

but one that affects millions of people. Over the last 25 years, David has worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights and well-being of people who are most in need of Congress' protection but who do not have access to high-priced lobbyists.

David performed these services every day, whether in defending against attacks on women's reproductive rights, working to protect Americans' civil liberties against PATRIOT Act provisions, or building support for legislation to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act.

David's resume is impressive, but it does not tell the full story. David is a legend in the House. He is one of those committed public servants who has become an institution within the institution.

As the chief of staff of the Constitution Subcommittee, David has been the point person on some of the most difficult and divisive issues facing Congress each year. Yet, he brings a sense of humor, wit, and perspective that is well known in the House, without ever sacrificing his commitment to advancing the cause of equality and justice, and to defending the rights and freedoms of the most vulnerable among us.

He has provided Members of Congress, staff, and advocates with a wealth of expertise and institutional memory on a wide range of issues that would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace. It will be a long time before I stop picking up the phone and dialing his number to ask him a question about some matter before the committee, or to get his perspective on the latest Supreme Court decision, or to just reminisce about the days of 1970s and 1980s New York politics.

David has worked with me for a long time, and his biggest contribution has been as a trusted adviser and loyal friend.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking David for his service and for his dedication to working on behalf of the American people. He will be sorely missed in this institution, but we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

□ 1030

DIVERSE LOCAL AND NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR FARM BILL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on February 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Agricultural Act of 2014, the 5-year farm bill reauthorization that passed Congress with bipartisan support and reduces annual budget deficits by \$16.6 billion over 10 years.

Industry professionals across my home State of Pennsylvania and nationally—including farmers, foresters, conservationists, researchers, and poli-

cy advocates—have praised the law as a historic improvement, the Federal agriculture policy that will improve land management, support key areas of economic activity, and bolster important investments in education and applied research.

Susan Benedict, an American Tree Farm System certified forest owner from State College, Pennsylvania, stated:

As a Pennsylvania tree farmer, I can happily say this farm bill was well worth the wait. With the promotion of new market opportunities in the Biobased Markets Program and green building markets, improved access to critical conservation programs, and increased regulatory certainty when protecting water quality of my forest's roads, this farm bill is truly the best farm bill yet for forests. I applaud conference committee members for championing strong forestry provisions, such as the Biobased Markets Program changes, for America's 22 million family forest owners.

Kenneth C. Kane, president of Generations Forestry in Kane, Pennsylvania, stated:

From the outside looking in, Congress displayed a level of bipartisanship on the farm bill that has been lacking, which is far better than the gridlock we have encountered. This is a wonderful bill and a good final product from numerous standpoints. From the standpoint of the Forest Service, this bill gives Secretary Vilsack and Forest Chief Tidwell more tools to actively manage forests, which is critically important. Now that these tools are available, the Forest Service must use them. This bill also offers our foresters and private industry more tools to actively manage, so this is also very important.

Barbara Christ, the interim dean of agricultural sciences at Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania, stated:

Agricultural policy impacts every American by advancing food security for our Nation and beyond, including providing for critical research and education programs. We are thrilled that a new 5-year farm bill is now a reality. As a specialty crop State, of particular interest to Pennsylvania is the inclusion of the specialty crop research initiative. These programs help keep our Pennsylvania farmers competitive in an increasingly complex environment and help tackle the ongoing challenge of feeding a growing population.

Robert Maiden, executive director of Pennsylvania's Association of Conservation Districts, stated:

The new Federal farm bill has many strong conservation programs that are lifelines for Pennsylvania farmers. We need Congress to understand these points and ensure that the importance of conservation efforts wasn't lost in the final farm bill language. The final bill addressed our fiscal challenges by understanding the necessity of reductions to Federal spending while identifying the need to improve conservation program efficiencies and improvements in program delivery. The final bill will allow for cleaner water for Pennsylvania waterways, resulting in healthier communities and stronger economies.

The president and CEO of the Nature Conservancy stated:

Despite the polarized political climate and challenging budget times, this farm bill would be one of the strongest ever for conservation and forestry. The farm bill's con-

servation provisions are practical, cost effective, and provide solid ways for the government to collaborate with individual landowners.

The president and CEO of the American Forest Foundation stated:

The long-awaited farm bill provides resources critical to implementing conservation practices on the ground and making good forest stewardship affordable. The improvements in the new farm bill include stronger market opportunities for forests, specifically with improvements to the Biobased Markets Program, and a strengthened commitment to expanding prospects for wood in green building markets, the fastest growing market for wood products. It also includes strong support for programs that combat forest invasive pests and pathogens and provisions to increase forest owners' regulatory certainty when protecting water quality.

Madam Speaker, it isn't every day that a broad cross-section of policy advocates and industry professionals find themselves on the same side of a given policy issue. Then again, it isn't every day that both parties actually work together for the good of the country and produce good public policy that improves the Nation's economic health, while at the same time, reforms government, and reduces spending.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw attention, once again, to an issue that some in this Congress seem to have forgotten: the millions of Americans who are unemployed or are working for wages that cannot support their families.

Imagine being told that you have to support your family for the rest of your life with just a month's paycheck. If it sounds impossible to manage, it is because far too often it is.

Low-income families have to make impossible choices between food and medicine. They often live in unsafe neighborhoods and send their kids to subpar schools because they have no other option. Getting paid the minimum wage has always been difficult, but it is getting harder year after year.

If the minimum wage had been tied to inflation in 1960, it would be \$10.10 today, or just over \$20,000 per year. Now, someone making this today wouldn't be wealthy, but working full-time might at least allow them to make ends meet. For me, this is what our country is really all about. If you work hard, you can build a life for yourself and your family.

Madam Speaker, this is why I am a very proud cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which finally raises the minimum wage for millions of Americans. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues oppose this very bill, claiming that raising the minimum wage should be a State-by-State decision. Now, that is fine if your State chooses

to raise its minimum wage, but if not, your constituents are no better off. They are still making \$7.25 an hour.

So I have just one question: If you are a well-intentioned, patriotic Republican who wants to leave the decision up to the States, are you prepared to explain to your constituents why they are worth less to you than the people across State lines?

For my part, I do not want low-wage Hoosiers to make less than those in other States just because our general assembly decides not to act. Of course, I understand the argument that some people may work fewer hours and some may even lose their jobs. This may be true. But it is important to remember that we have raised our minimum wage in the past, and in the past, the very same argument has proven itself to be untrue. So I am very optimistic that American employers, and particularly Hoosier employers in my congressional district, will do what they can to weather a minimum wage increase without letting folks go.

Now, unfortunately, this is not the only unnecessary struggle Congress has laid on America's low-income families this year. Today, our well-intentioned, patriotic Republican leaders continue to block an extension of emergency unemployment insurance, and because of congressional inaction, nearly 2 million Americans, Madam Speaker, were instantly cut off from their benefits in December, with 72,000 more being cut off each week.

Many of my Republican friends have painted unemployment benefits as a slush fund for certain lazy Americans. This is not only incredibly offensive, it is untrue. Americans want to work, but in many communities, there are simply no jobs available. In our economic downturn, Madam Speaker, everything from restaurants to machine shops to retail stores closed their doors and are only now starting to come back.

In Indianapolis, many Hoosiers are finding they no longer have the skills necessary for the modern workforce. Educated men and women with years of experience have to retrain before they even get rehired. Others have seen their industries simply disappear and have to prepare themselves for an entirely new career. This is far from laziness. Retraining and looking for a job is hard work with no pay. These Americans deserve our help covering expenses while they get back on their feet.

Madam Speaker, my good House Republican friends have yet to bring a real jobs bill to the floor in the 113th Congress, instead, focusing continually on deregulation and repealing the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, they overlook that raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do, putting our country back on track.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 39 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, through whom we see what we could be and what we can become, thank You for giving us another day.

In these days, our Nation is faced with pressing issues: constitutional, religious, and personal rights, and matters of great political importance.

We thank You that so many Americans have been challenged and have risen to the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens to participate in the great debates of these days.

Grant wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to us all, as well as an extra measure of charity.

Send Your spirit upon the Members of this people's House who walk through this valley under public scrutiny. Give them peace and Solomonic prudence in their deliberations.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LANKFORD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SILICA

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, comments have closed on a proposed rule from OSHA for sand in the workplace.

Prolonged breathing of silica, sand, can cause serious health issues. No one will dispute that. But this new rule is interesting in its design. In the comment request, OSHA specifically singles out one industry—oil and gas—as a key reason for the rule change. They write, in part, "A recent cooperative study identified overexposures to silica among workers conducting hydraulic fracturing operations," as their prime reason for the rule change.

It is interesting that after the rule has been in place since 1971, OSHA has made this change. Fracking is not new. It has been around for decades. Why the sudden change in this administration?

I believe the change is because this administration is looking for one more way to impede oil and gas development in the United States. If this is not just about oil and gas, will OSHA set new rules for beach lifeguards who work in sand all day? How about road crews in Arizona who work in blowing sand all day? How about gift shops and restaurants along our coasts? What about dune buggy operators in the sand dunes of Little Sahara State Park in northwest Oklahoma?

The people of my district work every day to provide our Nation energy independence and to get our Nation out of the Middle East. But they are tired of fighting mounds of new regulations, unfunded mandates, and attacks on their livelihood as they serve our Nation.

WIND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

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

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition to talk about a significant issue for Massachusetts and our nation: the wind production tax credit.

In the past 2 years, clean energy jobs in Massachusetts have grown by 24 percent and are projected to grow another 11 percent in 2014. Thanks to the wind industry, the Commonwealth has seen an influx of over \$200 million in capital investment and is home to nine wind-related manufacturing facilities.

Massachusetts is also home to the Wind Technology Testing Center, which at the time of its opening was the first facility in the country capable of testing large-scale wind turbine blades up to 300 feet in length. This testing center has created high-skilled jobs and has helped spur the development of next-generation blades made here in the United States.

We must act now to make sure that these innovative American businesses can continue to create new manufacturing opportunities here in the United States.