

of the Republican cut, cap and balance bill. There's still time to prevent these harmful, across-the-board spending cuts.

I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 699, a balanced bill to replace the sequester that includes both spending cuts and revenues.

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to really applaud the House for renewing today the Violence Against Women Act. This will protect our citizens. It's important legislation. I had the privilege of helping to author the original one in 1994 with Patricia Schroeder, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, and JOE BIDEN; and we reauthorized it twice. I'm pleased that it passed today.

I was very pleased that the bill included two bills that I had authored, one the SAFER Act with Congressman POE, in a bipartisan way, that would process the DNA rape kits that are sitting on shelves across this country gathering dust and hopefully put rapists behind bars and protect women from future assaults from these particular rapists; and also the Campus Security Act, which would require campuses to keep statistics on violence on the campus and steps that they're taking to protect their citizens; also the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act to crack down on sex trafficking.

It's an important bill. I applaud my colleagues for passing it.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share my deep concern with my colleagues of what these dangerous sequestration cuts mean to my community.

I have the honor to represent the suburbs of Miami-Dade County and the Florida Keys. We are a community of middle class families, and my constituents will be hurt if the leadership of this Congress fails to act.

Here are a few examples: south Florida's economy depends on the flow of tourists. It is an engine which fuels us. If sequestration goes into effect, TSA and customs agents will be furloughed, passengers throughout the country will miss their connecting flights, and we will have fewer tourists and hurt business.

Up to 600 civilians who work in the Florida Keys Naval Base will be furloughed. This means less money for everyday needs in the economy of the Keys. Students on work-study programs at schools like Miami-Dade Col-

lege and FIU will see their funding cut. The leadership of this Congress owes the American people an explanation of why we have gotten to this point.

There is a better alternative that will create jobs, and that is H.R. 699. I respectfully ask unanimous consent to bring up this balanced budget bill that replaces the sequester with balanced cuts.

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

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL ADVISORY PANEL ON THE GOVERNANCE OF THE NUCLEAR SECURITY ENTERPRISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 3166(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Pub. L. 112-239), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following individual on the part of the House to the Congressional Advisory Panel on the Governance of the Nuclear Security Enterprise:

Ms. Heather Wilson, Albuquerque, New Mexico

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276L, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Members on the part of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. PETRI, Wisconsin
Mr. CRENSHAW, Florida
Mr. LATTI, Ohio
Mr. ADERHOLT, Alabama
Mr. WHITFIELD, Kentucky

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913 and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

Mr. SMITH, New Jersey, Co-Chairman

SEQUESTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber, we've heard over the last sev-

eral days numerous speakers who have spoken quite eloquently about the impact of sequestration on their communities and their constituents across this country; and I daresay there are many Americans who have no idea what sequestration is. But they will come to know, Mr. Speaker, exactly what sequestration is when they figure out that of the range of programs and services that impact them and their communities, the Federal Government is taking a step backwards because of Republicans' failure to bring forward a balanced approach to dealing with our budget. In fact, we've just been moving from one crisis to the next crisis.

Today, in this House Chamber, we did something very special. We passed the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which was first passed in 1994 and had enjoyed bipartisan support up until recently. We ended up passing the Senate version of the Violence Against Women Act which, frankly, we could have done about a year and a half ago but for failure in this House Chamber.

In passing the Violence Against Women Act, we, on the one hand, provided for authorizing funds to support shelters, services, and programs for victims of domestic violence, many of them women, all across this country. And on the other hand, March 1 sequestration looms and, in fact, is happening, and we take away with one hand what we've provided with the other under the Violence Against Women Act that was just reauthorized today by a bipartisan vote with overwhelming support from Democrats. But tomorrow, \$29 million will be cut from the very shelters and programs that we authorized today.

Six million women all across this country face domestic violence, and yet the programs and services that they depend on from the Federal Government will be ripped away in a sledgehammer approach—across-the-board cuts, arbitrary cuts to the budget beginning on March 1.

Workers and families all across this country have truly grown weary of watching this and past Congresses create and kick down the road fiscal disaster after fiscal disaster. Sequestration is going to rattle our very still-recovering economy and take an axe hammer to so many agencies and programs that are struggling to meet their work loads to deliver services for the American people.

□ 1300

Sequestration is estimated to lower the U.S. economic output by \$287 billion.

In the Fourth Congressional District of Maryland that I have the privilege of representing in this Chamber, people are truly preparing for the drastic impact sequestration will have on them, their capacity to pay their bills and to meet their obligations.

These cuts are devastating, and today we're here to talk very specifically about the devastation to women

and children across this country, and specifically to women of the impact of sequestration. Whether that is the devastating cuts to the Women, Infants, and Children program that so many low-income women depend on; school nutrition programs in our Nation's schools; K-12 education; cuts to Head Start; cuts to serving children with disabilities; cuts to health care screenings like cancer, cervical cancer and breast cancer screenings that so many women rely on, and this at a time when we just discovered that, in fact, younger women are suffering from greater rates of breast cancer than ever before in our history, here we go slashing and burning a budget.

I don't like to use the term "war on women," but, Mr. Speaker, as a woman, it sure feels like it. Sequestration definitely has that impact.

Joining me today, who I will yield to in just a few moments, is my good friend from New York, CAROLYN MALONEY, who has been quite a leader on a range of women's issues, and she knows clearly the devastating impact of sequestration on women.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I want to thank my colleague for leading this very important Special Order and to note two women's issues that will be introduced next week.

One is the women's museum. It will cost no extra money and will create a commission to put a women's museum on the Mall. We have it for postage stamps, flights. It should be there for half the population, and it is something, hopefully, we can move forward with in a bipartisan way.

Also, next week, I'm reintroducing the equal rights amendment. We really lag behind in the Western World in not having that important provision in our Constitution. But regrettably, this country has a habit of sweeping women's issues under the rug and ignoring them; and this meat cleaver approach through sequestration will disproportionately hurt women.

Tomorrow, \$85 billion will be cut from our budget, sequestration will go into effect, and economists predict that over 700,000 jobs will be lost.

Chairman Bernanke testified yesterday before the Financial Services Committee that the sequester could make it harder to reduce the deficit, not easier. The whole purpose of sequestration is to reduce the deficit. But as he pointed out in his testimony—and I will quote him directly—he said that it would have "adverse effects on jobs and incomes," and "a slower recovery would lead to less actual deficit reduction." So here we are hearing from the head of the Federal Reserve and many economists that sequestration will literally hurt the deficit, hurt our economy, and hurt jobs.

Why can't we agree on a measured, balanced approach that targets certain areas such as tax loopholes? Why in the world are we giving tax deductions to companies that move jobs overseas? We should be giving tax incentives to peo-

ple who create jobs in America, not those who move their companies and their jobs overseas. And why are we giving up to 40 percent subsidies to very profitable oil companies that are making profits? Why are we doing that when we are going to be turning around?

Because of sequestration, we'll be cutting teachers, which is the very investment that we need for the future. Teaching is one of the professions that is disproportionately headed by women. So disproportionately these cuts are not only going to hurt the future of our country, but women teachers and male teachers in our country.

I am particularly concerned in one area that my friend mentioned, and that's research. This country has invested in research, and it is one of the areas that has moved us out of our recessions with innovative ideas. But there are across-the-board cuts in research. NIH may face as much as 40 percent cuts. That's the National Institutes of Health.

Right now, 1 in 7 women contracts breast cancer. Because of the research in our great country, lives are being saved. There are 2 percent more lives saved each year because of new breakthroughs in breast cancer treatment. I venture to say there is not a person in this body or America who doesn't have a sister, a mother, a grandmother, or a friend who has not suffered from breast cancer. Yet the treatments, the research, the medical facilities that are there to help women confront this disease will be cut back in the sequestration.

Men also are contracting breast cancer. It is a disease that men are suffering from, and also prostate cancer, but the breakthrough in cures every year to save lives are going to be cut.

This past week, I had a meeting with some of the teaching hospitals in the district that I am privileged to represent, and they had a survivor there. His life had literally been saved with a new breakthrough in treatment and technology that they had developed while at Cornell. He testified that the doctors there with their new research had literally saved his life.

It is this lifesaving, cutting-edge research that we will be cutting away, along with many other important areas. Why are we passing the Violence Against Women Act and then turning around and cutting it dramatically with sequestration?

So I join my good friend from the great State of Maryland in really protesting sequestration. The approach doesn't work. Even Chairman Bernanke says it's wrong, wrong-headed, and will not help us reduce the deficit. And it particularly is disastrous to programs, research, and health care that impact women.

With that, I thank the gentlelady for organizing this Special Order.

Ms. EDWARDS. I want to thank the gentlewoman from New York. Thank you so much for your leadership.

You know both as a woman and a woman legislator what this impact is going to be to your communities in New York, and I know what they will be to mine in Maryland.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, we throw out these numbers, and most Americans have no idea what these numbers mean in real terms. From March 1, until the end of this fiscal year, we'll have to cut \$85 billion with a wide range of impacts across this country. Women are going to be disproportionately impacted by these. And there is no other word, Mr. Speaker, for these absolutely senseless cuts.

It is as though as legislators we are brain dead when it comes to making decisions that impact people's lives. These deep cuts are going to slash vital investments in job training, in public health, in public safety and education and small business. We know that so many women are juggling multiple responsibilities. They are juggling the responsibilities of their homes and their families; the responsibilities of a job or running a business; the responsibilities of being active in their community and making sure that there's a quality of life for themselves and their children.

They're also doing this and operating at the absolute margin. It's really unfair and completely lacking in compassion to place this additional burden of sequestration on their already burdened households. Even worse, low-income women and women of color who are toiling in the fragile economy at the lowest-wage jobs are going to be hit the hardest by sequestration.

I want to highlight these cuts and the resulting fiscal instability that is in addition to the fact that we are already falling farther behind other Western World nations in providing employment protections, pay equity, sick leave, promoting child care services. These are all the things that particularly women have use of as caregivers.

□ 1310

Is this really the way, Mr. Speaker, that we see ourselves as leaders of the free world? I don't think so.

With that, I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the gentlelady from Maryland and thank her for her leadership. This is a very important statement today because I was on the floor earlier this morning and said that we should not go home, that we should stay here. I'll say it again: We should not go home. We should stay here.

With all of the chatter of disagreement and accusations and blame games, what should be the message to the American people is, in fact, that we are committed to finding some form of common ground. Now, common ground is enormously challenging when there is no give from our Republican friends.

I do want to applaud the Congresswoman today in that the Violence

Against Women Act was passed because of Democrats' championing the right direction so that immigrant women, so that the LGBT community and so that Native Americans could be specifically covered, which, as a lawyer, is what the law is all about. Fuzzy legislation cannot work, but when you specifically designate in law the protection of these groups, then you have brought about a change. I say that only because I want to thank our Republican friends who voted for that ultimate Senate bill that was passed in a bipartisan way in the Senate and now in the House.

That should be an example of what we can do with regard to this dastardly act that is going to occur tomorrow—the sequester—which most Americans don't even understand. So I am delighted to join and to be able to be part of this Special Order, led by the gentlelady from Maryland, on explaining how vulnerable women can be impacted.

We did a good act today. Vulnerable women have been in the eye of the storm since this legislation was not reauthorized, and women's centers and shelters all over America were feeling the ax of the non-funding of the STOP grant, but today we made a difference. I want to make a difference in stopping the onslaught against women and children that the sequester will bring about, and I am going to use as an example the impact on a State like mine—the State of Texas—that has a diverse, if you will, congressional delegation, with more Republicans than Democrats. Frankly, the people of the State of Texas are not interested in what party we are; they simply want to find out why we can't come to the floor and vote to block the sequester and find common ground.

So, to my State of Texas, let me tell you what you will be facing, and why I want to say, stay and work, stay and work, and find some kind of common ground. In the alternative, all of us are willing to be called back this weekend. We're willing to be called back Friday night and Saturday morning. I want that to be on the record. We're willing to get back in a short order of time to come here and solve this problem.

Specifically, I have worked extensively with our teachers and schools and school districts:

\$67.8 million for funding for primary and secondary education, putting 950 teachers' and aides' jobs at risk, meaning that they may ultimately be terminated. Those jobs are at risk in the State of Texas. 172,000 fewer students can be served in approximately 280 schools. That's not just in Houston; that's throughout Republican and Democratic districts in the State of Texas. That is shameful. Texas will lose approximately \$50 million in funds for about 620 students and aides to help children with disabilities;

Work study jobs will impact our college students. 4,720 fewer low-income students will be able to have those jobs, and, of course, it will eliminate the opportunity to finance the cost of

college to around 1,450 students, who will not get work study jobs;

Head Start. Many of my Head Start leaders advocated and asked me, as I was in Austin this past week, to stop the elimination of their funding. I will be meeting with those from AVANCE next week, approximately 4,800 students in Texas, on the reducing of access to critical early education;

Law enforcement. Part of the Violence Against Women Act specifically speaks to the question of helping the crime victims. When I had a gun briefing in Texas, I made sure that the victims of gun violence were in the room. What we'll be stopping is \$1.1 million in what we call Justice Assistance Grants, which specifically deal with our crime victims;

This is an example of what will happen in America if you're looking for jobs and if you want assistance from the Federal Government. It's interesting how people make light that the Federal Government does nothing. My friends, the Federal Government is you. It is the tax dollars used wisely to ensure that it is a bridge, a complement, a collaborator with State government. So you will be losing in the State of Texas, for those of you who are searching for jobs—and you do it every day—some \$2.2 million if this goes through.

Child care. Up to 2,300 disadvantaged and vulnerable children may lose their access to child care. That impacts women who go out every day, one possibly to look for a job but, more importantly, to go out to go to work. I hate the thought that 9,000 children will have a lack of access to vaccines. That's a mother's responsibility, that's a parent's responsibility to ensure her children are getting vaccines, and the public health system will collapse because of the lack of resources;

\$1.1 million will be lost, in particular, for HIV tests, which is devastating among the African American community, particularly women. We have encouraged them now to get tested. We've tried to remove the stigma. When they go up to the door of the public health entity to get tested, you're going to tell me that there are a million less dollars and that the door will be closed? On the STOP Violence Against Women's program, which we'd now reauthorize, I'm sad to say that Texas could lose \$543,000 and that 2,100 more victims will not have this.

Let me come to a close and look at it generically across America as I cite what Congresswoman EDWARDS just cited about small businesses, and I would indicate that, on a nationwide impact, two-thirds of all new jobs we know have come from small businesses. As I listened to the news this morning about a woman-owned business that does work with the Defense Department, she was being interviewed, and she said, about 5 days from now, she'll literally be shut down. So what we're talking about is losing \$900 million across the Nation in helping small businesses. That is a travesty.

When we travel internationally, one thing we sort of look at is the question of food safety, and what we pride ourselves on here in the United States is that which stops disease and that which stops contamination. Well, my friends, 2,100 food inspectors for the Nation, who deal with helping to ensure the kind of safe food for our women and children, will be shut down. That means that billions in food production will be shut down. I heard a plant manufacturer, or a food manufacturer—a packaging company—say that it literally cannot do anything without a food inspector saying “yes.”

Let me indicate something that is very close to my heart, and that is those who are needing mental health services. Do you realize, with the sequester, Congresswoman, that 373,000 mentally ill adults and seriously emotionally disturbed children will lose public services for their needs? That is a travesty, and asks the question: Why are we going home? Why don't we stay here and find the compromise that we did for the Violence Against Women Act?

Let me close on our work in dealing with homeland security. I am the ranking member on the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security. We have responsibilities with ranking member THOMPSON and our chairperson, who has noted in our hearings as recently as this week that we would lose some 2,750 Customs and Border Protection officers, CBP. Those are the individuals who allow goods to travel, to meet individuals at airports; and we would lose 5,000 Border Patrol officers at our borders, where we're talking about the question of border security.

Are we talking out of two sides of our mouths? Here we're making the argument that we want border security, and we're willing to allow 5,000 Border Patrol agents—willy-nilly—to just go away? We're allowing difficulties with the FAA and, as well, with TSA officers of whom some have critiqued. I serve on the Transportation Security Subcommittee. These officers every day face the trials and tribulations of ensuring safety on our airlines and airplanes, and we are telling them that we don't care about security? Right now, we've got a sequester and you're out, and we don't know how long the lines are. Frankly, the statement is being made by my Republican friends and leadership that they simply don't care.

We have an opportunity to work together. We can work with the Senate. We can work with the White House. We can understand the underpinnings of this whole debate, and that is: revenue and cuts. Why do I want revenue? Because I want for the money not to run out when the victims of Hurricane Sandy are desperate. That's why I want revenue.

□ 1320

I want the Head Start programs to be funded, and I want our military in a

balanced way to be funded. So I support the utilization of the Buffett rule that has been offered by the Senate, and aspects of many other proposals. They are out there, we can do it, and we can do it with the kind of grace and mercy and understanding of the needs of the American people, and protecting the middle class. And, as Congresswoman EDWARDS stated, we can do that with an eye on women, to make sure that women, many of whom are heads of households, do not face these devastating cuts that would literally shut them down, their small businesses, Head Start, teachers for their children's schools, to ensure that there is funding for the Violence Against Women Act.

I want to say thank you to Congresswoman EDWARDS for allowing us to have an opportunity to share our concerns today. I am pained by what we are saying today, but I am extending a hand of friendship to my friends on the other side of the aisle. Leadership can call us back. We are ready to be called back. We can huddle somewhere else. We can find a way to get consensus by email so that when we come back next week, we have an immediate vote because we have been willing to do so.

I'll close by saying I'm supporting Mr. CONYERS, who has offered an alternative that will be coming forward next week that ends the sequestration. I believe that is the way to go to allow us more time for debate and collaboration. I hope others will join us in supporting this legislation we're introducing today. I thank him for his leadership on that. I think that speaks to the fact that all Members, Congresswoman EDWARDS, are following the leadership of this Special Order, which is to protect women from this devastating impact of sequester. Thank you so very much for the opportunity to speak today.

Ms. EDWARDS. I want to thank the gentlelady, and especially to thank her for, Mr. Speaker, pointing out to us that in virtually everything that impacts our lives as Americans, and particularly impacts women, there is a devastating impact of sequestration on a whole range of things that, you know, most of us get up every day and don't even think about. But we will think about them beginning on March 1 because the services won't be there.

The gentlelady pointed out, as she was speaking and as others have as well, the devastating impacts to education. Just a few weeks ago, many of the people in this body, Republicans and Democrats, stood on their feet and cheered the President of the United States when he talked about the need to invest in early education, in Head Start, in making sure that our young people get started early in school so that they are prepared through their education years to take on the challenges of the 21st century. And yet here we are, just a couple of weeks after that great moment of a bipartisan show of support, ripping apart the very

programs that the President talked about that are so important, Mr. Speaker, to the development of our children.

I would note that in my great State of Maryland, and Maryland has now been named the State with the number one schools in the Nation for the fifth year in a row. Well, we've been able to achieve those great heights in Maryland because of the commitment of our governor, because of the commitment of our legislators, and because of the commitment of the Federal Government, especially to some of our most vulnerable schools.

To our students who depend on investing in Head Start, to our students who are in some of our most vulnerable communities served by our title 1 schools, to the idea that we're going to educate all of our young people, even those with disabilities, so that they can achieve their greatest ability, and in Maryland we're going to see in fact very devastating cuts to the number one school system in the country—\$5 million ripped out of Head Start; \$14 million ripped out of our title 1 schools; \$9 million, almost \$10 million, taken out of funding our young people with disabilities, and that's a total of almost 300 jobs that will be lost as a result of these cuts. And that's in my small State of Maryland.

You know, we've heard from Members representing New York and Texas. Well, they're going to suffer even more devastating cuts. I would note, for example, in Texas, Texas will lose \$51 million from education for children with disabilities. Texas will lose \$67 million from their title 1 schools. And Head Start will lose to a tune of \$30 million from Head Start. This is devastating for women and children, for their families.

But it doesn't end there, Mr. Speaker. Would that it would, but it doesn't end there. Sequestration, as I said, has a devastating impact and a disproportionate impact on women and children.

I would note that about 600,000 children and pregnant women are going to lose access to food and health care and nutrition education, including supplemental nutrition programs that are the difference between having a meal or a healthy meal, or not. The difference for a mother who, even as she is working every day, has the ability to make sure that there is a good meal on the table for her children. Six hundred thousand children and pregnant women will lose those benefits.

Let's look at child care. There's not a one of us, Mr. Speaker, who hasn't had children and had the need of child care. Now if you are a wealthy woman or if you have a high income, your needs may be very different. But for most of us who get up and go to work every day, we really do need child care assistance. About 30,000 children across the country who are in low-income families are going to lose essential Federal funding for child care services. That's about \$121.5 million, Mr. Speaker.

Let's just look at the Centers for Disease Control. Twenty-five thousand low-income women—and this is according to thinkprogress.org so I'm not making it up. Americans across the country can go to thinkprogress.org, and what they can find is the same information that I'm sharing with you today. At the Centers for Disease Control, 25,000 low-income women who rely on the Centers for Disease Control for their breast cancer and cervical cancer screenings are just going to be lost. So there we will have a ripple effect through the health care system as these women, potentially with cancers that are curable, will not have those diagnosed in time.

In Army military construction of family housing where we have so many more female recruits who are in need of housing, they're going to lose about \$424 million. How on one hand can we say that we support and honor those who serve and who are in uniform, but at the same time take away the kinds of things that would be supportive for our military families.

In the area of global health care—I mean, after all, these cuts apply not just to those of us in the United States but to the support that we provide for vulnerable communities around the world. There are 1.6 million women around the globe who rely on family planning services, and guess what? They're going to be turned away, too, Mr. Speaker.

We could go on and on, as we have. But the reality is that beginning on March 1, beginning tomorrow, America's women and children will see cuts to things that they had no idea about, and those cuts will be, in fact, devastating. And what are we doing here in this Chamber? We're going home for the weekend. Where else in America do you stop working, Mr. Speaker, after 3½ days, a couple of journal votes saying we approve of the business of the day, a couple of adjournment votes, a vote to rename a space center, and then devastating cuts to health care, to Head Start, to education, to food inspection, to all of the things that impact so many of our families. If it weren't true, if it weren't reality, it would seem like it was just a bad B movie, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1330

We can go through so many other impacts to our children, 70,000 children, Mr. Speaker, who are going to be cut from Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Sixty percent of these program recipients, 60 percent of those 70,000 children, are children of color.

And so I guess we're saying, Mr. Speaker, that we don't care about our Nation's children. We don't care that they go hungry. We don't care that they're not receiving adequate child care. We don't care that they're not getting the education that they need. Mr. Speaker, these across-the-board, arbitrary, senseless cuts just say to the rest of America, we don't care.

And you know what? I would love it if the blame were equally shared across the board, but the reality is that Republicans control this Chamber, and this Chamber could be gaveled in tomorrow morning, straight up, and stop this sequestration. That's what could happen, and that is what would make a difference to America's women and children.

You know, I would look to, Mr. Speaker, women and girls across this country and just share with them that no matter what their age, no matter, really, what their income, whether they're young children in school readiness programs or they're older women who rely on senior nutrition programs, things like Meals on Wheels, that these cuts will have an impact on them.

We've already talked, Mr. Speaker, about devastating impacts to education. Can you believe that 7,400 special education teachers, their aides and other staff servicing our vulnerable kids with disabilities are going to be laid off, 7,400 educators who will be laid off because we haven't provided the resources for them to serve our children with disabilities? It's pretty shameful, Mr. Speaker.

I'm thinking about the landmark Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare. You know, we did something very special, actually, in this Chamber when we passed ObamaCare. But the reality is that, because of these looming cuts, these cuts that will take place just hours, hours from now, Mr. Speaker, they're going to jeopardize critical health care services, prevention initiatives, medical research to help women lead healthier lives. These sequestration cuts will affect millions of women.

Four million dollars is going to be cut from the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Who knew that the Congress doesn't like motherhood? And so \$4 million in cuts, Mr. Speaker, to the Safe Motherhood Initiative.

And what does that do? It helps prevent pregnancy-related deaths. In this great Nation, the leader of the free world, we still have pregnancy-related deaths, and the way that we've chosen to deal with that is through the Safe Motherhood Initiative. But, beginning on March 1, these devastating cuts will have an impact on that program.

In addition, 5 million fewer low-income families will be able to receive prenatal health care. And we know, those of us who've had children, know the importance of getting prenatal health care, know the importance of a successful pregnancy that goes to term. We know the importance of prenatal health care because it becomes a determinant of overall health care as that child is born. And yet, with these devastating cuts, these across-the-board cuts, these arbitrary cuts, these senseless cuts, 5 million fewer low-income families will receive prenatal health care. And this is particularly concerning, Mr. Speaker, and very serious, because two to three women die each year, each day, in fact, from complications as a result of pregnancy.

I don't know if you're aware of this, Mr. Speaker, but the fact is that the United States has an infant mortality rate that is twice as high as the rate of other wealthy nations. We're not a leader when it comes to prenatal health care. It is why we need the Motherhood Initiative.

Eight million dollars in cuts are going to go, Mr. Speaker, to breast and cervical cancer screening. That means that there will be 31,000 fewer cancer screenings for low-income women.

Now, I suppose we could just write these low-income women off the books. But you know what happens, Mr. Speaker? When they're diagnosed with cervical cancer or with breast cancer, they show up in the emergency room and they require even greater treatment, or worse, it becomes a mortality risk because they lose their lives, not because the cancer was not curable, but they lose their lives because the cancer was not diagnosed.

And yet here we are, Mr. Speaker, ready to exact \$8 million in cuts that will prevent low-income women from receiving cervical cancer screenings and breast cancer screenings. That's not what a leader nation does, Mr. Speaker.

Now, we can recall very recently the very fierce battles to protect Title X family planning and reproductive health services. I will just remind the Speaker that sequester would cut \$24 million from these lifesaving programs. That's right; \$24 million that would be ripped out of Title X family planning and reproductive health services, lifesaving programs that provide care to low-income, uninsured and underinsured women, men, children, and families—\$24 million. Our Nation really can't afford this.

And let's talk about research. The National Institutes of Health could lose as much as \$1.5 billion in medical research funding. And that means there will be fewer research projects for treatments and cures for diseases like cancer, like diabetes, like Alzheimer's, like all of these diseases where we're right on the cusp of the kind of research that will make a tremendous difference, Mr. Speaker, in the lives of so many, and particularly a tremendous difference in the lives of women. But, oh, no, National Institutes of Health, on the chopping block March 1, losing up to \$1.5 billion for medical research funding.

Women, Infants, and Children programs, something that's particularly important to me and to people in my community, to women and children in my community, \$353 million, remind you, to begin, Mr. Speaker, on March 1; \$353 million cut from the Women, Infants, and Children program.

And I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, if you go to any State in this country, talk to your Governors. It doesn't matter whether you talk to a Republican Governor or to a Democratic Governor. Those Governors will tell you that the investment and the payoff for making

investments in Women, Infants, and Children programs is enormous, that it results in great benefit, not just for the quality of lives of the women, infants, and children who are served by the WIC programs, but, really, to communities, enabling them, people, women, to go out and get an education, to get on their feet, to take care of their children.

These are really lifeline programs, and they're highly effective. And yet there's no sense to these cuts, and so we will end up cutting the most ineffective programs in the same way that we cut the most effective ones. That's what sequester means.

Let's look at unemployment benefits. Here we are, Mr. Speaker, really recovering from the devastation of the economy of the last 5 years, unemployment going down, but still the need for so many in this country for unemployment benefits. Now, I don't know, Mr. Speaker, about other people, but any of us who've ever received an unemployment check because of the misfortune of losing a job, it's not a big check, Mr. Speaker. And yet, even that small check, which is a fraction of what your income might have been were you working, even that check will face devastating cuts, and particularly to the long-term unemployed, to people who are out of work and who've been searching for a new job for at least 6 months, not because they don't want to work, Mr. Speaker, but because the economy is recovering and because work is hard to find.

□ 1340

And yet we rip apart 10 percent of their weekly jobless benefits if this sequester goes into effect. Maybe the 1 percent or the 2 percent out there can get away with not having 10 percent of their income. But the families that I know, the communities I come from, a 10 percent cut in an income is the difference between paying your electric bill and your water bill and your rent or your mortgage. A 10 percent cut. No one can afford that. And yet that's exactly what happens beginning on March 1 with this senseless sequester.

Child care assistance is going to be cut by \$121 million. Child care. What great nation doesn't ensure child care for its nation's children so that moms and dads can go out and work and not have to worry about the care that their children are receiving? Worse yet, not have to worry about leaving young ones unattended because the choice is between going to work and staying at home because there's not quality child care available. Child care assistance cuts 30,000 children across this country who would lose essential Federal funding for child care.

And we've talked about the Violence Against Women Act. But I want to get specific because I spent a lot of years before I came into Congress working on these issues of violence against women, on domestic violence, on sexual assault, on stalking, trying to make sure

that the Federal Government meets its responsibilities for women. I've worked on a hotline. I've been in a shelter. I know what it means to provide those services. I know that when a woman calls and she's being abused and she's seeking help, that that phone call needs to be answered.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, we've passed the Violence Against Women Act and we're running the risk that because of these cuts in this sequester—because of these senseless cuts—that phone call from that woman in the middle of the night calling a shelter or a program or a hotline, that call won't be answered.

Who's going to take responsibility when that abuse results in the death of a woman or her children because we've not done the right thing in this Congress? That's what's at stake. And that is real and it is harm, Mr. Speaker, to this Nation's women. And so we passed the Violence Against Women Act, but you can be sure that what we gave with one hand, we took away with the other hand beginning on March 1 because of these devastating cuts to domestic violence shelters and programs and hotline services, to the law enforcement officials who need to be trained about issues of domestic violence so that they don't endanger themselves and so that they provide the kind of law enforcement assistance that's needed in every community across this country.

Mr. Speaker, you sit on that hotline and know that you can't pick up a call because the other phone is going unanswered. Because the other phone is going unanswered because the Congress hasn't done what we need to do to protect women and children and their families.

The Department of Justice estimates that the cuts to the Violence Against Women Act is going to mean that 35,927—and I want you to hear, Mr. Speaker, every single one of them—35,927 victims will be prevented from gaining access to shelter and to legal assistance and to services for themselves and for their children, every single one of them vulnerable because Republicans in this Congress, Mr. Speaker, have not done their job. The cuts are going to mean that domestic violence training is going to be eliminated for 34,000 police officers, prosecutors, judges, and victim advocates. This really is shameful, Mr. Speaker.

And for women who work and who own small businesses, the sequester is going to be a handicap as well. And we know that women work. Some of us work not because we want to. We work because we have to because we're partners in our families with our spouses, with our partners taking care of our families, taking care of our children, because we're women living on our own, because we're women as caregivers to other members of our family. That's why we work. We create businesses; and, thankfully, we've had the support of the Federal Government for women-owned small businesses, a really fast-growing sector.

But these contracts are in jeopardy, Mr. Speaker. In fact, contracts that have been won by women-owned businesses dropped 5.5 percent in fiscal year 2011; and the damage that they are facing now, the harm our vulnerable women-owned businesses are facing is even more devastating. The gender gap may reflect stiffer competition over a shrinking pool of contract revenue, but it may get worse for women as women face difficulty in winning a greater share of contracts in an era of these devastating spending cuts.

And that's according to Bloomberg. It's not made up by this Congresswoman from Maryland. It is what is happening in our economy, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of public sector jobs are going to be lost. That's on top of jobs that have already been lost, Mr. Speaker. And since women are 50 percent more likely than men to be employed in the public sector, just like education, these jobs are going to be cut and lost needlessly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to think that my colleagues in this Congress have the ability to exercise common sense and rationality; but these cuts don't reflect common sense at all. In fact, they don't reflect much thought, in my view. When you say across the board, that would be like in your own family budget, when you know you have to tighten up the budget, rather than looking at where you're doing your spending and going with a scalpel to cut that wasteful spending—in my household, I would probably cut the coffee expenditures—but we're not doing that. We say we cut coffee just like we cut the mortgage. We cut coffee just like we cut the groceries. We cut coffee just like we cut buying school clothing.

But this is what is happening with the Federal budget. We're taking an ax or hammer to the entire budget. We're not looking at every single line and making strategic and thoughtful and important choices about what needs to stay and what needs to go. That's the danger here. And for women, the impact is really substantial.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close now, but I wish I were closing and saying I'll see you tomorrow. But, unfortunately, we won't be seeing each other tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, because when you gavel out this evening, Mr. Speaker, what you will know is that we've said sequester is going to go into effect. So what? Sequester is going to go into effect and we'll just come back next week and name a couple more buildings. But we won't deal with the real issues that are facing America's families, that are facing America's women.

And as I said before, I'm not particularly fond of the term, Mr. Speaker, "war on women." But as a woman, when I know that there's a threat of not getting a cervical exam or a breast exam, when I know that as a woman there's a threat of not receiving family planning services, when I know as a woman that my children won't be able

to go to a Head Start program or that if I have a child with a disability that that child won't receive the kind of education that he needs to get his or her fullest potential, when I know as a caregiver that a senior woman won't get Meals on Wheels, when I know that the important research that could lead to a cure for Alzheimer's isn't going to happen, Mr. Speaker, it may not be a war on women, but it feels like as women we are on the front line and we are taking all of the heavy-duty fire coming in.

And so I would urge you, Mr. Speaker, and I would urge my Republican colleagues to do as my colleague from Texas said: get back to work. Come back to work and let's do the business of the American people. Let's take up a truly fair and balanced approach to our Nation's fiscal problems. Let's make certain that we preserve and protect a social safety net for so many of our vulnerable families.

□ 1350

Let's make certain that we make the investments we need to make in education, in research and development, in small business so that we really can grow our economy, so that we, Mr. Speaker, together can create growth, but create growth by making great investments.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will close by just saying to you that I want to work with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but it does take two to tango. Unless we do that, women in this country are going to face the devastating impact of these budget cuts that go into effect on March 1.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

VIOLENT MEDIA ROLE IN MASS SHOOTINGS

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

Mr. WOLF. Today, I rise as the father of five and the grandfather of 16—many of whom are of the age to play video games—to express my deep concerns about the lack of discussion on mental health issues and violent media and the role they play in mass shootings.

As we continue to seek ways to end mass violence, in addition to gun safety, we must address the impacts of mental illness and, of equal importance, violent video games, movies, and TV.

I have supported legislation that would keep guns from getting into the wrong hands. I voted for the Brady Bill in 1993, safety lock requirements, and provisions that help police conduct effective background checks. My father was a Philadelphia policeman.

As chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that funds the Justice Department, I have increased funding for the national background check