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THE IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATION FOR NEW JERSEY

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, unless Congress acts this week, a series of drastic spending cuts known as the sequester will take effect. Sequestration threatens the jobs of hundreds of thousands of middle class Americans, as well as vital services for children, seniors, and our troops. Congress must not wait any longer to come to an agreement.

Should sequestration take effect, my State of New Jersey would lose almost \$12 million in funding for primary and secondary education, putting around 160 teachers and their aides at risk. New Jersey would also lose \$17 million in funding, or about 210 teachers who help children with disabilities. In addition, Head Start and Early Head Start services would be eliminated for an estimated 1,300 children in New Jersey. Furthermore, New Jersey would lose funding cuts for public safety grants provided to local law enforcement officials designed to improve the safety of our communities, as well as reduction in funding to provide meals for New Jersey seniors. Mr. Speaker, these are just a small portion of the impact sequestration will have on New Jersey and America as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 699, a balanced bill to replace the sequester with spending cuts and revenues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As the Chair has previously advised, that request cannot be entertained absent appropriate clearance.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my grave concerns over the Republican substitute to the Senate-passed Violence Against Women Act. The Senate passed this bill with overwhelming bipartisan support, including a majority of Senate Republicans. But apparently, leadership in the House has decided that this law should protect only some women.

The substitute that we're being asked to vote on excludes LGBT victims. It weakens protections for women on college campuses, Native American women, and immigrants. As a father of a young daughter and a husband, I cannot begin to understand why we would gut commonsense protections for women or why we would pick and choose the type of women that we want to protect from violence.

A few minutes ago, we swore allegiance to this flag and to a Republic that stands for liberty and justice for all, not for some. In fact, Americans have long fought for equality for women and protecting all women from

violence. The Violence Against Women Act has been an important part of that arc of our history. It's not something that should be politicized or used for political games. Let's vote against this substitute.

BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, in our San Joaquin Valley in California, unfortunately we are facing yet another fight for every drop of water that's critical to our economic recovery. For over the last 2 months, we have lost over 700,000 acre-feet of water that represents \$2.2 billion in economic activity because of an unlawful biological opinion that puts a 2-inch fish before 25 million Californians.

Had the Bay Delta Conservation Plan been implemented, none of this valuable water would have been lost today. To add insult to injury, our valley was dealt yet another blow when the Bureau of Reclamation announced this week a 25 percent water allocation. This is simply unacceptable.

It remains to be seen if the Obama administration and their nominee to replace Secretary Salazar has forgotten or ignored the tough lessons from the failures of 2009 and 2010. Immediate action is necessary to keep a bad situation from becoming devastating to our valley this year and throughout the State.

The Bay Delta Conservation Plan must move forward to resolve this situation in the future. Every day wasted is valuable time and water lost.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

(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, I stand here today to urge my colleagues to bring the Senate version of the Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA, a bill that would provide critical services to all victims of domestic abuse, to the House floor. My friends, my colleagues, my constituents, it is time to reauthorize.

I want to applaud all the Senate Democrats, all the female Senators, and the vast majority of Republican Senate Members who believe that VAWA is good for the safety of all women, regardless of their sexual orientation, their ethnicity, or tribal heritage.

As for the altered House version, which clearly rejects the equal protections outlined in the Senate version, it is unfair, unjust, and unacceptable.

I have a few questions for my colleagues in the House who altered this bipartisan Senate VAWA bill:

Why do our LGBT, Native American, and immigrant brothers and sisters not deserve the same protections?

Why are they exceptions in your eyes?

And why must they continually be denied the same freedoms and liberties that we all enjoy under our Constitution?

By reauthorizing the Senate version of VAWA:

We can make sure our LGBT brothers and sisters receive appropriate care when they are victimized;

We can make sure that immigrants, who so desperately want to be a part of this great Nation, will not have to hide behind their abusers in fear of deportation;

And, we can make sure that the three out of five American Indian women who will experience domestic violence in their lifetime can have the peace of mind to know that their abusers will not be given a way out of prosecution.

My colleagues, this is not politics and this certainly is not a game. This is simply the right thing to do.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice strong opposition to the sequester, which was designed to be so severe and so catastrophic that we would be compelled to make the necessary compromises to avoid it, and yet we have done nothing.

The Second District is the home to Fort Meade, NSA, Aberdeen Proving Ground, the Port of Baltimore, and hundreds of contractors reliant on these institutions. We're neighbors to the Social Security Administration, the National Institute for Health, and BWI Airport.

Nearly 140,000 workers at these facilities would be furloughed. Maryland will lose about \$14.4 million in funding education, putting the jobs of 200 teachers at risk. We'll lose nearly \$50 million in funding for medical research, which supports thousands of jobs in Maryland.

Maryland can't afford this approach to deficit reduction and neither can any of the other States in this Nation. We have to put forward serious alternatives to avert sequestration, and I encourage leadership to either allow a vote on one of these alternatives or to propose one for themselves.

We are in this most ridiculous situation and we must resolve this problem now.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 699, a balanced bill to replace the sequester with spending cuts and revenues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As the Chair has previously advised, that request cannot be entertained without appropriate clearance.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 47, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 83 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 83

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 47) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their respective designees; (2) an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-2, if offered by the Majority Leader or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to commit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself as much time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

□ 1240

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 83 provides for a structured rule for consideration of S. 47, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. The rule also provides for consideration of one substitute amendment to this underlying legislation. This process ensures there's ample discussion on both options presented to the House, to give Members, both the minority and the majority, the opportunity to participate in these debates.

I support the rule, and I hope my colleagues will support it as well because, by supporting and passing this resolution, we'll be able to move on to debating the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.

As a former law enforcement officer who spent 38 years fighting against all types of violence, I have seen the evils and cruelty of domestic violence issues firsthand. That's why I also volun-

teered with and even served on the board of directors for the Dawn Center, which is a refuge for victims of domestic and sexual violence in Hernando County, Florida.

With these sorts of experience, I know and understand how important grant programs like these authorized by the Violence Against Women Act are to law enforcement agencies fighting domestic violence, the advocates serving the victims of domestic violence, and most importantly, the victims themselves.

Violence against women is unacceptable in any terms. It should be unacceptable to everybody in this room, regardless of your gender, regardless of your sexual orientation, and regardless of your age. I hope it's that obvious.

The rule we have before us today provides the House the ability to consider measures that would help provide stakeholders with the tools they need to combat this terrible crime.

If House Resolution 83 passes, then tomorrow the House will debate two separate versions of reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act. We will have 1 hour debate on the underlying bill, which passed the Senate just 15 days ago.

We'll also spend 20 minutes debating a Republican alternative to the Senate bill. At the end of the debate, we will vote first on the Republican alternative to the Senate bill, and if that House amendment fails, then we'll have an up-or-down vote on final passage of the Senate reauthorization. It's that simple.

These options offer two separate and distinct visions on how the Federal Government can help aid in the fight against domestic violence.

I can say that, during my time as sheriff, I never saw a single Federal domestic violence case ever prosecuted, but I know the Federal dollars went to the States and counties to help combat these types of crimes. I also know that victims of all genders and sexual orientations found shelter and safety in places like the Dawn Center because of grants like those authorized in the Violence Against Women Act.

For all those reasons, I know this a debate we need to have. That's why I'm proud to stand here today sponsoring a rule that lays the options out on the table, provides for vigorous and enthusiastic discussion of those options, and ultimately, let's the people's House work its will.

I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, good afternoon.

I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, when I joined my former colleague, Representative Pat Schroeder of Colorado, to write the original Violence Against Women Act, it didn't occur to us to exclude or dis-

criminate against anyone. And in the multiple times the law has been reauthorized, we, as a legislature, have always tried to ensure that all victims of domestic violence receive the protections under the law.

As my colleague pointed out, up till now they have. Unfortunately, the latest attempt to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act has been different. This time, the majority has alternately tried to pass extreme legislation that would weaken current law and rejected calls to pass bipartisan legislation that would strengthen the current law.

On February 12, with 23 Republican Senators voting in favor, including every Republican woman in the Senate, they approved a reauthorization that is both comprehensive and inclusive in nature. Unfortunately, instead of allowing a clean, up-or-down vote on this bipartisan bill, the majority leadership proposed a substitute amendment that removes key provisions from that bill.

For example, the leadership's amendment fails to explicitly protect LGBT victims, and limits protections for immigrants. At the same time, the amendment fails to close the legal loopholes that leave Native American victims of domestic violence with nowhere to turn.

Additionally, despite the high rate of dating violence and sexual assault on college campuses, the amendment entirely omits protections for young women who are victimized in college. And that's why the majority's amendment is opposed by groups including the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, among many others.

It's dismaying that some in the majority want to weaken a strong bipartisan Senate bill, and it's vital that this Chamber reject their alternative partisan amendment.

With the votes we are about to take, we will be asked to choose between an amendment that fails to protect some victims of domestic violence, and the bipartisan Senate bill protecting all victims. The choice is so clear.

We'll be asked to choose between an amendment opposed by victims and victims' rights advocates and a bipartisan bill. And when looking at those options that are before us, it is clear what we must do. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the substitute amendment tomorrow to the Senate bill, so the original Senate legislation will receive a vote in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment and talk about the incredible impact the Violence Against Women bill has had since it was enacted. Thanks to that Act, instances of domestic violence have fallen by 67 percent, and over 1 million people have obtained protective orders against their batterers.