

Do you know how many hearings we've had on SNAP in this Congress? Do you know how many the Agriculture Committee has held? None. That's right, the Agriculture Committee is about to cut \$20 billion from SNAP, and we haven't had one single hearing. Yet there are 20 new members of the Agriculture Committee in this Congress, 20 new members who deserve the right to learn about these issues, including the details of SNAP and the impact of these cuts.

Mr. Speaker, this is not how we should be approaching this program. We should be holding hearings; we should ask questions; we should be thoughtful; and we should look at the program in an honest way, and our goal should be to end hunger now. Unfortunately, this bill, as written, is more about protecting big agribusiness and corporate welfare than it is about protecting hungry Americans who need help today.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do something about hunger in America. I've urged the administration to host a White House conference on food and nutrition to come up with a plan to end hunger now. Hopefully, they will act on that soon. But for today and tomorrow, we must protect SNAP from needless, unnecessary, and harmful cuts. We must stand for the most vulnerable in our country, and we must end hunger now and not make it worse.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEWART) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all to whom the authority of government is given. Help them to meet their responsibilities, enlightened by Your eternal spirit.

We gather after celebrating Mother's Day. We thank You for the gift of self modeled by our mothers, who chose to place each of us before themselves in giving birth to us and nurturing us as we grew. May we all earn the pride of our mothers in the service we provide to the benefit of this Nation.

There are many serious issues confronting our Nation these days. May the truth be served and the Nation's interests be met in the proceedings of this day.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

OVERSIGHT IS A PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CONGRESS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week was very revealing about misstatements of truth from the White House. On Wednesday, the administration was heavily criticized as the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing, led by Chairman DARRELL ISSA, to investigate the Benghazi terrorist attack. Additionally, on Friday, the IRS secret operation to target conservative groups was admitted after 3 years of denial.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest."

As a congressional body, the Members of the United States House and Congress have an obligation to carry out oversight responsibilities. When situations arise where there is administration misconduct, we must pursue investigations to protect the American people. I look forward to working with my colleagues by demanding answers to the countless questions of intentional misrepresentations.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SCOTTSBORO BOYS

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I applaud the Alabama Legislature's Scottsboro Boys Act, which granted posthumous pardons to eight African American young men wrongfully accused in Alabama in 1931. The Scottsboro Boys case profoundly impacted America's civil rights movement and American law.

In two different landmark decisions, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution requires legal counsel for criminal defendants and held that arbitrarily excluding African Americans from jury pools was unconstitutional.

It is never too late to call wrong by its name. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail":

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

I pray that the families of Olen Montgomery, Haywood Patterson, Ozie Powell, Willie Roberson, Charlie Weems, Eugene Williams, and Andy and Roy Wright may take comfort in Alabama's full acknowledgement of the innocence of these wrongfully accused young men.

OBAMACARE'S THREAT

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

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today not only as a Member of Congress, but as a concerned business owner angered by the fact that ObamaCare may be putting my companies at financial risk. Currently, those businesses employ over 120 people in the State of Oklahoma. Because of the size of these companies, when ObamaCare is fully implemented, it will mean an immediate cost of over \$200,000 to that business.

I ran for Congress because I got fed up with the Federal Government becoming my biggest threat.

The President says he wants to grow the economy and encourage job creation, but in reality he is punishing those who are trying to thrive. As a business owner, you are penalized \$100,000 for hiring that 50th employee.

ObamaCare is the number one threat to businesses in Oklahoma and across this country. This week we'll vote to repeal this law, along with its harmful new mandates and tax hikes.

For the sake of this country's job creators, we must repeal ObamaCare. I urge my colleagues to join me and America in putting America back in business.

SECRETARY SEBELIUS CONTINUES TO VIOLATE CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution allows the Congress, specifically the House of Representatives, to hold the purse strings of the Federal Government—not the executive branch, not the Federal agencies.

This week, we've heard reports that the Secretary of Health and Human Services has been calling executives

from the industries that she regulates asking them to donate money to a group called "Enroll America," a private organization that makes the President's health care law a success by signing individuals up for coverage through exchanges.

The Antideficiency Act prohibits the Federal Government departments from making greater expenditures in a fiscal year than those provided by the Congress. So it begs the question: What is the Secretary promising to corporate executives in exchange for their funding of this ACA implementation? This continues the line of questionably ethical conduct by the Secretary all to further the administration's controversial agenda.

Let's review: in 2012, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel concluded that Secretary Sebelius violated the Hatch Act by campaigning for President Obama while traveling on official business; then they raided the ACA's Prevention and Public Health Fund; and now she is seeking money from businesses that she regulates to prop up the President's takeover of American health care.

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

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

Mr. MESSER. What a week, Mr. Speaker. A Benghazi coverup, the IRS targeting conservative groups, and now the Department of Justice found spying on the Associated Press. The scandals from this administration are coming so fast that the American people can barely keep up, and this pattern of arrogance, lies, and outright lawlessness should be disturbing to every American.

Mr. Speaker, the American people demand the truth, and this Congress is duty bound to make sure they get it. Congress must act now and investigate each of these scandals.

Some may call it political, but there is nothing political about keeping the oath of every Member of this Chamber to protect and defend the United States Constitution. And there is nothing political about working to ensure that none of these scandals gets swept under the rug.

□ 1410

IRS ACTIONS VIOLATE PUBLIC TRUST

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage at the behavior of the IRS.

Last week, the IRS admitted that it targeted organizations based on group names and political ideologies. Based on their conservative leanings, these

organizations were often forced to divulge their donor lists and answer invasive questions about their affiliations, requirements the IRS did not extend to other groups seeking similar treatment under the Tax Code.

These actions are unacceptable. IRS officials cannot infringe on any person or organization's constitutional rights simply because of a difference in political ideology.

We expect our government to be a guardian of rights. Those responsible for this violation of the public's trust must be held accountable. IRS employees and officials are public servants, and those involved with this scandal have violated a fundamental precept of public service.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1703

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 5 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NATIONAL BLUE ALERT ACT OF 2013

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 180) to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 180

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Blue Alert Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COORDINATOR.—The term "Coordinator" means the Blue Alert Coordinator of the Department of Justice designated under section 4(a).

(2) BLUE ALERT.—The term "Blue Alert" means information relating to the serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer in the line of duty sent through the network.

(3) BLUE ALERT PLAN.—The term "Blue Alert plan" means the plan of a State, unit of local government, or Federal agency participating in the network for the dissemination of information received as a Blue Alert.

(4) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term "law enforcement officer" shall have the same meaning as in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b).

(5) NETWORK.—The term "network" means the Blue Alert communications network established by the Attorney General under section 3.

(6) STATE.—The term "State" means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 3. BLUE ALERT COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.

The Attorney General shall establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice to issue Blue Alerts through the initiation, facilitation, and promotion of Blue Alert plans, in coordination with States, units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and other appropriate entities.

SEC. 4. BLUE ALERT COORDINATOR; GUIDELINES.

(a) COORDINATION WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Attorney General shall assign an existing officer of the Department of Justice to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network.

(b) DUTIES OF THE COORDINATOR.—The Coordinator shall—

(1) provide assistance to States and units of local government that are using Blue Alert plans;

(2) establish voluntary guidelines for States and units of local government to use in developing Blue Alert plans that will promote compatible and integrated Blue Alert plans throughout the United States, including—

(A) a list of the resources necessary to establish a Blue Alert plan;

(B) criteria for evaluating whether a situation warrants issuing a Blue Alert;

(C) guidelines to protect the privacy, dignity, independence, and autonomy of any law enforcement officer who may be the subject of a Blue Alert and the family of the law enforcement officer;

(D) guidelines that a Blue Alert should only be issued with respect to a law enforcement officer if—

(i) the law enforcement agency involved—

(I) confirms—

(aa) the death or serious injury of the law enforcement officer; or

(bb) the attack on the law enforcement officer and that there is an indication of the death or serious injury of the officer; or

(II) concludes that the law enforcement officer is missing in the line of duty;

(ii) there is an indication of serious injury to or death of the law enforcement officer;

(iii) the suspect involved has not been apprehended; and

(iv) there is sufficient descriptive information of the suspect involved and any relevant vehicle and tag numbers;

(E) guidelines—

(i) that information relating to a law enforcement officer who is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty should be provided to the National Crime Information Center database operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation under section 534 of title 28, United States Code, and any relevant crime information repository of the State involved;