

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Harriet Howard, a great Tennessean who recently passed away.

Harriet Howard, of Rutherford County, is known throughout our community for her tireless efforts on behalf of our military veterans. Not only did Harriet devote countless hours to volunteer work; she helped ensure that veterans in our State have access to the care they need and deserve.

Harriet launched a well-known public communications campaign that led to female veterans receiving quality medical coverage. She set up a petition drive to prevent the Alvin C. York VA Medical Center in Rutherford County from closing. Today, the hospital remains open as a direct result of her efforts. Finally, she raised more than \$125,000 for the Tennessee Fisher House for a new facility in Murfreesboro. Harriet also served her country in the military as a Navy clerk for more than 39 years.

Our State owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to Ms. Howard. I know she is missed by countless veterans and their families.

UNBUDGED IN OUR TRACKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, lately, the people's House, this House of Representatives, has been called a lot of other things—dysfunctional, unpopular, and gridlocked—but one word, inspired by Charles Dickens, seems particularly fitting these days: bleak.

In 1852, Charles Dickens wrote the novel "Bleak House" about the dismal failures of the British judicial system. The title "Bleak House" refers to the main courthouse, above which reads the warning:

Suffer any wrong that can be done you rather than come here.

Given the recent inaction, and perhaps dysfunction, I feel a similar moniker may need to be placed above our own door.

This body has reached a point where our inaction is no longer harmless. Our inability to act and govern is having real and harmful effects. We are on the verge of causing great suffering.

Take, for example, health care. We passed health care reform 3 years ago. While everyone does not like all of its provisions, the fact is it's the law of the land. It's not going away. But rather than working together to improve the bill, as has been done with every other major piece of legislation, such as Medicare part D, many in this House are not only refusing to make adjustments; they are trying to stop its implementation altogether. There are efforts under way to dissuade young people from signing up for insurance, to prevent assisters from helping folks access insurance, and to scare seniors. Rather than coming together to improve our health care system, the dys-

function of this body is actually harming the health and well-being of millions of people.

Take the inability to pass a continuing resolution as another example of how the gridlock of this body is hurting our country. What was once a routine act of debating funding levels and priorities and passing a budget has devolved into a hijacking of government and the funding of health care. This is a game of chicken that risks shutting down the entire government and injuring millions of Americans.

Leaders on the other side of the aisle understand the devastating effect of such a shutdown. Speaker JOHN BOEHNER said in April 2011:

If you shut down the government, it'll end up costing more than you'll save because you interrupt contracts.

Yet despite such warnings, we continue to risk a deeply damaging government shutdown.

Finally, efforts to increase the debt limit should serve as another sober reminder of how dysfunctional and harmful this body has become. The debt limit has been raised 78 times, including 49 times by Republican Presidents and 29 times by Democratic Presidents. Once again, what was once standard operating procedure has become a hostage for extreme positions.

Many in this House are willing to risk the full faith and credit of the United States in order to push their extremism. Defaulting on our debt would cause irreparable damage to our recovery and risk sending us back into recession. As George W. Bush's chief economic adviser, Keith Hennessey, put it:

Not raising the debt limit could lead to "a catastrophic event."

Still, we continue down this dangerous path.

And these are just a few of the most topical examples. The list of items we are unable to tackle goes on and on: tax reform, entitlement reform, reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, transportation and infrastructure, immigration reform, postal reform, a decent farm bill, and commonsense gun violence legislation. We are indeed making Truman's do-nothing Congress look positively busy.

Yesterday, Senator CRUZ quoted Dr. Seuss. Today, I would like to do the same. But I am drawing from a different Seuss tale, the story of "The Zax." For those not familiar, the Zax is about two Zaxes going two different directions and who meet face-to-face. Each Zax refuses to go any direction but the direction it was headed. The Zaxes stand so long that a highway overpass is built over them, and the story ends with each Zax still standing there "unbudded in their tracks."

From Dickens to Seuss, great writers can teach us and warn us about the dangers of obstinacy and intransigence. Refusing to act has surely led us to a very bleak place indeed. Let's not end up like the Zaxes, "unbudded in our tracks," and unable to tackle the great challenges of our time.

CONGRATULATING TIDIOUTE COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Tidioute Community Charter School in Tidioute, Pennsylvania.

Earlier this week, the United States Secretary of Education awarded Tidioute Community Charter School the recognition of National Blue Ribbon School for 2013. The National Blue Ribbon is awarded to public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students are achieving very high learning standards or are making notable improvements toward those standards.

Mr. Speaker, the National Blue Ribbon Award reaffirms the hard work of the students, faculty, and families who make up the Tidioute Community Charter School. I commend them for creating an environment where young minds are able to gain knowledge and skills; and, through a rigorous curriculum, students have developed the character to realize their own full potential.

Tidioute Community Charter School students exemplify just what it means to be young learners preparing for their roles in the 21st century. Equally so, the quality instruction, creativity, and support of the teachers and families have made the Tidioute Community Charter School deserving of our praise.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to again talk about the need to end hunger now.

Last week, this House passed a bill that cut \$39 billion from the Nation's preeminent anti-hunger safety net program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP. Formerly known as food stamps, SNAP is a program that provides food to low-income individuals and their families. It also has among the lowest error rates of any Federal program. Additionally, the bill contained new work requirements for people receiving SNAP benefits.

Mr. Speaker, the notion of new and stricter work requirements sounds terrific. I'm sure it polls very well. But the reality is that the majority of people receiving SNAP who can work, actually do work. In fact, working people are the fastest-growing priority of the SNAP program.

And let me note that SNAP already has work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents. Under current law, they are eligible for SNAP benefits for only 3 out of every 36 months unless they work 20 hours a

week or are in a State-run unemployment or training program. The law specifically states they must take a job if it is offered to them, and cannot quit.

States can apply for waivers for areas of high unemployment. During this very difficult economic time, 48 States and jurisdictions currently do so. In other words, Republican and Democratic Governors alike understand that forcing people to find a job before they can get their food benefits doesn't make any sense if there are no jobs to find.

The Republican bill would eliminate those State waivers and impose harsh financial penalties on States that refuse to implement the new work requirements. So much for States' rights.

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But more broadly, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that what we do in Congress is not done in a vacuum. Every action we take is linked together. Every piece of Federal policy that we pass has a reaction on other Federal policies.

For the past 3 years, we have seen this Tea Party-controlled House of Representatives attempt to weaken our educational system, prevent people from obtaining health care, cut childcare programs, cut transportation funding and affordable housing, cut job training programs, try to take health care away from people who have insurance, and prevent bills that create jobs from coming to the floor. In other words, at the same time my Republican friends are telling poor people that they need to work in order to get food benefits, they are doing everything possible to make it harder for people to find a job that pays a living wage.

Now, think about a young single mother who is trying to make a better life. Republicans want to cut Pell Grants, cut funding to community colleges, and cut job training programs, which means it's harder for her to get the skills she needs. This sequester has meant cuts to Head Start programs, which makes it harder to find affordable childcare so that she can go to work. Cuts in transportation funding make it more difficult and expensive for her to get to a job if she can find one.

They reject health insurance for everyone, which gives her a perverse incentive to stay on Medicaid. They oppose raising the minimum wage, which means that even if she can find a job, it likely won't pay enough to provide for her family.

Mr. Speaker, slashing government just for its own sake means cutting education, stifling innovation and job creation, and preventing people from making ends meet.

I have come to this floor week after week to talk about how we can end hunger now. Week after week, I have called for a White House conference on food and nutrition, urging the President to bring policy and political experts to the White House to come up

with a comprehensive plan to End Hunger Now—a plan that could dramatically reduce the number of people who rely on SNAP and reduce the amount of money we spend on the program. This is an issue that can and must be solved.

Last week, this House took a huge step backwards, a step that will make more people hungry in America. It was an awful thing to do. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 3.8 million people will lose their benefits; 170,000 veterans will lose their food benefits.

Ending hunger used to be a bipartisan issue. Surely, it can be again.

HEALTH CARE PERSPECTIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring two very contrasting perspectives to the floor with regard to health care. One of them starts with an individual that we are all familiar with, and when he talks, people listen.

On March 1, 2010, Warren Buffett said:

I would much rather see a plan C that really attacks costs in regard to health care. And I think that's what the American public wants to see. The American public is not behind this bill. And we need the American public behind the bill.

Now, he has changed his position two or three times and it is hard to get a beat on exactly how he feels about ObamaCare, but when he talks, people listen. The problem is the people we need to hear from the most aren't being heard.

I got a letter from Christy in Jonesboro, in my district, and I'm going to share that letter with you today. It says:

As I was listening to the radio this morning, people were calling in about how ObamaCare is already affecting them. I just want you to know a little about our family.

My husband and I are 48 years old, have been married 29 years, and have three daughters, ages 16, 18, and 23—all still living at home, although the 23-year-old does work a full-time job.

My husband has been an auto-body mechanic for most of his life. This has taken a serious toll on his body as a result of strenuous physical labor paired with breathing chemicals. He has worked at numerous body shops—always looking for a better environment/pay/benefits. I will say, as a body man's wife, the people making good livings in this area are the body shop owners and the health insurance companies.

Every shop he ever worked at offered him health insurance, but the premiums were always around \$200 a week just for him. There was no way we could afford \$800 a month for something that may or may not happen.

Our family of five has rarely been sick. I have tried to practice preventative health care by what I feed my family because I'm positive a large percentage of health costs are due to diet.

My husband makes \$500 a week, on average; my daughter makes a little over \$300 a week. Our rent is \$800 a month. Utilities run

\$200. We can barely afford the \$47 liability insurance on my husband's vehicle. My daughter pays the \$95 liability insurance on her vehicle.

We have barely been able to buy groceries, and I know how to shop frugally. We have no credit cards or expensive habits. We use the library a great deal. My question is: What will we do when we are fined because we don't have health insurance? There is absolutely no way we can afford health insurance for a family of five.

It is hard to go day by day watching what is happening with the government of this once great Nation. I am so discouraged and disappointed, and I try not to fear the future when it comes to the American Government, which will dictate my future regardless. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully, Christy in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

I want Christy to know, and I want everybody in America to know, that I hear you. Those guys that are driving the wrenches, the nurses that are providing health care, the firemen who are doing their jobs working the 40-hour week, barely making ends meet, and we're piling more and more debt on this country—\$1.3 trillion in additional costs, when Social Security and Medicare are nearing bankruptcy. It's unconscionable.

I want folks to know, certainly in my district and folks across the country, that there are people here that hear you. And we're going to work for you and try to fix this problem because we can't sustain this any longer.

CONGRATULATING ORACLE TEAM USA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for his courtesy to allow me, with great enthusiasm, to come to the floor to salute Team America, the Oracle Team USA, which came from behind to win the America's Cup.

As many people may be aware, and some not, over the past year or so the San Francisco Bay Area has been home to the America's Cup race. It's a venerable race. It is usually out to sea, where people in their sailboats could witness what was going on or see it on TV. Because of the vision of Larry Ellison, it was brought to San Francisco Bay. It went from white caps to blue collar, and anyone who could see the bay could see the America's Cup race. The shores were lined with people, and anyone who had a view of the water could see something spectacular happen.

For the past 2 weeks, San Francisco was home to the 34th America's Cup Finals, where Oracle Team USA and Emirates New Zealand raced across the bay for the right to win the oldest trophy in international sport.

The race was swift—boasting AC72s, the fastest catamarans the competition has ever seen. The race was long—lasting over 15 days, as these two incredible teams competed in 19 races. The