

Instant Criminal Background Check System, known as the NICS. We put in place this background check system to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, but our background check system is failing.

For example, the NICS database of mentally ill individuals has fewer than 20 percent of the records that it should have. This is unacceptable. If you are a violent criminal, you should fail a background check. If you've been involuntarily committed to a mental institution, you should fail a background check. If you've been convicted of domestic abuse, you should fail a background check—no one argues with that—but if the information is not in the database, then these dangerous individuals will get their hands on guns, which could lead to devastating consequences.

Mr. Speaker, my bill will improve incentives for States to partner with the Federal Government, and it will maintain an accurate, accessible, and up-to-date NICS. This is a strong step in the right direction, and it has the support of voices on both sides of the gun debate.

□ 1140

#### CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, for far too long our country has ignored the blatant warning signals that climate change is real, and its effects are happening all around us, from droughts to wildfires to extreme flooding. The time to act is now. Numerous reports indicate that we are dangerously close to losing the window of opportunity in which we can meaningfully address climate change.

My district of Sacramento has already been working hard to implement commonsense policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By developing cutting-edge clean energy technology and creating energy retrofit programs, my constituents understand the urgent need to tackle this issue head-on.

Now is the time for Congress to follow their lead and show that we, too, are committed to mitigating and reversing the devastating effects of climate change. Failure to heed new warnings and take action will have drastic economic and environmental effects, not just for our generation, but for our children and grandchildren. The time to act is now.

#### INCREASING POLICE PRESENCE AT SCHOOLS

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, the recent school massacres at Newtown, Connecticut, sent shock waves across

our country. And as a father, I grieved with the families that lost loved ones on that day, but as a legislator, I vowed that I would take action to prevent future tragedies.

According to a recent Gallup poll, 53 percent of Americans believe that increasing police presence at schools would be very effective in preventing future tragedies. After speaking with local law enforcement, superintendents, and principals in my district, I believe it is the best path forward. That is why I will be introducing the Protect America's Schools Act today.

This legislation would revitalize the Cops in Schools grant program, which has not been funded since fiscal year 2005, and fund it at \$30 million annually. The CIS program is specifically designed to assist local law enforcement agencies in the hiring of new officers.

And with a \$16.4 trillion debt, we must take action, but we must be fiscally responsible. The \$30 million to pay for this critical grant program would be offset by taking the unspent funds from the operations budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The Protect America's Schools Act is not the only answer, but it is a critical step forward to protect our Nation's children. Keeping our children safe is not only an area where both political parties can find common ground, but as lawmakers, we have a moral obligation to make sure that we do just that.

#### BROAD AND DEVASTATING EFFECT OF SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, San Diego is the largest metropolitan area for military personnel and base operations. My district is home to seven military installations, and sequestration will have a broad and devastating effect on our military families and economy.

In total, defense spending is responsible for 25 percent of San Diego's GDP. That means 1 out of every \$4 generated in San Diego is achieved as a result of defense spending. The proposed cuts to the defense budget will cost San Diego more than 30,000 defense-related jobs, and the Navy will be forced to put a freeze on hiring civilians, many of whom are veterans.

With 11.5 percent of our community's veterans unemployed and a shocking 25 percent of veterans between 18 and 24 struggling to find employment, any further reduction in job opportunities for our Nation's heroes is unacceptable. We can neither threaten our military readiness with indiscriminate cuts nor can we fail the brave men and women of our Armed Forces and their families who have already sacrificed so much.

Please join with me in bringing an end to the partisan gridlock and finding solutions that do not put undue

burdens on those who risk their lives in defense of our freedom.

#### RECOGNIZING REVA BRITAN

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reva Britan for her brilliant 25 years of service to the people of south Florida.

Reva began her career in 1988, after successfully raising five sons, and became a congressional staffer for former Congressman Larry Smith, then worked for former Congressman Peter Deutch, my predecessor, and for the last 8 years, she has been working with me in my district office. Her continuity of service and her depth of experience has benefited thousands of my constituents.

She is a much-loved staffer who brings her joy, her light, and her smile to the Pembroke Pines office every single day. Whether she's helping someone set up a tour or greeting constituents on the phone, she does it all with ease and elegant grace.

On behalf of the constituents of Florida's 23rd Congressional District, we thank Reva for her service and her dedication to our community, our office, and our country.

#### REJECT THE SEQUESTER

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, in the State of the Union address this week, President Obama laid out a powerful vision for our Nation, one that will create jobs, tear down barriers to prosperity, and lift the most vulnerable out of poverty.

At the same time, the Republican-controlled House has yet to bring a bill to the floor to prevent the unconscionable budget sequester from slashing thousands of jobs and pushing poor and low-income individuals over the edge.

As the President said this week, we cannot grow the economy by shifting the cost of health care or college onto families that are already struggling, or by forcing our communities to lay off more teachers, more firefighters, and more police officers.

We must reject the sequester and reject proposals that would balance the budget on the backs of seniors, veterans, and low-income families. Everyone should have the opportunity to climb, strive, and reap the rewards of the American Dream. That is how we build our economy for all and create a better world for our children.

#### ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

(Mr. CLEAVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help our communities deal with changing climate. In the last 2 years alone, our country has dealt with destructive wildfires in the West, flooding on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, a devastating hurricane in the Northeast, and the worst drought since the Dust Bowl. Climate change preparation and adaptation is about risk management. As Ben Franklin said: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Spending a small amount now saves us much suffering; and we understand, this is going to happen again and again. Because climate change is real, we are going to address this over and over and over again on this floor. Some people might say there is no such thing as climate change. Well, you can say that water is not wet, but it doesn't make it so.

#### REAUTHORIZING THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

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

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, in Arizona's First District, Native Americans make up about 25 percent of my constituents. Unfortunately, Native American women are two and a half times more likely to be assaulted in their lifetime than other women.

Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act is important to my district. That's why I'm very concerned about the impact of sequestration cuts on programs supported by the Violence Against Women Act. More than \$20 million in cuts are at stake.

What does a \$20 million cut mean? It means thousands more victims would be denied shelter and legal services. It means thousands fewer police officers, prosecutors, judges, and victim advocates would get specialized training.

As a former prosecutor, I know we need to do all we can to keep victims safe and hold perpetrators accountable, and that means we need to do all we can to stop these sequestration cuts.

□ 1150

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to represent the Second District of California, which spans from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border. Mine is a district with hundreds of miles of pristine coastline, with numerous rivers, and coldwater fisheries, with ancient forests and redwood trees, with cities located right up against San Francisco Bay.

It's a district where unique climatic factors have combined to create some of the world's greatest wine appellations. And we know, in the Second District of California, that we cannot wait to address the threat of climate change.

On the State level, I have fought to defend and successfully implement California's world-leading greenhouse gas reduction law for the past 6 years, but that is not enough. We need leadership here at the Federal level.

If we fail to act, Mr. Speaker, the livelihoods of fishermen, crabbers, foresters, farmers and others in my district are going to suffer great harm. The cost of Congress continuing to bury its head on the issue of climate change is simply too great.

And so I am proud to be joining other colleagues, with Chairman WAXMAN, in the Safe Climate Caucus, and to take this cause to the national level.

#### COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I introduced a resolution to designate March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. I want to thank Senators LAUTENBERG, MENENDEZ, and ENZI for introducing a similar resolution in the Senate. I also want to thank the entire New Jersey delegation and all those who signed on to this bipartisan resolution.

This issue is very personal to me, as I lost my father, the late Congressman Donald Payne, Sr., to colon cancer just last March. It became my mission to raise awareness of the importance of cancer screening.

While colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer, it remains the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. In New Jersey alone, 1,600 people will die of this disease this year.

African Americans and Hispanics are at increased risk. Too many people forego screenings because of the perceptions around testing. But I am here to tell you: be a man; get tested. You just might save your own life.

#### THANK YOU TO PRESIDENT OBAMA

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to say thank you, thank you to President Obama. A couple of nights ago at the State of the Union, he mentioned Youngstown, Ohio, and the National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute that is a partnership between the Departments of Commerce, Energy, Defense, and private partnerships up to about \$70 million to advance additive manufacturing innovation in the military and energy and health care that will transform and revolutionize manufacturing.

I wanted to rise this morning to also say thank you to all of our partners in the Tech Belt, which ranges from Cleveland to Akron to Youngstown, to

Pittsburgh, all the way down into West Virginia. The old Rust Belt has made a comeback, and we are on our way, as we did many, many years ago, to revolutionize manufacturing again.

This will lead to great opportunities for our young people to come back, institutions like Case Western Reserve, Carnegie Mellon, Youngstown State, University of Akron, Lehigh, Penn State, West Virginia University, all coming together, working as a team. And we now have landed this institute, and we will once again be the hub of manufacturing.

Thank you, President Obama, and thank you to all of the men and women who have helped put this thing together.

#### THE THREAT OF A NUCLEAR IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MESSER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, my comments today are heavily contributed to by the author of "The Nature of War," Ron Tira; and I want to acknowledge him. He's a noted military expert and noted national security expert, and I appreciate so very much his seminal contribution to these comments.

Mr. Speaker, a nuclear Iran poses a severe and unfamiliar risk to the United States and its allies. We have to be very careful not to mistakenly assume that a relatively stable balance of deterrence, similar to the nuclear equilibrium between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, can be achieved with Iran. A nuclear Iran represents a very different type of threat that simply cannot be managed.

A nuclear Iran would serve to incentivize the development of nuclear weapons by many other regional powers in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey.

Mr. Speaker, a multi-polar nuclear crisis is much harder to manage than anything we've experienced or did experience during the Cold War. If we could all just imagine for a moment the so-called "chicken game." But instead of two drivers, imagine five drivers, Mr. Speaker, each speeding from different directions to converge on the same intersection.

All of this, in addition to the other characteristics of the Middle East, such as unstable regimes and the danger of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of al Qaeda or other terrorist groups.

Consider Qadhafi's Libya, Mr. Speaker, with several nuclear warheads. Who knows where they might be now? And where would the world be today if Syria's Assad had managed to complete his nuclear bombmaking efforts?

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the only viable U.S. policy is one of preventing