

in the ranks of the military that they loved and served so well.

Mr. Speaker, in the face of unique challenges, the men of the 65th regiment served our Nation with great skill and tremendous grace. Their contributions to our country have been recognized in many forms. Streets and parks bear their name. Monuments and plaques memorialize their accomplishments. And cities and States have approved resolutions in their honor. I believe it is time that Congress pay tribute to the 65th, and so I ask my colleagues to join me in the effort to award the regiment with the Congressional Gold Medal.

END FORCED UNION DUES IN AMERICA

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I'm here today to ask my colleagues to join me in supporting an end to forced union dues in America. I'm talking about the National Right to Work Act, which I recently reintroduced here in the 113th Congress as H.R. 946.

Every American should have the power to negotiate with their employer about the terms of their employment, but no American should be forced to pay union dues just to get or keep a job. However, when Congress enacted the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, it established monopoly bargaining, and that monopoly bargaining conscripts workers who want nothing to do with the union into paying union dues. That doesn't sound like the America that I know.

In 1947, Congress admitted this provision violated the rights of workers; but because the votes weren't there to fully repeal this provision, they opted instead to allow the States to opt out of the NLRA's monopoly bargaining statute. That was a provision that the States, though, had to pass laws to exempt themselves.

To date, 24 States have enacted these right-to-work laws; and because of that, they have been able to mitigate the negative effects of our misguided Federal labor law on their citizens and their economy. Iowa is one of those States.

But the fact remains that Congress created this problem in the first place by making forced unionization the default position for all States. Since Congress created this problem, it is Congress' responsibility to correct it. The National Right to Work Act does so without adding a single new word to the Federal Code by simply erasing the forced-dues clauses in the Federal statute.

While the votes weren't there to repeal this provision in 1947, they should be there today because we now have decades of data to compare forced-dues States and workplace-freedom States. The results of this nationwide experiment suggest that the National Right

to Work Act would create a huge boost in our economy; and, therefore, I urge Congress to take up the National Right to Work Act.

IN HONOR OF MITCHELL DEE JONES

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

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of an inspirational young man from my district. Mitchell Dee Jones from Herriman, Utah, passed away on March 2 of this year after a lifelong battle with Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Mitch was a beloved son, brother, friend, and Latter-day Saint. He lived life to the fullest and loved others selflessly. In the very best ways, Mitch was a typical 10-year-old boy playing board games, building with Legos, four-wheeling, camping, and enjoying the outdoors in Utah with his family. His sense of humor, of adventure, and of devotion to his family touched thousands. Both in his life and in his passing, Mitch's dignity and gentleness, strength of spirit, and quiet resolve reveal his exceptional character.

I hope you will join me today in honoring the life of this very special young man who brought others together, who touched lives in a profound way, and who inspired us all.

Mitch's parents, Chris and Natalie Jones, have humbly shared their family's journey with our community in Utah and with countless others around the world. They opened their lives and Mitch's story so they might serve others, bringing an important awareness and a better understanding of their son's condition and that of others with Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to learn more about Mitch's story and about Duchenne muscular dystrophy by following his father's Facebook journal called "Mitchell's Journey."

This coming Monday, on April 29, the city of Herriman, Utah, will honor Mitch's life with the recognition of Mitchell Jones Day. Here in our Nation's Capital, we can join together to do the same by familiarizing ourselves with the disease that ultimately took Mitch's life.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a genetic muscular disorder that most often affects young boys and is characterized by a progressive muscle weakness and degeneration. It is typically diagnosed early in life and is usually fatal in the late teens or early twenties. For some, like Mitch, the disease progresses quickly and affects the voluntary muscles of limbs and torso and eventually the involuntary muscle function of the heart and lungs.

As legislators, it is stories like Mitch's that should remind us of the magnitude of our decisions about time and resources. The course we chart for our country is real for families like the

Joneses in every congressional district. I believe as a country we have endless potential to improve outcomes of Duchenne muscular dystrophy and so many other diseases that our children face; and I think this should be a bipartisan effort.

As we work in service of our constituents, I hope we will all reflect on the Joneses in Herriman, Utah, and the priorities of real American families. These are citizens who inspire us to work harder, to do better, to solve problems, and to make a difference.

Mitch's legacy is one of love and compassion of an inspiring young man who faced every challenge with bravery and faith. Here in Congress we should strive to live and serve in the same way.

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STRENGTHENING OUR STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

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

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, the American public always decries the partisan tone that happens here on this House floor, and I'm always amazed when people come down to the House floor and rail on Republicans and Democrats and try to place blame. I'm always particularly amazed when someone comes to the House floor and blames the Republicans for a bill that they voted for. I voted against sequestration, and I certainly agree with Mr. HOYER's current statements of how bad sequestration is. It just would have been nice if the consistency was there in the actual voting record besides just the attempt to blame Republicans.

This clearly was a project that was proposed by the President. I opposed it because I knew it was going to wreak havoc on our national security. And I wish those who now see its folly actually had voted against it when it was on the House floor.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm here today to talk about energy security. It continues to play an important role in global relationships and dialogue. In my role as chairman of the U.S. delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, many foreign leaders and officials have expressed to me the need to diversify energy resources away from one source or from unstable regions.

As we all know, the United States is currently experiencing a surplus of natural gas production, helping to keep the price low compared with global rates. This is creating opportunities to boost job growth right here at home and for U.S. natural gas to compete in the global marketplace.

In fact, a recent Department of Energy commissioned report found that increasing exports of natural gas would have positive economic benefits for our country. In my home State of Ohio, exploration and development in the Utica Shale would have a \$5 billion economic

impact and create or support nearly 66,000 jobs in Ohio by 2014.

Increasing natural gas exports would not only help reduce our trade deficit and create job opportunities for American workers but would also help key allies diversify their energy sources, bolster their energy and national security, and strengthen our strategic alliances. Many of our allies are heavily reliant on natural gas from either one country or from unstable regions and are paying significantly higher prices.

Several of the largest natural gas importers are also NATO members with strong national security ties to the United States. In recent years, several European countries have experienced natural gas supply disruptions from Russia, the largest supplier of natural gas to Europe. Turkey relies on 20 percent of its natural gas from Iran.

Earlier this year, Islamist militants attacked a natural gas facility in Algeria, which is the third-largest exporter of natural gas to Europe.

Japan, a strategic ally in Asia and already the world's largest importer of natural gas, may need to seek greater imports of natural gas as a result of the 2011 nuclear plant disaster. Japan already relies on 42 percent of its natural gas from Russia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

The surplus of U.S. natural gas production is already having an impact on global natural gas markets. Natural gas previously destined for the United States, but no longer needed as a result of our domestic increased production, has been diverted to other markets. For example, in 2012, nearly half of the natural gas supplied to Europe was purchased under spot contracts. Helping our allies diversify their energy resources is important to strengthening our partnerships and bolstering security.

Under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act, companies seeking to export natural gas must receive permits from the Department of Energy, which determines if such exports are in the public interest. Export permits to U.S.-free trade countries are automatically approved. Non-free trade countries must go through a process.

In general, when it comes to exporting U.S. goods, we often talk about barriers in other countries for U.S. producers that they must overcome to sell their products, but in this instance we have a domestic barrier that prevents us from exporting our natural gas to consumers willing and eager to buy.

There are currently 20 applications before the Department of Energy from companies seeking approval to export natural gas. As the DOE evaluates these applications, I hope it takes into consideration the domestic economic benefits.

I have authored bipartisan and bicameral legislation, H.R. 580, the Expedited LNG for American Allies Act, which would make approval of export licenses to NATO countries and Japan automatic. This bill creates a process

that allows the addition of other foreign countries to this list if the Secretary of State deems, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, that it would be in our national interest.

Exporting U.S. natural gas presents opportunities to create American jobs while helping to bolster our strategic alliances. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important bill that would have great economic impacts for the United States.

HONORING GOSPEL MUSIC PIONEERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, later on today, the President will join my fellow Texans in West, Texas, to mourn the loss of so many who died in a tragic plant explosion last week. Many of them were first responders. And many who will come to mourn and celebrate life and the life of West, Texas, are those who have been harmed and injured. I will join them in spirit, as I know my colleagues here today will.

That's why as I rise today to commemorate and salute two gospel music titans, it becomes even more appropriate to salute my friend, James "Jazzy" Jordan and Mr. Don Jackson, for they understand the value and message of gospel music.

Gospel music holds a special place in the American experience. Gospel music was a release from suffering and hardship, but it was also a form of praise and protest. I would like to thank Jazzy Jordan for understanding that as we introduced in 2008 the Gospel Music Heritage legislation that establishes September in the United States of America as Gospel Music Heritage Month.

We hope as we have faced these tragedies over the last couple of weeks that Americans, no matter what their religious background or nonreligious background, will find relief in this joyful and comforting music. Spirituals once sung by slaves transformed into gospel songs sung by free people who had their own space and place to express their emotions and tell their stories in music—those spirituals have been translated into gospel music.

Gospel music could express the joys and sorrows of so many people. All of us remember and have often sung the song "Amazing Grace," created by one who saw this wonderful resilience of their life when they thought they had been lost. That is truly American and American gospel music.

We know the early founders: Thomas Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, James Vaughan, James Cleveland, and now today Kirk Franklin, and Yolanda Adams, among so many. And then those who were influenced by gospel music: Sam Cooke, Al Green, Elvis Presley, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, among many.

Jazzy Jordan understands that and is now head of The Jordan Webster Group, a film and music production house in Washington, D.C. A brilliant businessman, he has a great love of gospel music. We are grateful for his service to Verity Gospel Music Group, now known as RCA Inspiration. Mr. Jordan was a founding board member of the Gospel Music Heritage Foundation and cochair, with gospel music advocate Mr. Carl Davis of my district, of the Evolution of Gospel Celebration which kicks off Gospel Music Heritage Celebration in the Nation's capital. Mr. Jordan was executive producer for Gold, Platinum, Grammy, Stellar, and Dove award-winning projects. Throughout his career, he served as a creative producer and has marketed and promoted many award-winning CDs and gospel artists that have included Kirk Franklin, and as well worked with DJ Jazzy Jeff and Will Smith—"Fresh Prince."

Oh, he knows music. And to tell you that he does, he has engaged and worked with the likes of Kirk Franklin, as I said, Marvin Sapp, Donnie McClurkin, Fred Hammond, Heather Kyle Walker, Donald Lawrence, Richard Smallwood, Byron Cage, John P. Kee, Jay Moss, Crystal Aikin, Deitrick Haddon, and DeWayne Woods. Mr. Jordan is truly one who lives his life in commemorating and cultivating and nurturing the gospel tradition, the gospel tradition which has now spread beyond the borders of this Nation.

He is joined by Mr. Don Jackson, the founder, chairman, and CEO of the 41-year-old Central City Productions, now the founder and organizer of the Stella Awards.

I am grateful that Mr. Jackson thought it was important to recognize those who excelled in gospel music. He graduated from Northwestern University and entered a career in media and broadcasting with a number of stations, WBEE and WVON, a top radio station in Chicago. As he founded Central City Marketing in 1970, his company over 41 years involved itself in encouraging and helping others promote their issues. He had involvement in promotion and sales and production of media and television.

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But his first gospel music awards show in the United States, the Stellar Awards, was produced by his company. The Stellar Awards honors gospel music artists, writers, and industry professionals.

He is one who has featured so many artists, such as the Clark Sisters, Kirk Franklin, Da' T.R.U.T.H., Mary Mary, and many others.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, let me simply say, these two men are more than deserving of being American icons, and we congratulate them for loving, cherishing, and promoting gospel music.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize two of America's pioneers in gospel music: Mr. James "Jazzy" Jordan and Mr. Don Jackson.