

have voted in support of H.R. 3092, H.R. 2449, and S. 793.

THE FIRST RESPONDERS OF THE COLORADO FLOODS

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the many first responders, National Guard, volunteers, and local leaders who have worked tirelessly, beginning in the middle of last week, in order to respond to the floods in Colorado. An area the size of Connecticut has been impacted by over 20 inches of rain in certain areas of the State; 19,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed; and countless people have had their lives changed forever.

But as is the case with all tragedies in Colorado and across this great country, we come together as a community, as neighbors to help one another in times such as these. We know in the months and years to come there will be great challenges, and there will be trying times as we try to find answers for those families who lost so much.

So, Mr. Speaker, we recognize those efforts, such as HelpColoradoNow.org, that are doing so much good for the people there. This has happened before—a great tragedy. We've come together, but we will rise up. We will be stronger because we are Colorado.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(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, several weeks ago, we had a deeply partisan debate about cuts to SNAP. The proposed cuts by the majority were then \$20 billion—a number that many of my colleagues and I found unacceptable and rejected. The majority has now doubled these cuts to \$40 billion a year—nine times the amount passed in a bipartisan vote in the Senate. They have abandoned all attempts at bipartisanship and compromise to satisfy the unreasonable demands of the far right.

Mr. Speaker, we should not be playing politics with a program that means so much to American families. The \$40 billion in cuts will slash benefits to as many as 6 million Americans, including 170,000 veterans. The average benefit for SNAP is only \$4.50 a day—just \$1.50 a meal.

As someone who benefited from food stamps when I was a teenager, I know what the safety net means. This benefit is the difference between a child going to bed hungry or having the energy to focus on school. It is the safety net that allows low-income seniors to be able to both eat and afford medication. In my district, the poverty rate rose from 5.3 percent in 2000 to 9.2 percent in 2011. We need to be finding ways

to reduce poverty in our communities, not cutting programs that work, like SNAP.

ODD GUN POLICY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it seems the administration has finally made up its mind and will arm the Syrian rebels. Never mind Syria is in the messy midst of a civil war. That involvement is not in the national security interest of the United States.

The other rebel groups include foreign mercenaries, criminals, and, in my opinion, half are al Qaeda operatives. That includes al Qaeda from the state of Iraq and al-Nusra, an al Qaeda terrorist group. The last I heard, Mr. Speaker, the United States is at war with al Qaeda.

There is no way our government can prevent the guns sent to Syria from getting into the hands of al Qaeda rebels. The administration constantly and conveniently goes out of its way to keep Americans from possessing firearms, but it seems to be enthusiastically delighting in running guns into other countries—to groups like drug cartels in Mexico, rebel groups in Libya and al Qaeda in Syria.

Odd gun policy, don't you think, Mr. Speaker?

And that's just the way it is.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, the Safe Climate Caucus held a remarkable forum. It was the first time in Congress that individuals were invited to talk about the personal hardships they have experienced as a result of climate change. We heard from witnesses from around the country.

Matt Russell, an Iowa farmer, told us how his crops had been flooded by record rains. Hugh Fitzsimons, a Texas rancher, described how his herd was decimated by a record drought. Emily Dondero from Sonora, California, explained how the massive California Rim fire is devastating her community. Stephanie Kravitz, a New York homeowner, talked about the devastation she suffered when Superstorm Sandy struck Long Island, New York, and Reverend Tyrone Edwards from Louisiana spoke movingly of the damage inflicted on his community by enormous hurricanes.

For these Americans, climate change is already painfully real. They told us climate change is not a distant threat. As scientist Noah Diffenbaugh explained, it is already affecting families across the country.

The witnesses ask that Congress stop denying the science. They want action, and I think it's about time we start to listen.

MEDICARE ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS IMPROVEMENT ACT

(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, when unlicensed and unaccredited providers are allowed to deliver prosthetic and orthotic services through Medicare, both Medicare beneficiaries and the American taxpayers are shortchanged.

Unfortunately, the orthotics and prosthetics market currently is prone to fraud and abuse, where substandard products and services are being furnished to Medicare beneficiaries and other patients. Despite congressional mandates, not enough has been done to ensure that legitimate practitioners are providing these items and services.

Moments ago, I, along with my colleague MIKE THOMPSON of California, introduced the Medicare Orthotics and Prosthetics Improvement Act of 2013. This commonsense piece of legislation will protect Medicare beneficiaries by identifying and addressing fraudulent payments, and it will hold government accountable by reducing fraud and abuse within Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in this bipartisan effort by co-sponsoring H.R. 3112, the Medicare Orthotics and Prosthetics Improvement Act of 2013.

ANOTHER MASS SHOOTING IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. "I heard 'pow, pow, pow.' Then for a few seconds, it stopped and then 'pow, pow, pow.' I just started running."

Mr. Speaker, the sentiments of this newspaper fell upon me and many other Americans, the words again—"another mass shooting in the United States of America."

Now, at the Naval Sea Systems Command—the naval command here in Washington, D.C.—and in coming from Texas, it reminded me of the horrific tragedy and terrorist act of Fort Hood. If you cannot call this terrorism, you could call it a domestic rampage, but what you could call it is a failing for what we in the United States Congress have not done, and that is to pass universal background checks and to focus on the mental health needs of those who are disturbed and might cause the havoc and the loss of life of so many that families today mourn.

As we stand here today, the question becomes: How much longer will it take us to pass sensible gun legislation to stop this violence?

I pray for those who have lost their lives, Mr. Speaker, and I ask this Congress to act and to pass universal background checks and the stopping of

these ridiculous top secret clearances by outsourcing.

NATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, this is National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

Childhood cancers are the leading cause of death by disease amongst children in our country; and each year, nearly 13,400 children are diagnosed with cancer.

I have been privileged to have met with many doctors and researchers who spend every day searching for answers in Minnesota's award-winning institutions, like the Mayo Clinic, the Children's Hospital of Minnesota, the Gillette Children's Hospital, and the University of Minnesota. There is no doubt that we can be proud of the incredible work that they are doing in Minnesota.

I am also cosponsoring legislation that will make cancer treatments more affordable for families and will encourage the development of new treatments by redirecting taxpayer funds that are spent on Presidential campaigns into childhood cancer research.

Mr. Speaker, we all look forward to the day when cancer is 100 percent treatable in our children, and that's why I stand alongside doctors and families and, most importantly, cancer patients in the search for a cure.

AMERICA'S INHERENT FREEDOMS ARE BEING ATTACKED

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

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, freedom of speech and religion and the recognition of the God-given dignity of every human life are core principles upon which America was founded, but these inherent freedoms are being attacked.

The Southern Poverty Law Center is one of the worst offenders—targeting and persecuting Americans who stand up for their moral convictions. This group routinely attacks mainstream, pro-family organizations, slandering them with false accusations of hatred and bigotry. Motivated by their inflammatory rhetoric, a gunman burst into the Family Research Council's lobby last year and shot a security guard, later admitting that the assault was inspired by the Southern Poverty Law Center's hate list.

We cannot let the beacon of freedom, known as America, become home to hate groups and other extremists, including those who slander their political opponents.

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CONSTITUTION DAY

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

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, on this Constitution Day, I want to applaud those in the Armed Forces who take a pledge to honor and defend the Constitution at the risk of life and limb.

Every generation of Americans has been protected by what Frederick Douglass once called "that glorious liberty document." We should take the time today to salute those who defend the Constitution. I fear that sometimes we take for granted the sacrifice that these brave men and women bear.

They, like their predecessors, are the ones who allow us to secure our freedoms in the Constitution to pass down to future generations. They are the ones that allow us to gather here today to do the will of the people. They are the reason why the Constitution has lasted over two centuries as the prime example in the world of a free government.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WENSTRUP). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, earlier in the session today, we paused in remembrance of those who were killed here in Washington, D.C., yesterday, yet another tragedy for this Nation, another shooting, senseless rage by some individual. We heard on the floor here a few minutes ago a plea by some of our colleagues to call us to action so that we who represent the millions upon millions of Americans would find within ourselves the courage to take action on wise gun safety legislation, mental health, and other things that we know can help to address the problem that plagues this Nation. So today, as we start this one-hour, I want to just remind ourselves that we have work to do here.

Joining me tonight is PAUL TONKO, a Representative from the State of New York. We often have had the opportunity to speak on the floor about the issues that confront us. Perhaps, PAUL, you may want to comment on this tragedy, and then we'll turn to the other issues that we want to take up today.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative GARAMENDI, and thank you for bringing us together on what will be thoughtful discussion in how to invest in America and grow the economy and grow job opportunities, create that climate that best cultivates job action and job growth in our society.

Just moments ago on the House floor, we held a moment of silence in

recognition, in commemoration and respect for those who gave it their all, as many were Federal employees in that situation. I also want to attach my comments to those of yours in extending my condolences to the many family members and friends who are so impacted by this tragedy, this horrific act that wiped out their lives prematurely. May they rest in peace.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I join you in those condolences.

Our subject matter for the evening was really going to be about the economy, about income within this Nation, or the lack of it.

I want to just start by referring to a statement that Franklin Delano Roosevelt made during the economic crisis of the 1930s. In fact, this statement is etched in the marble at the F.D.R. memorial here in Washington, D.C. He said:

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

The test of our progress. Well, what has been our progress over these last several years?

This last week, the economic study of the progress of America since the great crash of 2007 was made public. There has been progress. There has been economic growth. There has been the creation of wealth. We have seen progress, but it's not the kind of progress that F.D.R. talked about in the thirties. What we have seen is exactly the opposite of what he called for: to provide more for those who have little.

Here it is, the tale of two Americans, a stunted recovery, but, nonetheless, a recovery.

Where did the economic growth go? Where did the wealth go that was created? Was it to those who have little? No. No. No. Ninety-five percent of all of the wealth that this economy created since 2007 in the great crash went to the top 1 percent. Ninety-five percent of all of the wealth went to the top 1 percent. The remaining 99 percent wound up with 5 percent of the wealth that the Nation's biggest economy created since the crash of 2007. Franklin Delano Roosevelt would not have stood for it, and he didn't. Nor did Bill Clinton.

From 1993 to 2000, the economy grew very rapidly. The distribution of the wealth that was created during those years went in a remarkably different way than what has happened over the last 5 years. During the Clinton period, 55 percent of all the wealth that this Nation created went to the bottom 99 percent. The top 1 percent did very well. They got 45 percent of all of the wealth. You can say that was not enough for the bottom 99 percent, and I would agree; but compared to what's happened over these last 5 years, it's a remarkable improvement on the distribution of wealth.

What is the distribution of wealth? It's not a class struggle. It's about the