

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we will finally vote on the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Times are still tough for many hard-working families. Federal agencies like FEMA should not be in the business of making things tougher. Yet that is exactly what FEMA's callous and impractical administration of the National Flood Insurance Program is doing. Homeowners in south Florida, and throughout our Nation, cannot afford the astronomically increased insurance premiums forced on them by FEMA.

Without action to correct this agency's abuse, many family budgets that are already at the breaking point will fall apart.

Although I support passage of this vital bill today to protect our families and the American Dream of homeownership, we absolutely must do more to help bring premiums down.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT, VFW POST 308

(Ms. ESTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate VFW Post 308 in Newtown, Connecticut, which celebrated its 75th anniversary this past Sunday.

Since 1939, the members of Post 308 have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to civic engagement and community service in everything they do, whether it is assisting tornado victims in Oklahoma, providing college scholarships to deserving high school graduates, or supporting families affected by the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in their hometown.

The men and women of Post 308 serve their community, their State, and their country with distinction. I congratulate Post 308 on celebrating this milestone.

THE GROWING INEQUALITY IN THIS COUNTRY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the Federal Register is four times larger than it was in 1970.

This weekend, columnist Peggy Noonan captured the feeling among everyday Americans:

Voters and taxpayers feel bullied, burdened and jerked around which, again, is not new, but feels more intense every day. Rules, regulations, many of them stupid, from all the agencies, local, State, Federal, on the building of a house or the starting of a business. You can only employ so many before the new insurance rules kick in, so don't employ too many. Don't take a chance, which means don't grow.

Mr. Speaker, there is growing inequality in this country, between regulators and the regulated, between large businesses wielding government influence and smaller competitors attempting to grow, between established corporations with compliance departments and upstarts with energy and ideas.

This status inequality demands our attention. Last week's bipartisan passage of the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act is a good start, but much more must be done.

OUR VETERANS DESERVE OUR HELP

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, transitioning from military to civilian life can be challenging for our veterans. The skill sets learned while serving in the Armed Forces are highly valued, and competence is extraordinary of veterans, who have a proven work ethic.

With record unemployment, we need to work together for jobs. Yesterday, the office of the Second Congressional District conducted a veterans job fair, thoughtfully hosted by the Aiken Shrine Club, to support our brave men and women who have faithfully served our country.

The event was to better connect our veterans with the resources available to them. I am very thankful for the local businesses, schools, government agencies, and veterans organizations that were on hand to offer assistance.

As the son of a veteran, as a retired member of the South Carolina National Guard, and being the very grateful father of four sons currently serving in the military, I appreciate our veterans' dedication to protect our freedoms. It is my hope this veterans job fair will prove beneficial and recognize the service of our heroes.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our hopes and prayers are for the people of Ukraine.

OPPOSING THE ACA'S CUTS TO MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of health care choices for our seniors.

Nearly 30 percent of all seniors, 15 million Americans, choose Medicare Advantage. Individuals have testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee that Medicare Advantage provides better results than traditional Medicare by embracing free-market principles.

Medicare Advantage focuses on preventive care. Before ObamaCare, com-

petition in Medicare Advantage kept costs for beneficiaries low and choices for plans abundant. With ObamaCare, choices will be reduced and costs for seniors, unfortunately, will increase.

ObamaCare cuts Medicare by \$700 billion. Medicare Advantage has been successful for its enrollees. These cuts will reduce the access seniors have to Medicare Advantage. This is unacceptable as far as I am concerned.

Medicare Advantage should be touted. Instead, seniors are facing an on-average 13 percent rate cut in 2014, compared to 2013. We should not be penalizing seniors and reducing their access to health care to pay for others.

Medicare Advantage is a successful program, and Congress should protect it from being gutted by the Obama administration and the Affordable Care Act.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE CLERK,

Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, The Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 28, 2014, at 2:31 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President whereby he notifies the Congress he has extended the national emergency with respect to Zimbabwe, declared in Executive 13288 of March 6, 2003.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-94)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive

Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 28, 2014.

□ 1415

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

HOME HEATING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE THROUGH TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4076) to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4076

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014" or the "HHEATT Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. PROPANE AND HOME HEATING FUEL EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a covered emergency exemption issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration shall remain in effect until May 31, 2014, unless the Secretary of Transportation, after consultation with the Governors of affected States, determines that the emergency for which the exemption was provided ends before that date.

(b) COVERED EMERGENCY EXEMPTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term "covered emergency exemption" means an exemption issued under section 390.23 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or extended under section 390.25 of such title that—

(1) was issued or extended during the period beginning on February 5, 2014, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) provided regulatory relief for commercial motor vehicle operations providing direct assistance supporting the delivery of propane and home heating fuels.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) may be construed to prohibit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration from issuing or extending a covered emergency exemption beyond May 31, 2014, under other Federal law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4076.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I was proud to introduce H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014. This bipartisan legislation will provide relief for millions of Americans suffering from the current propane and home heating fuel emergency.

An exceptionally cold winter has increased demand for propane, which is used for heating approximately 12 million homes in the United States, and for other home-heating fuels. In my district, more than 9,000 households rely on propane for home heating; and across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are more than 200,000 households that do the same.

So according to the National Propane Gas Association, supplies are expected to remain tight through the end of the winter because the infrastructure to deliver propane to high-demand areas is insufficient.

On February 5, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration issued a temporary emergency declaration to allow tank truck operators delivering propane and other home heating fuels to drive longer hours in order to speed up deliveries to the affected States. However, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time, creating great uncertainty and limited relief.

Extreme weather conditions are not expected to subside any time soon, threatening the lives and livelihoods of those with homes, farms, and businesses that depend on heat from propane and other home heating fuels. Just yesterday, we saw another severe winter storm.

H.R. 4076 provides a guaranteed extension of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's emergency declaration until May 31, 2014. This certainty is required to address the transportation distribution issues to give

much needed relief to the affected States.

Should the crisis subside prior to May 31, 2014, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Governors of the affected States, can determine that the guaranteed extension is no longer needed.

I would like to thank the National Propane Gas Association and the New England Fuel Institute for supporting this legislation. I will be entering their letters of support into the RECORD.

This bill has strong bipartisan support, and I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4076.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

NPGA,
February 25, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, On behalf of The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA), I write to share our strong support for your legislation, H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation (HHEATT) Act of 2014.

NPGA is the national trade association of the propane industry, having a membership of about 3,000 companies, with 39 state and regional associations representing members in all 50 states. The single largest group of NPGA members is retail marketers of propane gas who deliver the fuel to the end user for space heating, water heating and agricultural crop drying, among other applications. NPGA membership also includes propane producers, transporters and wholesalers, as well as manufacturers and distributors of associated equipment and containers. While NPGA's membership covers a broad cross-section of categories, more than 90 percent are designated as small businesses.

As you know, this winter Americans have faced severe supply disruptions in many areas of the country. A convergence of conditions—late wet grain harvest, closed pipeline infrastructure, limited railcars due to alternate service demands—have caused difficulties in delivering propane to consumers during one of the most extreme winters on record.

While the overall supply of propane in the United States is sufficient to meet demand, the propane industry is facing challenges with distribution and transportation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the U.S. has more than 42 million barrels of propane presently in stock, located predominantly in Mont Belvieu, Texas, where the largest propane storage facility in the world is located. Overcoming the distribution challenges has been most greatly alleviated by temporary emergency declarations issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration which provide relief from certain federal motor carrier safety regulations for the Midwest, Eastern, Southern, and portions of the Western Service Centers. Unfortunately, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time which creates uncertainty for our propane suppliers and distributors.

Chairman Shuster, we thank you for your leadership on this bill, and trust Congress will take swift action to pass this important regulatory relief. Thank you.

Sincerely,
RICHARD ROLDAN,
President & Chief Executive Officer,
National Propane Gas Association.