would add to the financial burden of seniors and persons with disabilities who are already struggling. Here are some of the voices of those who need Medicare's guaranteed benefits.

Michelle Adams, from Fallston, Maryland, has been on Medicare for the past 13 years because she is disabled. If she didn't have Medicare, she says, "I would be in bad shape without my prescription and possibly homeless because I wouldn't be able to afford both my medication and rent."

Madeline Levine from Evergreen, Illinois has diagnosed with breast cancer shortly after she became eligible for Medicare. "Without Medicare, I could not have afforded my treatment," she says. "This gives me a peace of mind that I have protection."

Juandra Drumgold from Dorchester, Massachusetts, depends on her family for a roof over her head and to pay for basic necessities. She says that not being able to work at such an elderly age and having to maintain her health care can be quite costly. If she did not have Medicare, she says, she would have to cut her living expenses even more, making a choice between medication and food.

B. Peter Brandt-Sorheim from Mt. Morris, New York, saw his medical expenses drop by nearly two-thirds once he became eligible for Medicare last year. Before, he had to pay about \$1,625 for a three-month supply of medication, he currently pays \$135. If it weren't for Medicare, he says, "I would be walking on the edge, crossing my fingers, and praying that someone would donate my insulin medication to me."

Toni Rosenberg of Boca Raton, Florida relies on Medicare for services related to high-blood pressure, lymphedema, and kidney disease. She says, "If it was not for Medicare, I would be dead. If my Medicare benefits were cut or became more expensive, I would have to stop eating. By being single, Medicare has provided me with a safety net. Medicare is not an entitlement—it is something that we've paid into and should have when we 65. Medicare has provided me with not having to choose between eating healthy foods or being able to get my prescriptions. I do not have to worry

about my health because I know I have coverage to take care of me. I am a voice for the people who cannot speak for themselves, please keep your hands off Medicare. My parents and family all fought to have Medicare in our golden years so that my children and grandchildren will have what I have to keep them going in their senior years."

Harlan Lang from La Plata, Maryland, has been on Medicare for twelve years. He says, "If I did not have Medicare coverage, the quality of my life would change terribly, because if I was in a crisis, I would not be able to make it without the coverage. I believe so strongly in Medicare, it is so important to me. I cannot afford to be without the coverage. Healthcare is so expensive; I wish it was even better."

Rosie Woods lives in Richmond, Virginia. "I have been enrolled in Medicare for twenty years. Medicare has helped me to save on my prescriptions," she says. "My health issues for which I am receiving treatment covered through Medicare is for cholesterol and I had a stroke in 2012. If I did not have Medicare my quality of life would change because I would have to go on the soup line. If my Medicare benefits were cut or if I was charged more, I would have to give up a whole lot. It would be a lot of stress that I would have to go through. Taking care of my home will be hard with the expenses. We work very hard for them to take money out of our checks expecting the benefits to be there when we retire."

Barbara Bonfield of Birmingham, Alabama has been enrolled in Medicare for eleven years. She says, "Medicare has helped me on most of my expenses. My husband died of a heart attack at the age of 64. At the age of 65, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and I am a survivor, Medicare was my primary insurer. Medicare has kept me well and it is a vital part of my community, without Medicare coverage I probably would not be alive today, it has kept me alive. If my Medicare benefits were cut or if I was charged more, I would be spending a lot of money to obtain my health care. I would have to re-adjust to everything (travel, food etc.). The last thing that I would have to reduce is my medications. I am very aware of the rising cost of medical care in this country and it is good to know that the Affordable Care Act will reduce the medical cost."

Cynthia Ochs Saur from Melbourne, Florida says, "I reside in Florida and have been enrolled in Medicare for four years. I have had two wellness exams for breast cancer and a lot of health issues which were treated thanks to Medicare. If I did not have Medicare coverage my quality of life would change quite a bit. If my Medicare benefits were cut or if I were charged more, I would have to give up other necessities in order to pay for the help for my medical problems. I would not be able to survive in many ways and would suffer greatly."

Bruce Russell, Sr. is from Missoula, Montana and has been enrolled in Medicare for five years. He says, "Two weeks ago I was operated on for a growth on my neck, had a colonoscopy test done and one growth was removed—neither one was cancerous. If I did not have Medicare coverage I would die young. My sister had severe arthritis and shingles, she put up with the pain for three years until she was enrolled in Medicare. People who retire on fixed incomes without medical insurance face serious quality of life issues