

and Pentagon officials. The VA should have a direct partnership with Vets4Warriors and I will certainly continue to press for that, and am very happy to have the committee's support for that effort.

Madam Chair, while I will support this bill I do not support the process that brought it to the floor today. This bill came up under a rule that enshrines sequester, cutting another \$90 billion in overall funding for the government at a time when it has become clear to all but the most obtuse among us that the sequester has caused real harm to real people. The self-executing rule under which this bill is being considered will cause still more harm—not directly to our veterans, but to millions of other Americans from the additional draconian cuts the majority is seeking to impose. That's why this bill and the Homeland Security bill are under a veto threat from the President, and rightly so. I urge my Republican colleagues to abandon the budget gamesmanship, drop Sequester 2.0, and work with us and the President to implement a budget that is fair to all Americans.

RAISING THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding President Obama's upcoming meeting with President Xi Jinping of China.

Tuesday marked the 24th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, an event that reminds us of the importance of human rights, democracy and freedom across China and the world. I encourage the president to remember the tragic events of June 4, 1989, and to bear in mind the important issue of human rights when meeting with President Xi.

I also believe it is important that, as he prepares for his weekend meeting with President Xi, President Obama continues to recognize the important relationship between the United States and Taiwan. We have built an important alliance, one that has positive implications for both our economy and national security and, most importantly, helps with the spread of democracy and freedom throughout Asia and the world.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in encouraging President Obama to be mindful of the many intricacies of our relationship with China and advocate for stronger human rights standards in China and for improved coordination and partnership with Taiwan.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF BARDSTOWN POLICE OFFICER JASON SCOTT ELLIS

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Bardstown Police Officer Jason Scott

Ellis. Officer Ellis was shot and killed while on patrol in the early morning hours of Saturday, May 25. Believed to be an ambush, this senseless act has left Bardstown and its surrounding communities mourning the loss of a husband, father and police officer.

A seven-year veteran of the force, Officer Ellis also served as Bardstown's canine officer and training officer. He is the first police officer in the history of the Bardstown Police Department to be shot and killed in the line of duty.

Bardstown Police Chief Rick McCubbin was quoted as saying Officer Ellis "paid the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved: being a police officer." Mayor Bill Sheckles said, "The city and community of Bardstown lost a class act officer of the law in Jason Ellis, and his shoes will be hard to fill." I could not agree more.

I join with the Bardstown community and all of Kentucky's Second District in sending my thoughts and prayers to the family of Officer Ellis, especially his wife Amy and their sons, Hunter and Parker.

HONORING CHRISTOPHER BRIZENDINE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Brizendine. Christopher is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 214, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned 34 merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Christopher has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Christopher researched and reconstructed sheep feeders at Watkins Mill State Park in Lawson, Missouri, to be used during historical reenactments at the historic site.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Brizendine for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

VA BACKLOG

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, America's veterans deserve better.

Right now there are more than 865,000 claims pending before the Veterans Administration, and, of these, more than 575,000 have remained unresolved for 125 days or more.

It is completely unacceptable that the brave men and women who have served our nation

in uniform should have to wait months, or even years, before they receive the benefits they have earned.

That's why I'm proud to join my colleagues in supporting a package of ten bills that would help clear the existing backlog and fix the flaws in the current system.

The VA Claims, Operations and Records Efficiency Act, H.R. 1729, would help to reduce the amount of time spent waiting for the Department of Defense to provide information in a more timely manner.

The Claims Adjudication Centers of Excellence, H.R. 2088, would establish a pilot program to help expedite the adjudication of the most difficult medical conditions afflicting American veterans.

There are eight other bills that would help remedy a range of problems and enable policymakers to get more definitive information to solve this problem. I encourage my colleagues to join us in this important effort.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EQUAL PAY ACT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, 119 years ago, in 1894, a study by the AAUW and the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor found that men were making more than twice as much as women for jobs like bookkeeping.

Forty-eight years later, as millions of women like my mother entered the factories to help fight World War II, the War Labor Board issued General Order 16, declaring that men and women working the same job in the same factory should be paid the same wage.

In 1945, the first Equal Pay Bill was introduced in the House by Chase Going Woodhouse, the second woman and first Democratic woman to be elected to the House from Connecticut. It was reintroduced every year for 18 years. President Dwight Eisenhower called it "a matter of simple justice" in his State of the Union.

And 50 years ago this week—on June 10th, 1963—President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law.

The Equal Pay Act was supposed to end, and I quote, "the unconscionable practice of paying female employees less wages than male employees for the same job." But fifty years later, women are still paid only 77 cents on the dollar compared to men.

It has been 50 years since the Equal Pay Act, and 120 years since we first studied pay inequity. Haven't America's women waited long enough? It is time to come together, give the Equal Pay Act real teeth. It is time to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act so that men and women in the same job—get the same pay. It is that simple.

RECOGNIZING MIRIAM HUGHEY-GUY FOR HER EXTRAORDINARY WORK AT BARCROFT ELEMENTARY

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Miriam Hughey-Guy on her retirement following 20 years of extraordinary service as the principal of Barcroft Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia.

For 20 years, Ms. Hughey-Guy has been the energizing force motivating Barcroft students to be active learners. The innovative educational programs she brought to Barcroft have produced one of the best, most flexible schools in the County, which has some of the best schools in the country.

Ms. Hughey-Guy was the first to introduce the modified school year to Arlington County, reorganizing Barcroft's school year to provide more continuous learning, dividing the long summer vacation into shorter, more frequent breaks. Ms. Hughey-Guy recognized the benefit children received from these shorter breaks, and ensured that the intersessions between telms kept the students engaged, supported, and challenged.

She was also the leader in bringing the Leonardo da Vinci Project to Barcroft, which brings creative and scientific thought to the learning experience, challenging students with focused thinking and problem-solving activities. Ms. Hughey-Guy promotes this type of learning every day, by engaging the children directly in conversations about experiential learning and consistently calling on them to make a difference with their new found knowledge.

Her dedication, and these innovations, are just part of the reason she is consistently recognized as a leader within her profession. In 2001–02 she was awarded the Woman of Vision Award. In 2002–03, she was Arlington Public Schools' Principal of the Year. In 2003, the Washington Post awarded her with a Distinguished Leadership Award. And, in 2003, Miriam Hughey-Guy was given the Ebone Image Leadership Award from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women's Northern Virginia Chapter. Further, she is recognized as a leader among the numerous organizations that call on her to speak, such as NPR, CNN, the Virginia State Reading Association, and within the Arlington County school system.

Miriam has shared her life with hundreds of children and families over the years, many who continue to call for her advice. She has supported her staff with their ideas, goals, and professional growth. Mrs. Hughey-Guy has truly led by example. She is a mentor, boss, leader, teacher and advocate for Barcroft's children, their families, and the teaching profession.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to salute her for a job well done and wish her a happy and healthy retirement.

HONORING BEN LAUGHLIN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ben Laughlin. Ben is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ben has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ben has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ben has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ben Laughlin for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

THE KIDNAPPING OF FORMER MARINE ARMANDO TORRES IN MEXICO

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my deep concern for former Marine Corporal Armando Torres who was reportedly kidnapped by members of the Mexican Cartel during a visit to Las Barrancas, Tamaulipas, Mexico while visiting his father and uncle.

On May 14, 2013, Mr. Torres crossed on an Internet bridge into Mexico and had planned to return the next day. Family members in Mexico report that Mr. Torres along with his father and uncle were forcibly taken by members of the Mexican Cartel.

Corporal Torres is a combat veteran who served his country honorably in Iraq. I have asked the F.B.I. in McAllen, Texas and the U.S. Consulate General in Matamoros, Mexico to help bring this marine and his relatives back safely to their loved ones. Each agency has been working on this case every day. They report the Mexican Government is cooperating with them on their efforts to find the victims of this outrageous crime.

I commend the quick action taken by both the F.B.I. and the U.S. State Department. I urge them to continue to do all they can to find and return our former Marine, Armando Torres, back safely to the U.S. and to bring his relatives back home.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. JARED POLIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2216) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes:

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important amendment.

As I'm sure my colleagues know, last November Coloradans voted overwhelmingly in favor of Amendment 64, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana in our State.

Marijuana policy is a public health issue, and should be regulated like one.

Americans across the country already know that the so-called 'War on Drugs' is a failed Federal policy that clogs our prisons, drains Federal resources and disproportionately penalizes African-American and Latinos.

But Amendment 64 represents even more than an acknowledgement of failure and a Triumph of common sense.

For Colorado veterans who suffer from post traumatic stress disorder, Amendment 64 measure offers them something more: relief.

And for combat veterans who have tried everything the VA has thrown at them to fight their symptoms medical marijuana may be their only relief.

Colorado service men and women have fought valiantly for their country in every American military conflict.

It is not just Iraq and Afghanistan—from Korea to Vietnam to military engagements around the globe, over 420,000 veterans live in Colorado today.

Our commitment to our veterans should not end once they are back on American soil, and in most cases, it does not.

But for a number of veterans—those who the system denies when they try to access one of the few treatments that actually works for them—we are not living up to our promise.

If we continue to prescribe powerful, addictive drugs with dangerous side effects—but prevent even preliminary medical research into the efficacy of medical marijuana—we are not living up to our promise.

Some estimate that nearly 20 percent of returning Iraq and Afghanistan war vets are suffering from PTSD.

If we continue to fail to provide relief to veterans suffering from this condition, we are not living up to our promise.

Eighteen States and the District of Columbia currently allow some form of marijuana use. A third of Americans live in one of these States, and more States are approving these common-sense measures every year.

But the Federal Government continues to stand in the way of progress. Is there any other situation where this would be acceptable? Where some of our bravest men and women could be denied effective care by their own government?