

Sewell (AL)	Thompson (CA)	Waters
Shea-Porter	Thornberry	Watt
Sherman	Titus	Weber (TX)
Shuster	Tonko	Webster (FL)
Simpson	Tsongas	Welch
Sinema	Upton	Westmoreland
Smith (NE)	Van Hollen	Williams
Smith (NJ)	Vargas	Wilson (FL)
Smith (TX)	Vela	Wilson (SC)
Smith (WA)	Wagner	Wittman
Speier	Walden	Wolf
Stewart	Walorski	Womack
Stutzman	Walz	Yarmuth
Swalwell (CA)	Wasserman	Young (FL)
Takano	Schultz	Young (IN)

NAYS—140

Amash	Griffin (AR)	Palazzo
Andrews	Griffith (VA)	Pallone
Bass	Hartzler	Pastor (AZ)
Beatty	Hastings (FL)	Paulsen
Benishek	Heck (NV)	Peters (MI)
Bishop (NY)	Herrera Beutler	Peterson
Brady (PA)	Honda	Pittenger
Broun (GA)	Hoyer	Poe (TX)
Burgess	Hudson	Price (GA)
Carson (IN)	Huizenga (MI)	Radel
Castor (FL)	Hunter	Rahall
Chaffetz	Israel	Reed
Chu	Jackson Lee	Renacci
Clarke	Jeffries	Rigell
Cleaver	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Clyburn	Johnson (OH)	Rooney
Coffman	Johnson, E. B.	Rush
Collins (GA)	Jones	Ryan (OH)
Conaway	Jordan	Salmon
Connolly	Joyce	Sánchez, Linda
Conyers	Kelly (IL)	T.
Costa	Kilmer	Sanchez, Loretta
Cotton	Kind	Sarbanes
Courtney	Kinzinger (IL)	Schakowsky
Crawford	Kirkpatrick	Schock
Crowley	Lance	Sires
Davis, Rodney	Latham	Slaughter
DeFazio	Lee (CA)	Southerland
Denham	Levin	Stivers
Dent	Lewis	Stockman
DeSantis	LoBiondo	Terry
Dingell	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
Duckworth	Maffei	Thompson (PA)
Duffy	Maloney,	Tiberi
Fitzpatrick	Carolyn	Tipton
Fleming	Maloney, Sean	Turner
Foxx	Markey	Valadao
Fudge	Matheson	Veasey
Garamendi	Matsui	Velázquez
Garcia	McDermott	Visclosky
Gardner	McIntyre	Walberg
Gerlach	Meehan	Wenstrup
Gibson	Meng	Woodall
Gingrey (GA)	Miller, George	Yoder
Graves (GA)	Moore	Yoho
Graves (MO)	Neal	Young (AK)
Green, Al	Negrete McLeod	
Green, Gene	Nolan	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Owens

NOT VOTING—27

Bishop (GA)	Hanna	Pascrell
Butterfield	Hensarling	Pearce
Capuano	Holding	Pitts
Cohen	Hultgren	Quigley
Doggett	King (IA)	Shimkus
Flores	Larson (CT)	Tierney
Forbes	Lowenthal	Waxman
Franks (AZ)	McGovern	Whitfield
Gohmert	McMorris	
Grijalva	Rodgers	

□ 1147

Mrs. BEATTY changed her vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote 142 to H.R. 807 taken on May 9, 2013. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted "aye."

I was not present for this vote due to a speaking engagement at Texas A&M University.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 142, I am not recorded because I was absent from the House of Representatives for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 32. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

The message also announced that the Senate has a passed bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 622. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to reauthorize user fee programs relating to new animal drugs and generic new animal drugs.

□ 1150

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) for the purposes of inquiring of the schedule for the week to come. Mr. BRADY, as I understand, is the designee of the majority leader, and I welcome and appreciate his participation.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. First, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at 2 p.m. in pro forma session. On Tuesday, the House will meet at noon for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning hour and at noon for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions on Tuesday and Wednesday, a complete list of which will be announced by the close of business tomorrow.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I expect the House to consider H.R. 45, a bill sponsored by Representative MICHELE BACHMANN, to fully repeal ObamaCare.

We will also consider H.R. 1062, the SEC Regulatory Accountability Act, authored by Representative SCOTT GARRETT. This bill requires the SEC to conduct cost benefit analysis on any rulemaking to ensure that the benefits outweigh the costs.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information and, again, I want to thank him. I know that the majority leader could not be here and he's filling in, and I appreciate the fact that he is doing so.

Mr. BRADY, I notice that there is not on the notice for the schedule for next

week any reference about a motion to go to conference on the budget. As you know, the Senate has now passed a budget, which it had not done for some years. Your side, in particular, but all of us wanted the Senate to pass a budget. They have now passed a budget. We passed a budget. We would hope on this side of the aisle that we would now go to conference.

I'm wondering whether the gentleman can—in light of the fact that it is regular order that two sides pass, now try to compromise the differences that exist between the two Houses—can the gentleman tell me whether or not there is a plan to go to conference and, if so, what that schedule might be? And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you. As you know, Chairman RYAN and Chairman MURRAY are in discussions about the budget. It is I think encouraging that for the first time in 4 years this is actually occurring, the Senate has finally passed a budget.

But we know both sides take a considerably different view toward our financial budget future. These talks are aimed at sort of narrowing those differences. We certainly don't want to short-circuit those discussions because we're all encouraged.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the fact that you're encouraged. Frankly, our side has not heard an encouraging word. In fact, we continue to hear discouraging words, as the song says.

I'm very hopeful we can bridge the gap that exists, which is about \$100 billion, as the gentleman knows. The Senate marked \$1.058 trillion, which of course was consistent with the Budget Control Act that we agreed upon, we voted on, and passed. The President signed the Budget Control Act, including that figure for the fiscal year '14 budget. The Ryan budget, as you know reflects a \$966 billion 302 allocation; that is, general discretionary spending levels.

I'm wondering when you say you're encouraged, do you know whether there's been any progress toward trying to bridge that gap? Obviously, as a former appropriator, many times it's 50/50 you come to the middle, which would be about \$1 trillion or a little more than that. I'm wondering whether or not the gentleman knows whether any progress has been made on that? And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. As you know, there are significant differences. The Senate budget includes over \$1 trillion in new tax hikes on small businesses and families, which would be very damaging for the economy. The Senate Democrat bill adds I think about \$8 trillion to the deficit and doesn't take what we think are critical steps to saving Social Security and Medicare over the long haul. That's why these discussions, I think, are so critical.

Again, I'm encouraged that both sides are discussing them, trying to

find a way to narrow them, and we ought to give them time to be able to continue those discussions.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

Just let me observe that on our side we think it would be useful if the American public had the opportunity to, in effect, see the discussions in a conference. I've been here long enough to remember when we had conferences on the Appropriations Committee. They were open to the public. They were reported on. We had discussions about the differences that existed, as one would expect, from people elected from different parts of the country and with different views. But we think it would be very helpful if those discussions were held, because the differences are pretty profound and pretty significant, that it would help the public to have a better understanding of the process.

In addition, as the gentleman knows, of course, there was some discussion about the President's coming down late with his budget. We should have been through the budget process by now so that the Appropriations Committee could proceed with its allocations to its 12 subcommittees.

In that context, I would ask the gentleman, does the gentleman have any idea when the appropriations bills might be marked up and brought to the floor? As you know, under regular order, for the most part, we have brought appropriations bills to the floor starting in mid-May or the last week in May so that we could get through that process in June and July and send those bills to the Senate so that we might have conferences and complete our work by October 1.

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. I agree with you about the importance of moving our appropriations bill.

The majority leader has announced we will begin the process of funding our government in June through an open appropriation, and through those appropriation seasons will work with the Appropriations Committee to determine which bills will come to the floor in June, as we have continued to do for the last number of years.

Mr. HOYER. Well, I appreciate that and I look forward to the consideration of the appropriations bills on the floor.

I want to say that for the most part you have followed open rules, which we did as well in 2007 until we just couldn't get the bills done in a timely fashion. Hopefully, we can do that, because I think that, again, it gives the public the opportunity to see the priorities of not only each Member but both sides moving forward. I think that's appropriate in a democracy. I appreciate the fact that the majority leader intends to bring those bills to the floor starting in June. I'm not sure whether we can finish all 12 in June, but perhaps finish those in July.

We did not bring, as the gentleman knows, the Labor and Health bill to the

full committee in the last cycle, much less to the floor. That bill will be tough.

Chairman ROGERS—I know the gentleman is on a committee that he believes is more important. He and I may differ in that perception. He's a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I was a former member of the Appropriations Committee. But, nonetheless, Mr. ROGERS has made the observation, in terms of the dollars allocated in the Ryan budget for discretionary spending, both on the defense side and non-defense side:

I suspect there will be some who will be shocked. I don't think people yet understand how severe the numbers will be.

Those numbers refer to the \$966 billion in discretionary spending, which will require deep cuts in almost every program on the national defense side and on the discretionary side.

So, the sooner we get to that, because I think it's going to be a difficult process, the better. And I appreciate your information with reference to the majority leader's intent to bring them to the floor.

Now, I also did not see on the schedule, Mr. BRADY, anything that deals with the sequester. I do see the Affordable Care Act repeal on the floor next week, which has been, of course, on this floor some 33, 34, 35 times before, to repeal it. We're having another repeal vote coming up. I think honestly you believe, as I believe, that that bill is not going to go anywhere, other than perhaps through the House of Representatives, but, beyond that, it won't go anywhere.

However, the sequester continues to be an ongoing challenge to our country, to our government, and to our people. We dealt with it in a sort of surgical fashion dealing with the FAA, but we have not dealt with any of the other concerns. As the gentleman knows, I have concerns about the fact the sequester may result in 70,000 children not being on Head Start. They are only 3 or 4 years of age once.

□ 1200

The Social Security Administration may have to furlough payments, which will slow down payments of Social Security. There are 4 million fewer Meals on Wheels for seniors. There are 600,000 people who have been dropped off the Women, Infants, and Children program. There are 125,000 fewer HUD rental assistance vouchers for people who are homeless or who are struggling to keep a home. Unemployment insurance has been cut 11 percent for 2 million out-of-work Americans. We now have no safety net for them. The FDA will have 2,100 fewer food safety inspectors—that's down 18 percent—obviously, putting at risk our food safety; and we will furlough an equivalent to 1,000 fewer Federal agents, FBI—we know from the Boston Marathon bombings how critical the FBI was—and border security. One-third of combat air units have been grounded.

I mention all of those simply in the context of those consequences of the sequester. I see it's not on next week, and we have a week after that that we'll be in session. Does the gentleman have any information with reference to whether or not we will deal with trying to ameliorate these adverse consequences of sequester before we leave here for the Memorial Day break?

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Thank you for yielding. As you may remember, the President proposed this sequester originally in discussions about the budget and has threatened to veto any legislative efforts to turn off that sequester. Perhaps that's why Republicans, Democrats, and the President recently signed legislation that locks in those lower spending levels for the remainder of the budget year, and Congress has provided the administration the flexibility to cut funding from the nonpriority provisions, areas, of the budget so we can prioritize those important areas that you discussed.

As we all remember, what the sequester did was take, in effect, a 500-pound government and insisted that it lose 10 pounds. That's what the sequester does—a minor amount but important because this Nation is running such dangerously high deficits.

So, clearly, there is bipartisan agreement on the spending levels for the budget for the rest of the year. I think that's the regular appropriations process that Chairman ROGERS is bringing forward in which we'll have a chance, Republicans and Democrats, to amend it, to get our ideas to the floor. I think that adds extra importance to that process.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments; but I do want to observe that the President of the United States has offered a budget which eliminates the sequester and gets to a budget deficit reduction and fiscal sustainability in an alternative way which we think is much more positive.

I would also remind the gentleman that CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, offered an alternative which gets rid of the sequester, which all sides agree is an irrational process in that it cuts the highest priority and lowest priority the same. The sequester, as the gentleman knows, was put in a bill to force action with the specific belief and premise that the sequester was so bad, so irrational, so lacking in common sense, so negative in its impact that it would never be adopted. Sadly, it was adopted.

I want to say also that the gentleman and a lot of his colleagues like to mention that this is the President's suggestion. With all due respect, Jack Lew brought it up with Mr. REID, and everybody has read about that in Mr. Woodward's book. He brought it up, however—and the gentleman probably recalls this—days after sequester, as a policy, was included in the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill for which 229 Republicans voted for as a policy. I want to

tell the gentleman just for his future information, on our side, we are opposed to the sequester. We want to see the sequester changed.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN not only offered a budget, but he offered four amendments. Each time we considered the CR and other legislation, four times he offered an amendment to substitute the same savings so we would get to those budget deficit reductions to which the gentleman spoke, but would not do so in the irrational, across-the-board fashion that sequester requires.

So I want to make it clear, if there was any confusion on your side of the aisle, we are not for the sequester. I voted for the CR to keep the government open, but I voted against the CR, when it left this House, which had sequester in there. I, frankly, thought shutting down the government was even worse than the sequester, but I think the sequester is having a harmful effect, not only on government, but a harmful effect on our economy. I think it's a drip, drip, drip. It wasn't a "shut the door." It wasn't black and white. It wasn't overnight, but it is a drip, drip, drip that is harming our economy.

I understand what the gentleman has told us, but I would hope that we would seriously consider trying to see if we could reach agreement either outside the context of the budget conference or inside the context of the budget conference that would give us an alternative which would be more rational, more positive, and more helpful to our economy.

The next subject is simply the debt ceiling. We just passed a bill on the prioritization. We unanimously opposed that on our side. We think that is not a good policy. Obviously, there is a disagreement on that. May 19 is the date that the debt ceiling extension expires.

Can the gentleman tell me whether there is any proposal to act in the near future other than on debt prioritization, which will have no chance in the Senate and is roundly opposed by many Republican economists, as the gentleman knows, and by the former economic adviser to the Bush administration, who said that it would not work, should not work? Can the gentleman tell me whether there is any alternative plan, before we leave here for the Memorial Day break, to give confidence to the economy and to creditors and to the American people that we will deal responsibly with the debt limit extension?

And I yield to my friend.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Well, thank you for yielding. I was disappointed in today's action in the sense that I think it is dangerous to flirt with default. America ought to pay its debt, and we ought to reassure investors here at home—our local retirement funds that have bought U.S. Treasury, the Social Security trust fund, itself, that gets paid back interest, as well as other investors—that America will not default. I was disappointed this was made a par-

tisan issue when, in fact, I think flirting with it and getting to the brink has really been damaging to our economy, and I think choosing for default was a mistake by your colleagues.

I am hopeful that the Senate will take it up and that there will be a more bipartisan effort to assure that we are going to actually pay our bills and then focus on the real problem, which is dangerously high deficits, the fact that we're not acting now to save Social Security and Medicare—such critical programs.

In the House, we've begun the discussions to identify what those priorities are to move us back toward a balanced budget without raising taxes on local families and businesses. We've begun the process of identifying good, positive ideas that would restore confidence in America's financial future, and we think it is important this moves along in a very deliberate, timely manner so that we don't end up with an 11th-hour issue.

I think this is a reasonable, appropriate way to deal with a huge, dramatically larger debt borrowing amount than America has ever seen—so many trillions piled up in the last few years and more piling up for the future. We don't think the answer is taking more of what people earn; it is Congress coming together, Republicans and Democrats, and finding a way to get our financial house in order, move back toward a balanced budget and act to save Social Security and Medicare.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. Of course, we did have a balanced budget, as you'll remember, for the last 4 years of the Clinton administration. Now, there was a Republican-controlled Congress; but in the next 4 years, there was a Republican-controlled Congress, a Republican-controlled Senate, and a Republican President, and we went deeply into debt.

□ 1210

We escalated the debt during the Bush administration by 87 percent of GDP more than this President has escalated the deficit. In nominal terms, as Mr. CAMP observed before, the dollars are higher. That's true. It's because we are bigger, spending more money, making more money as a country. GDP is up.

During the Reagan administration, we increased the debt as a percentage of the national GDP by 186 percent; 55 percent under George Bush; 37 percent under Mr. Clinton; and some 40-plus percent under this President today.

So I think the gentleman and I agree that we need to get a handle on the debt and the deficit, but we disagree on how this happened. It happened because we didn't pay our bills, and we jettisoned PAYGO in 2003. As a practical matter, we jettisoned it in 2001.

Not paying for things is what creates debt, not buying. If I buy things and I pay for them, I don't have a debt. If I buy things and don't pay for them, I have a debt.

So it's not a question of what I buy, although clearly we need to restrain buying and we need to constrain spending, as I've said, all across the board—the gentleman has heard me—including entitlements, including discretionary defense and nondefense spending. But what we ought to do is manage our finances in a way that does not give pause to the American people or to the economy.

I want to just read for you a quote. Keith Hennessy was George Bush's National Economic Council director who disagrees with your proposition that this prioritization will in any way stabilize—I don't think the gentleman disagrees with me that that bill is not going to pass the Senate. Here's what Keith Hennessy said:

Payment prioritization doesn't stop payments; it just delays them. Then the aggrieved party sues the government and probably wins, and it turns into a bloody mess.

Tony Fratto, who was the spokesman on economic policy in the Bush administration said this:

Prioritization is impossible. Is the government really going to be in the position of withholding benefits, salaries, rent, contract payments, et cetera, in order to pay off Treasury bondholders?

We refer to this, of course, as the Pay China First bill. And China ought to be paid. We borrowed money from them; we ought to pay them.

Here's what he concludes of the prioritization bill:

That would be a political catastrophe.

I suggest it would be an economic catastrophe, as well, to say to our armed services personnel, We're not going to pay you, but we are going to pay China for our debts.

The fact of the matter is the United States is the most creditworthy Nation on Earth. We ought to pay all of our debts and not on a priority status. If we owe you as the United States of America, we're going to pay you. That's our proposition. We should not prioritize paying simply bondholders, but paying smaller contractors we are doing business with who offer us services and products and we don't pay them until after we pay our bondholders. We ought to pay everybody. That's what America is about.

So I would hope that we could revisit this because your debt prioritization is not going to pass. You know it's not going to pass. We need to get to a responsible way of dealing with the debt-limit extension.

Both parties, I will tell my friend, have demagogued on this issue. We demagogued on it when we had a Republican President; you've demagogued on it—not you personally. I cast no aspersions. But both sides have demagogued on it when the President was of the other party. It's a shame. It's not been good for our country.

Ronald Reagan said that Congress continues to run us up. And we ran us up so close last time that for the first time in history, the United States of America was downgraded by one of our

rating agencies. I would hope the gentleman who serves on the Ways and Means Committee and I and others could work together so this doesn't happen again, that we make sure that the American people and that all of our creditors and people around the world know that the United States of America can and will handle its finances in a responsible fashion.

If the gentleman wants to say anything further, I'll yield back to him; if not, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013, TO MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next and that the order of the House of January 3, 2013, regarding morning-hour debate not apply on that day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

HONORING DR. SHIRLEY TILGHMAN

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Shirley Tilghman for her distinguished service as the 19th president of Princeton University.

Dr. Tilghman will step down this spring following 12 years of exceptional leadership. As the first woman to serve as president of Princeton, she is a role model for the campus community and young women and men across the country and throughout the world.

During her tenure, Dr. Tilghman, a molecular biologist, set in motion a number of significant initiatives. Princeton increased its financial aid offerings significantly, raising the percentage of students who receive aid and making Princeton's program one of the most generous in the country.

Dr. Tilghman has also worked diligently to bolster the university's academic offerings, overseeing the creation of the Lewis Center for the Arts, the Center for African American Studies, the Princeton Neuroscience Institute, and the Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment.

As a proud Princeton alumnus, it is an honor to recognize Dr. Tilghman today. May the university continue to be guided by Woodrow Wilson's 1896 words, true also of President Tilghman's labors: "Princeton in the Nation's service," and now expanded to include in the service of all nations.

Our congratulations to Dr. Shirley Tilghman.

NURSES WEEK AND POLIO ERADICATION

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Nurses Week and to thank the millions of nurses who are on the front lines of our health care system.

Although a doctor is usually considered to be the primary health care provider for a patient, nurses are expert clinicians who provide high-quality and cost-effective care in every community throughout our country.

Around the world, nurses are the first and often the only link to health care for millions living in developing countries and are true warriors against diseases like malaria, HIV/AIDS, and polio.

Thanks to the work of nurses and community health workers, we are close to a polio-free world and could not have come so far without the leadership of the United States, the Gates Foundation, and, of course, partners like the United Nations and Rotary International.

As we thank and salute nurses around the world, we must also recognize the severe shortages of health workers and recommit ourselves to supporting programs and policies that have the greatest impact and farthest reach.

Once again, we must end polio now.

TRIBUTE TO MEGAN BELL

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and give thanks to the very first person that came to work for me when I came to Congress 5 years ago, my legislative director, Megan Bell.

Unfortunately, she is going to be leaving our office as she goes on to bigger and better things. But Megan has been a tremendous and tireless public servant for the people of southeast Louisiana and has provided great leadership to our Nation. She's been a huge help to me on energy issues, on health care issues, on coastal restoration issues, and so many things. When the *Deepwater Horizon* accident and disaster occurred 3 years ago, Megan was right there helping not only to get people back to work, but also to help draft and lead through the legislative process the RESTORE Act, which provided incredible support to the people back home. She also provided great help to constituents.

On a Friday afternoon, when we got a call from a father whose son needed lifesaving treatment, she worked through the whole weekend to get FDA approval for a lifesaving clinical trial.

She's just a great public servant, somebody that I think we can all aspire and look up to. We will miss her

here at the Capitol, and I surely will miss her at the office. But she will be going on to bigger and better things, and I wish her all the best.

□ 1220

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, the Safe Climate Caucus is composed of 25 Members of the House who have made a commitment to talk every single legislative day on the House floor about the urgent need to address climate change.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, we reached record levels of carbon in the atmosphere. Since 1956, a U.S. observatory has been recording data on the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere; and over the last few decades, carbon dioxide levels have been higher than at any point in the last 800,000 years. So there's more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere today than since the dawn of civilization.

This month, the amount of carbon is close to reaching 400 parts per million, a new record. And as a result, extreme weather events are going to be evermore frequent and more damaging.

We must act before it's too late. Our window to address the threat of climate change is closing. It's time to stop the denials and to start acting proactively.

SERVICEMEMBERS' TELEMEDICINE AND E-HEALTH PORTABILITY ACT IMPLEMENTATION

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, I worked with the Congressional Armed Services Committee to include the Servicemembers' Telemedicine and E-Health Portability Act, or STEP Act, as part of the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.

The law expands telemedicine at the Department of Defense by allowing credentialed care professionals to perform telehealth consultations across State lines, which is great news for our servicemembers, especially those facing mental illness. Instead of waiting weeks for consultation, these men and women can now access care without delay while avoiding the stigma that is oftentimes associated with seeking treatment.

Last year, the DOD issued a waiver to expand telemedicine and begin implementation. In 2012, the Army was able to perform nearly 36,000 teleconsultations.

Despite progress, TRICARE providers were not included in the waiver, limiting thousands of professionals from providing services. Second, the waiver