

Our Nation has now been at war for a decade, yet a smaller percentage of our citizens have been in the Armed Forces. The Army Reserve offers a reminder that our Nation rests on the strength of brave soldiers who volunteer to step forward and make tremendous sacrifices.

Today, I wish a special 105th birthday to all the men and women serving in the United States Army Reserve and welcome some of them to Capitol Hill to participate in Army Day, to remind us all of the sacrifices that they make every day to defend this country.

To the men and women of the United States Army Reserve, I salute you. Thank you.

END HUNGER NOW—CHILDHOOD HUNGER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. McGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about the national shame of child hunger in America. I wish it didn't exist, but we can't ignore the fact that there are more than 16 million kids in America who are food insecure. Quite simply, that means more than 16 million children went hungry in 2011. That's unconscionable and that is unacceptable.

Hunger has no place in the richest, most prosperous nation on Earth. Letting anyone in this country go without food is bad enough, but letting children go hungry is more than heartbreaking; it's just plain wrong. Yet we let it happen every day in America—16 million children, Mr. Speaker. That means one in five kids in America go to bed hungry and wake up hungry at some point in their lives during the year. That means one in five kids don't know when their next meal is coming.

We are allowing more than 16 million kids to wake up hungry, go to school hungry, and go to sleep hungry. We are allowing more than 16 million kids to be deprived of proper nutrition, the nutrition contained in good, healthy food that helps children's minds and bodies properly develop. We are allowing more than 16 million kids to struggle at school and have problems with learning simply because they suffer from hunger.

Child hunger has many impacts. Kids who don't eat enough good, healthy food will not develop properly. They have more health problems and require more costly health care than children who don't have to worry about hunger. Sometimes the lack of food results in developmental problems and learning disabilities. Other times, hunger simply doesn't allow kids to concentrate. These problems can lead to under-education, which can have long-term effects, including a lifetime of low-paying jobs and even unemployment.

America has several antihunger safety net programs to deal with hunger. Some of these programs are specifi-

cally designed for children. SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, is the biggest antihunger program in the Federal Government. It does a good job, but there are still many ways that it can be improved.

Over many years, we have also created the National School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program; and in order to meet increased demand, we now have after school snack and meal programs. But these programs are inadequate in many ways. The breakfast and lunch programs provide either a free or a reduced price meal. The free meal is available to those kids whose families are quite poor; but the reduced price meals are available to kids of families who are poor, but not poor enough to qualify for the free plan. This means there are days, and even weeks, when a child's family simply may not have enough money to pay for the reduced price meal. That's a serious problem.

Another problem is that breakfasts are typically served before school starts, meaning that poor kids have to get themselves to school early just to get a good meal. This can create a stigma where these kids get teased and bullied because they're poor, but it can also result in a pattern where these children don't have regular access to a school breakfast if their parents can't get them to school on time or if the school buses don't deliver them early enough to be able to benefit from this breakfast. Organizations like the EOS Foundation in Massachusetts and States like West Virginia are working to fix this by promoting Breakfast at the Bell programs, a solution I strongly support.

And then there are weekends, where schools aren't open. Food banks, churches, synagogues, mosques, and other antihunger organizations are filling that gap with food backpacks that are given out on Friday afternoons.

□ 1010

Mr. Speaker, as a candidate, then-Senator Obama pledged to end childhood hunger by 2015. It was a good idea then, and it's a good idea now. We worked hard, and many of us pushed for a comprehensive childhood hunger plan. We even wore those buttons to show our support.

Mr. Speaker, 2015 is only 2 years away. There is no way we are going to meet that goal, but it doesn't mean we should give up. Now is the time to redouble our efforts. Now is the time to make the pledge to end hunger now. And that's not just a clever tag line. No, Mr. Speaker, we can end hunger now if we start with the commitment to develop a comprehensive plan to do so.

That's why I continue to call for Presidential leadership on this serious matter. We need a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition to develop a comprehensive plan that will address all aspects of hunger in America, especially child hunger. We need

this conference to bring all the stakeholders, like the Eos Foundation, the Governor, and other political leaders from West Virginia and other States and other organizations that are not typically in the antihunger movement. We need faith-based leaders, CEOs, leaders of food banks, pediatricians, schools, and nutritionists together in one room to develop a comprehensive plan, take assignments and make it work. If we do this, we can end hunger now.

Mr. Speaker, hunger is a political condition. We have everything we need to end it. We lack the political will.

I urge my colleagues to make this issue a priority. End hunger now.

CENSUS BUREAU ECONOMIC QUESTIONNAIRE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, generally, we believe that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. That's why I was a little bit shocked when it was brought to my attention by a number of my colleagues that they received an economic census in the mail—a very complex, 14-page document asking them in very great detail about their business, about their suppliers, about their cost, about who they sell to, and who their customers are. These were received by mom-and-pop businesses, sometimes just mom businesses, no pop—one-person businesses. One said:

It will take me two days to fill out this questionnaire. I have to work. If I don't work 2 days, my business will go down the drain.

I wondered how important this information was, so I wrote a letter to the Department of Commerce and the Census Bureau to ask just a few questions about it. I asked about their constitutional authority to do that, and they gave me their statutory authority. I'll talk about their letter in a minute. Then, while they didn't have time to answer my letter on a timely basis, they did have time to send another relatively harassing letter to the businesses threatening them with more penalties—a fine—and just scared the daylights out of them if they did not take time to return that form.

I finally got my response from them, and what I found was that they didn't answer all my questions. I asked them:

Please provide me with the information describing the universe the economic census questionnaires were mailed to and how they were selected.

No answer.

One constituent who received a questionnaire was a sole proprietor with no other employees; another was a sole proprietor with two employees.

Please provide me a summary, if you have one, as to how many of the businesses to which economic censuses were mailed were sole proprietors or small businesses or corporations? How many would you consider to be large corporations? Were there any Fortune 500 companies?

They didn't tell me.

Please tell me how many Federal employees from your agencies were involved in the development and execution of the economic census. Do you not need to count Postal Service time while delivering or returning the forms?

No answer.

Please provide me with the names of any Federal employees associated with the development of the economic census that have ever owned or operated any business whatsoever in the private sector.

They did not answer.

Please provide me with the identity of any Federal agency which has ever provided the kind of detailed financial information and operating information to citizens that you've requested from the people you are supposed to serve.

No answer.

The cost of completing the questionnaire will be costly for small business. How much do you anticipate the cost of labor will be to a business to comply with your request to complete the questionnaire?

No answer.

Please advise how the information gleaned from these questionnaires will be used.

They gave me some generalizations.

Please explain the benefit you anticipate the public will gain from the questionnaire.

Well, sort of. They said it would help them look at statistics.

Please provide me with a one-page summary of major activities performed by your agencies. Please cite the number of times you perform each activity and the cost of performing each activity on a unit cost basis. The aggregate cost of all performing activity should be equal to the exact amount of money that was passed through your agencies during a 1-year period.

Of course, they did not answer that.

They have no problem demanding that information from the private sector, but the government sector is completely unwilling to go through the least little amount of trouble to provide Congress with that same information.

We are often thought to believe that what's good for the goose is good for the gander, and so I will persist on trying to get answers to those questions for the constituents in my district, and hopefully for those in your districts that have also been interested.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO PUERTO RICO'S 65TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say I am pleased to be here today and joined by Resident Commissioner PIERLUISI in support of a bill awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment, also known as the Borinqueneers.

When the Korean war erupted in 1950, the soldiers of the regiment served in a segregated unit, despite President Truman's order desegregating the military 2 years earlier.

Army commanders doubted the effectiveness of these Puerto Rican troops, calling them "rum and Coca-Cola soldiers." They were required to use separate showering facilities and ordered under penalty of court-martial not to

speak Spanish. They were even told to shave their mustaches until "they gave proof of their manhood."

Despite this adversity, the Regiment embraced their Hispanic heritage, calling themselves "Borinqueneers" after the Taino word for Puerto Rico.

The Regiment served with distinction during the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in December 1950. Fighting alongside the 1st Marine Division, they covered one of the greatest strategic withdrawals in military history. Fighting in temperatures as low as Negative 37 degrees, the Borinqueneers were among the last defenders of Hungnam harbor, and suffered tremendous casualties during the evacuation.

The Regiment later participated in numerous battles, conducting the last recorded battalion-size bayonet charge in Army history. Though they struggled with a grave shortage of trained non-commissioned officers and personnel policies that pushed it to the breaking point, they overcame these challenges, fighting valiantly, and earning the respect and admiration of their commanders.

The Borinqueneers are part of a proud tradition of service in the face of adversity that includes the Tuskegee Airmen, Montford Point Marines, Navajo Code Talkers and the Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team—all of whom have already received the Congressional Gold Medal.

I therefore rise in support of the Borinqueneers—the Forgotten soldiers of a Forgotten war—and urge all of my colleagues to join us by cosponsoring this legislation to ensure that the Borinqueneers receive their long overdue recognition.

SEQUESTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, sequester starts with "S." That stands for "stupid." It is an irrational policy with no common sense attached to it, and it is a policy that we are headlong pursuing as a result of the actions of the majority in this House. It is a policy that the President of the United States opposes, it is a policy that the majority in the United States Senate opposes, and it is a policy that all of the Members of the Democratic Party in this House oppose.

My friend on the floor here shakes his head, but he voted for a bill. It was called Cut, Cap, and Balance. And Cut, Cap, and Balance said we have a target, but if we don't meet it what happens? Sequester happens—sequester happens.

The Republicans passed that through this House long before any deal was made not to default on our national debt, which included a provision for sequester so that we would achieve Speaker BOEHNER's objective articulated March of 2011 on Wall Street that we would cut dollar for dollar the increase in the debt. That's why we have a sequester. It starts with "S." It is a stupid policy. It is a negative policy. It is a policy that is hurting America.

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking Democrat of the Budget Committee, offered an amendment four times to replace

the sequester and achieve the same savings. It was rejected, not once, not twice, not three times, but all four times by the Republican majority. They wouldn't even allow it to be made in order to be put on this floor to have a debate on and a vote. This transparent new leadership that we were supposed to have wouldn't even allow a vote on this issue.

□ 1020

Now the Senate has passed a budget which the Republicans have been crying wolf about forever. The Senate passed a budget. It replaces sequester. It achieves the savings that we need to achieve over time. The Ryan budget was passed, which is tantamount to sequester. So now we're asking to go to conference, but we haven't gone to conference.

This week has been a lost week. You've heard about a lost weekend. This week, this House has done practically nothing. Now we're going to take 2 days, today and tomorrow, to consider a bill about helium that could be passed in 10 minutes, which is non-controversial and passed out of committee by a voice vote.

Will we deal with sequester, which is causing America such grief right now? We will not.

It is a shameful performance by the Congress of the United States. It is an irresponsible performance by the majority leadership of this House that we will not have the opportunity to replace this irrational, stupid, non-commonsense policy we call "sequester."

Some Republicans say, well, this is the President's policy. That's baloney. It's not true. It's a fraud. The President is against this policy. The Senate Democrats are against this policy, and House Democrats are against this policy. If I were the majority leader, as I once was, this policy would not have gone into effect, and I want the American people, Mr. Speaker, to know that.

There were some who pretended, oh, it will have no effect. Well, it's having an effect on the flying public right now; and on the Food and Drug Administration, in overseeing food safety, it's going to have an effect. There are 70,000 children who qualify for Head Start who are not going to have a seat in Head Start.

Ladies and gentlemen of this House, we ought to be doing some real work this week, not putting bills on the floor and then taking them off the floor because, very frankly, the majority party can't get its act together. We're now having a helium bill on the floor for 2 days. We're not even going to vote on the helium bill today—we're going to vote on the rule—and at about 2:30 today, we're going to adjourn.

My, my, my. What a hard workday.

We're not dealing with the budget. We're not dealing with the budget conference. We're not dealing with getting this country on a fiscally sustainable path. We're not dealing with getting