

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. GUTIÉRREZ. 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

owners and investors. That simply diminishes their incentive to move forward with expansions that would create jobs.

So Mr. President, if you'd really like this economy to get going, let's start by repealing ObamaCare and cutting taxes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address all remarks to the Chair.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the 48th anniversary of the establishment of Medicare and Medicaid. Since Medicare was signed into law in 1965, millions of Americans have relied on the crucial programs to live their lives in dignity, and millions more who have paid into the system are counting on Medicare to one day provide them with quality health care.

This historic commitment and pledge from our country is one of our greatest achievements. Seniors like my mother, and those living with disabilities, all understand the essential role Medicare plays in the lives of so many Americans.

In April, I held a roundtable with constituents in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. They all stressed to me the importance of protecting and preserving Medicare, but also on cracking down on abuse and fraud that exists in the program.

I have met with people living with disabilities who rely on these benefits for their health services. As we celebrate and acknowledge the great benefits of Medicare, it is important that we reinforce our commitment to the program, even as we cut down on the waste and fraud. We must continue our fight to strengthen and enhance Medicare and fulfill our 48-year-old promise to millions of hardworking Americans across this great Nation.

STOP OBAMACARE

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

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 2009, the Keep the IRS Off Your Health Care Act. ObamaCare has proven to be a terrible law that will continue to hurt individuals, employers, and our health care system.

While accurate information regarding the law has been scarce, what we know for sure is that premiums are skyrocketing, American families are confused, and doctors and nurses are afraid they will not be able to continue to care for their patients.

Businesses across the country are being forced to not only adhere to the

onerous paperwork requirements, but have been in a holding pattern for over 3 years waiting for implementation. Recently, we learned that the IRS has been targeting different groups and singling them out for intense scrutiny based on their political views. But as ObamaCare is set to be implemented, Americans are expected to trust the IRS with the responsibility of implementing this destructive law. This has proven to be unworkable and a dangerous path for our health care system and our country to be on.

CALIFORNIA AND RISING SEA LEVELS

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, climate change is a long-term threat to my home State of California and to all coastal States. Climate change will increase the risk of flooding and eventual submersion of millions of American low-lying homes.

Mr. Speaker, I hold up this article that a group of scientists from Princeton and the University of Arizona recently published, a journal article that quantifies State by State the coastal populations that are exposed to storm surges and sea level rise.

The researchers found that in California there are more than 138,000 housing units and over 325,000 Californians living on land that is below one meter of high tide. And in the entire United States, there are approximately 3.7 million Americans living on land below one meter of high tide.

Mr. Speaker, if Congress and the world does nothing, climate change will have a devastating impact on these 3.7 million Americans who are on the front line of climate change. And that number will only grow.

LETTER FROM A CONSTITUENT

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor with a letter from a constituent, a businessman, and I will just read parts of it:

I did not need to read about the ObamaCare health insurance tax increase that will be passed on to small businesses. It has already happened to my small firm. Last week I was advised by my insurance agent that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois is increasing my rates by more than 38 percent.

I want to relay to you that due to a decrease in business, likely caused by uncertainty of our future, I have had to release one employee and have advised all remaining employees that the increase of health insurance premiums will be passed on to them. I was proudly able to pay 100 percent of employees' health care coverage, but after two consecutive 20 percent increases in the last two years, and the latest 40 percent increase, simple business logic requires that I pass on

this increase or simply go out of business. My employees will have less take-home pay under ObamaCare. Does anyone in Congress realize that under this still uncertain program, it is more logical for me to shut down my business and take the subsidies on one of the exchanges than to remain open?

□ 1245

THE BIPARTISAN STUDENT LOAN CERTAINTY ACT

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1911, the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act.

Last month, I urged my colleagues in this House to take up and help our students because the interest rate was going to double on July 1. The Senate has already acted, and this week we have a chance to make things right.

The Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act will not only reverse the July 1 student loan interest rate hike, but it actually makes things better for our students.

As students around the world are acquiring higher education, master's and training, it's imperative that our students here in this country also receive the opportunities to compete on a global scale. By making higher education more accessible, H.R. 1911 accomplishes that.

When it is signed by President Obama, it will give \$25 billion in debt relief over the next 6 years. It will give students the ability to lock in the interest rate for the life of their loan so they know exactly what they are going to be paying in interest, and it will save thousands of dollars and lower interest payments.

I look forward to sending this bill to our President.

STOPPING GOVERNMENT ABUSE

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

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, in our Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote that governments derived their power from "the consent of the governed." Years later, Abraham Lincoln called our American democracy a government "of the people, by the people, for the people." What would these great men think if they saw the waste and abuse so rampant in our government today?

House Republicans are committed to maintaining a government that works for the American people, not against them. That's why this week we're bringing a number of bills to the floor to do just that. We believe in an America with expanded opportunity and a more secure future for all.

There's no place in that America for massive government overreach, and