

I grew up in poverty, and my grandmother often relied on Social Security survivor benefits to put food on the table. I know firsthand how important initiatives like Medicare and Medicaid are to seniors and families in America. No senior should have to make the choice between putting food on the table and paying for their medication.

Our country's retirees have paid into Medicare their entire lives. That is why it is so critical that those who have worked hard get their earned benefits.

Medicaid is critical to low-income families and individuals with disabilities that depend on the program for their basic health care needs, many of whom are struggling just to get by.

I look forward to continuing to work to strengthen and protect Medicare and Medicaid to ensure that the promise of health and economic security will be there for generations to come.

THE FATHER OF FRACKING

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

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week, Texas and America's energy industry lost a friend. George Mitchell, who many knew as the "father of fracking," passed away last week at his home in Galveston, Texas. While his death is a sad occasion, his legacy will live on as the energy industry continues to grow and prosper. Texas now stands ranked as No. 14 in the world in oil and gas production, largely due to Mr. Mitchell's innovation.

Not only was George an energy innovator, he was a community builder. He was a visionary. He developed the Woodlands Master Community when many just saw it as useless swampland. Mr. Mitchell also played an integral role in reviving what I consider a precious gem in my district: the island of Galveston. George and his wife put countless hours and resources into restoring the strand which helped keep the island a popular tourist destination and number one in Texas, for that matter.

It's important that we remember George Mitchell not only for his contribution to Texas business, but also for his zeal and tenacity to give back to the communities where he lived and worked.

I'm RANDY WEBER, and that's the way I see it from where I sit here in America.

RECOGNIZING DR. EMILY RUFFO

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

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to recognize Dr. Emily Ruffo, administrator of the Hayward Police Department's Youth and Family Services Bureau, who has been

named the California School Resource Officer Association's Law Enforcement Administrator of the Year. She'll be honored with this award today at the School Safety Conference in Anaheim.

She's been helping kids and families for years, joining the Hayward Youth and Family Services Bureau in 2011. Just this year, Dr. Ruffo was promoted to be administrator of the bureau, and her work has been a great help to Hayward and the entire 15th Congressional District.

The bureau Dr. Ruffo leads offers services to youth such as counseling to help keep kids out of trouble. For kids who have violated the law, it offers an alternative to juvenile justice to get them back on the right track. As a former prosecutor in the Alameda County District Attorney's office, I've worked closely with the Hayward Police Department and know how important this program is.

Dr. Ruffo is rightly being recognized for her commitment and care for the children and families of the East Bay. It's people like her willing to dedicate their careers to helping those at risk who are helping to provide us with a brighter future.

On behalf of the people of Hayward and the entire 15th Congressional District, I want to thank Dr. Ruffo for her service, congratulate her on her award, and wish her continued success.

REGULATING THE RABBIT

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, Washington bureaucrats are up to their old tricks again. They're interfering with how we run our businesses, dictating the type of health insurance we have to purchase, and stonewalling tax-exempt status based on political speech. Now they're going so far as to tell magicians how to do their magic shows.

Let me introduce you to Marty Hahne. He's an area magician from Missouri who's been doing magic shows for children in southern Missouri for over 27 years. This summer, he received a chilling letter from the Federal Government requiring him to have a license. Not for himself, but for his rabbit. The Agriculture Department is interpreting a decades-old law on animal exhibitions to now include pet bunnies used in magic shows. In order to continue conveying to children that reading is magic, he has to not only obtain a license, but also write a mandated disaster plan for his rabbit, including provisions for fire, floods, tornados, ice storms, and power failures.

This is just another example of government overreach and loss of freedoms in our country. It is time for this to stop. It is time for common sense to prevail. It's time for Big Government to leave us alone. With the track record of this current administration, that really would be like pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

CANCEL THE RECESS

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I wrote the following letter to the Under Secretary of Defense a few days ago:

Just this past Saturday, I attended a welcome home event for the 1109th TASMG, the Connecticut National Guard, who spent the last year in Afghanistan providing critical maintenance for our helicopter fleet.

Their joy at being home with family was undermined by the reality that nearly a third of the 100 returning members are dual-status technicians and, therefore, hit by furlough. After serving in a war zone away from family, it was a bitter pill for these patriots to lose 20 percent of their pay almost immediately upon their return.

I do believe that the Department of Defense can do a better job managing the furloughs. However, the real responsibility rests in this Chamber to turn off sequester. It has been 210 days since the governing Republican majority took power, and 81 legislative days that we have not taken up one measure to turn off sequester during that time. Incredibly, in 3 days, we are going on a 5-week recess, and on Friday we're going to vote for the 40th time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. I have a news flash: it's not going anywhere.

We should cancel the recess, and we should focus on making sure that these patriots are not treated so shabbily. We should make sure that the 600,000-plus civilian DOD Federal employees have their furloughs turned off.

Cancel the recess. Let's turn off sequester. Let's stand up for America's middle class.

WASHINGTON NEEDS HOOSIER COMMON SENSE

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, when I was back in the district this week in Indiana, Hoosier requests were pretty simple. They said: work on reforms, create more jobs, and jump-start the economy. In addition they said, We don't trust our government.

They're tired of Big Government policies that are intruding on the lives of American citizens and increasing government abuse. That's why I'm proud today to cosponsor and support bills that rein in Washington, refocus on the priorities to create jobs, and protect our citizens.

Every week we hear chilling reports about the Internal Revenue Service exercising poor judgment, intentionally going after American citizens. So I'm cosponsoring the STOP IRS Act.

While IRS employees are under investigation or forced to take administrative leaves, they continue to receive salaries funded by our taxpayer dollars. So I'm cosponsoring the Government Employee Accountability Act to freeze pay and demand accountability.

It's been reported that the IRS spent \$15 million between 2010 and 2012 to hold lavish, indulgent conferences. So I'm cosponsoring the Stop Playing on Citizens' Cash Act to stop wasting our tax dollars.

These same individuals are set to lead a commanding role implementing and enforcing ObamaCare. So I'm cosponsoring the Keep the IRS Off Our Health Care Act to prevent this agency from getting their hands on our health care.

Washington needs a strong dose of Hoosier common sense. I'm proud to stand with the thousands of letters and phone calls from Hoosiers and put the brakes on this reckless government.

□ 1230

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues and the American people just how important passing comprehensive immigration reform is to the growth of our economy.

Study after study has shown that successful implementation of comprehensive immigration reform will strengthen agriculture, cut the deficit, create manufacturing and job opportunities, and put hundreds of thousands of Americans back to work. This will increase our country's GDP and pump billions of dollars into our economy.

Here in Congress we talk a lot about creating jobs and growing the economy, but now it is time to act. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting comprehensive immigration reform for our economy and for the future of our country.

REPEAL MEDICAL DEVICE TAX

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, the President's \$30 billion excise tax on medical device manufacturers is bad for America. The tax is costing jobs, particularly in Indiana, and limiting patient access to lifesaving devices and therapies. We should not be putting American manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage and forcing Americans to look beyond our shores for care simply to pay for the President's broken health care law.

There are more than 26,000 Hoosiers employed by the medical device manufacturing industry and thousands more whose jobs are supported by the industry. The Indiana General Assembly has passed a resolution calling for repeal of the tax. This House should pass H.R. 523, the Protect Medical Innovation Act, to repeal the tax, preserve patient access to care, and save these Hoosier jobs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to shed light on the importance of the Community Development Block Grant Program. This program provides urban communities with vital resources needed to address a wide range of community development needs, growing local economies, and improving the quality of life for low- and moderate-income citizens.

Since the start of the program, the Community Development Block Grant program has invested over \$135 billion in local economies by helping families, creating jobs, supporting businesses, improving infrastructure, and providing housing to many Americans who are in need.

The program has provided the great State of Texas with over \$60 million in direct grants this year alone, with over \$28 million going to the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Funding for this program is vital to the constituents of the 33rd Congressional District. It has assisted homeowners with rehabbing their homes, providing downpayment and closing cost assistance to qualified home buyers; funded public improvements; provided public services, including employment training, meals and services to the elderly.

The appropriations bill up for vote this week cuts the fiscal year 2014 budget for these grants nearly in half. This is the lowest level of funding in history. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and save this important program.

STOP GOVERNMENT ABUSE

(Mrs. WAGNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote on a series of bills that aim to stop government abuse. Mr. Speaker, it is extremely disheartening that the Federal Government has acted and continues to act in a manner that cultivates distrust. Unfortunately, there are countless examples of misconduct among the Federal agencies, ranging from the IRS discriminating against conservative groups, to denying American citizens their constitutional rights in administrative proceedings.

Over the past month, I have heard from 1,187 of my constituents regarding their distrust in government; and as more activities of the agencies and the executive branch come to light, who can blame them. What is even more troubling than the misconduct itself is the fact that the President stands by it. Last week he called such transgressions "phony scandals."

These are hardly phony scandals. These are real and unconscionable actions taken by our Federal Government, and these actions are unaccept-

able. It is past time for us to do something about it.

We must take the necessary steps to start earning the trust of the American people, and that's why I back and have cosponsored several bills to be considered in the House this week. They are commonsense measures that work to begin restoring confidence in the American people.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I did not expect to still be waiting for a vote on immigration reform in August. But here we are, 48 hours from leaving town for 6 weeks, and there has been no definitive House action.

Many of us will spend time with our children and loved ones, whether on vacation or just in the backyard. I urge my colleagues to think about the millions of immigrant families who are no longer able to spend time together—the mother who was deported yesterday; the sister who feared deportation and left last year; the tens of thousands who wait in line for visas; and the ones for whom there is no line available.

For those who are in detention, like the Dream 9 in Arizona, and the many others who, because of their status, a trip to the hospital or getting a traffic ticket could mean they never see their children again. The American Dream will end for 44,400 immigrants who will be deported between now and September 9. I hope they are in your thoughts.

Mr. Speaker, I will be inserting into the RECORD a letter from JARED POLIS of Colorado and myself to the President of the United States asking for the release of the Dream 9 held in detention in Arizona.

REPEAL OBAMACARE AND CUT TAXES

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, President Obama says he now has serious ideas about taxes and job creation. I'd like to take him seriously, but the truth is that the President has spent the last 4½ years hammering the Nation's businesses with taxes, regulations, and ObamaCare. His business mandate has already forced many small businesses to convert full-time jobs to part-time jobs.

And let's remember the jobs that have already dissipated due to the medical device companies that are reducing employees to pay a new ObamaCare excise tax. One company has already terminated more than 1,000 workers.

As for taxes, the President's fiscal cliff deal pushes taxes up to as much as 45 percent for many small business