



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014

No. 25

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 11, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG LAMALFA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

WHAT IS MORE DANGEROUS, MARIJUANA OR METHAMPHETAMINES?

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week, during a hearing with the Deputy Director of the Office of Drug Policy, there was a moment of clarity for me. I was struck by the realization that our own office, charged with drug policy, discouraging or eliminating drug use, might well be part of the problem.

The poor witness was unable to answer my simple question, What is more dangerous, marijuana or methamphetamines? I asked, How many marijuana overdose deaths were there last year? No clear answer.

The United States does have a drug problem—make no mistake—and it appears to be getting worse: 100 people per day die of drug overdoses. About 9 of them are from heroin; 60 percent of the deaths are from prescription drugs; pharmaceuticals, over 22,000 in 2010, the most recent year we have available, almost three times higher than in 1999.

Why is the \$25 billion we spend fighting drugs each year so ineffective in stopping, much less reversing, the trend? Are our policies and programs misguided? Could it be that too many of the wrong people are spending far too long in jail, wasting lives and money? The States seem to think so. They are reducing sentences and releasing prisoners. Now even the Federal Government is starting to do that as well.

I think part of the problem is that we aren't honest about the impacts and dangers. Nothing better illustrates that than the continued misclassification of marijuana under Federal law as worse than cocaine and methamphetamines. That's according to Federal law.

Is it possible that this Federal dishonesty means that people don't take drug warnings seriously? No one knows anybody who ever died from a marijuana overdose. The failed marijuana prohibition could actually make the real drug problem worse.

Since all marijuana sales are, by definition, illegal, in the shadows, the money, the income, the profits help finance a drug trade that destroys life, like heroin, cocaine, illegal prescription drugs, and methamphetamines.

How easy is it for the distributor, who has no license to lose, who never

checks ID, to offer his marijuana customer something else, something worse, something more dangerous?

I fear spreading misinformation and wasting resources, arresting two-thirds of a million people for something that most Americans now think should be legal, undermines what could be an effective approach. Think for a moment. Unlike marijuana, tobacco is a highly addictive killer—over four hundred thousand people a year die from it yet tobacco use has declined almost two-thirds in the last half century. How did that happen?

We don't arrest people who smoke. We didn't try tobacco prohibition. What we did was research. We found out the facts. We told the truth. We controlled the product. We taxed it heavily, raising the cost, especially to young people—all the steps exactly the opposite of our failed marijuana approach.

I will be clear. For me, this goes beyond issues of marijuana policy. It is a symbol of a political process that is not thoughtful, not rational on dealing with things from the national debt, to our failing infrastructure, to climate change. Isn't it time for us to face some facts, adjust some policies, and move ahead?

CELEBRATING THE WORLD WAR II WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, we had beautiful skies in Miami. It was a perfect day for flying. I was given the opportunity to visit the Wings Over Miami Air Museum to revel in the history of aviation with veterans, fliers, and the families of World War II Women Airforce Service Pilots celebrating the life of one special WASP, Fran Sargent.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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We came to honor these American heroines, the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft. They flew over 60 million miles in every type of aircraft on every type of mission, except combat missions.

The WASPs served our country without hesitation and no expectations of recognition or praise. Yet, as our 23rd President, Benjamin Harrison, once noted:

The manner by which women are treated is a good criterion to judge the true state of a society.

These courageous women had never received the full recognition they warranted for their wartime military service to America. It was my honor then, as the most senior Republican woman in the House of Representatives, to introduce the bipartisan legislation to honor and award the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II with the Congressional Gold Medal. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest honor that this body, the United States Congress, can bestow. Coincidentally, the bill with me was Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS of California and Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas and BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland. I was so honored to be part of this effort to finally grant these women the recognition they deserved.

It was right there at the Wings Over Miami Air Museum in August of 2009 that I was able to present to our local WASP framed, signed copies of the legislation for the Women Airforce Service Pilots' Congressional Gold Medal; and in March of 2010, the presentation ceremony of the Congressional Gold Medal was held in Emancipation Hall, in our Nation's Capital, with over 100 WASPs in attendance.

South Florida is very fortunate to herald several Women Airforce Service Pilots in our midst. Air Force Major Ruth Shafer Fleisher is now retired. Bee Haydu is active and says "hello" to her fellow WASPs. Shirley Chase Kruse was there with us on Saturday and shared her vivid memories, while Jeremy Snapp and family represented his mother, whom we recently lost, Helen Wyatt Snapp. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, we gathered for a celebration of life and a memorial for Frances Rohrer Sargent, who was well represented by her daughter, Donna—and Terry and Jim—Timmons, and Fran's son, Kenny Sargent, with many grand and great-grandchildren honoring their WASP.

My thanks to aviatrix Ursula Davidson and all of the women pilots flying with the Ninety-Nines for honoring these women of aviation and to the Civil Air Patrol and the crew at Wings Over Miami for making the day possible. We know you loved Fran as your director emeritus and as a great teacher of flight.

How special are they, these women pioneers of flight? While 25,000 volunteered, only 1,830 qualified women pilots were accepted, and then only 1,102 women earned the wings of WASP. The

WASP are all true pioneers whose examples paved the way for the armed services to finally lift the ban on women attending military flight training in the 1970s. While flying their P-14s and AT-4s in training in Sweetwater, Texas, the WASP never sought to break the barriers for women, but through their service and their success, more opportunities became available for women in all fields.

Fran became a professor at my alma mater, Miami Dade College, where she took charge of developing the aviation program. One of her students, 73-year-old Judy Portnoy, called Professor Sargent "the most amazing person I know."

Mr. Speaker, today, women in military fly every type of aircraft, from the F-15s to the space shuttle. My daughter-in-law, Lindsay Nelson, a Marine Corps pilot, is part of this lasting legacy of WASP. Lindsay, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, served combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan where she flew F/A-18 fighter jets. I am so proud of Lindsay and of all of our servicewomen, past and present, who continue to inspire young women to achieve what was, heretofore, unimaginable. So, on behalf of Lindsay, my congressional colleagues and a grateful Nation, I offer my sincere thanks and utmost admiration to our WASP.

Climbing high into the Sun, Helen, Ruth, Bee, Shirley, and Fran, thank you all, women pioneers.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, all things are subject to interpretation, but as Nietzsche once said:

Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is often more a function of power and not truth.

Last week, the Congressional Budget Office came out with a report evaluating the economic impacts of the Affordable Care Act. Since then, there are those who have used the power they have to frame a false narrative. Rather than talking about what the report actually says, they have spent the last week talking about what they would like it to say. Their false interpretation of the ObamaCare act is that it will cost the American economy 2.5 million jobs; but the truth is that the much-misrepresented CBO study didn't say that at all because, as *The Wall Street Journal* accurately reported, reducing the total number of hours Americans have to work is very different than eliminating jobs.

One of the reasons we passed the Affordable Care Act in the first place was to fix the pitfalls of this country's employer-based health care system. Before the ACA, people with preexisting conditions were often forced to stay in their jobs to avoid losing their health care coverage. Even if they wanted to

leave their jobs to reduce their hours, retire early, change careers, or to spend more time with their families, they couldn't because doing so would risk their ability to provide affordable health insurance for their families.

□ 1015

What the Affordable Care Act did was right this wrong. By broadening access to health insurance, the ACA has increased personal freedom and market choice. Now Americans can choose jobs based on what they want to be doing instead of staying where they are unhappy just to keep their insurance.

The expansion of Medicaid eligibility and the subsidies available in the exchanges will give Americans the flexibility they need to raise their families, not encourage workers to seek less employment, which was one of the most misleading claims made after the report was released.

The idea that hardworking Americans will modify their employment just to be eligible for social safety net programs is both ludicrous and offensive. Nobody wants to live in a situation that makes you eligible for Medicaid or other social safety net programs, but too many hardworking Americans are forced to.

In Illinois, a family of four must exist on less than \$32,500 per year to qualify for these programs. In the Chicago area, the cost of living is high and families struggle to make ends meet.

Measures like Medicaid and SNAP are meant to help people lift themselves from poverty. Claiming that poor people want to be poor to rely more on the government is misguided and just flat out wrong.

I have said from the beginning that the ACA is far from perfect and that we should work together to improve it, but arguing that at-risk and low-income Americans will actively choose to work less, reducing their own incomes and jeopardizing their family's economic future just to "game the system," is not a legitimate issue and speaks volumes about the extreme views that are dividing our government and preventing real reform from occurring.

By focusing on false interpretations, we are forgetting the economic benefits contained in the law. To quote the CBO report:

If some people seek to work less, other applicants will be readily available to fill those positions and the overall effect on employment will be muted.

At a time when long-term employment is at its highest since World War II, there are more than enough workers willing and able to take these jobs. That is why the director of the CBO recently testified about the likelihood of the ACA creating jobs, not eliminating them.

The report also acknowledged that insurance premiums under the law are 15 percent lower than originally forecast, that "the slowdown in Medicare cost growth" is "broad and persistent,"