

back on for UNESCO. Not only does it wish to pay nearly \$80 million in dues this year. No, but because it chose to remain in UNESCO rather than doing the prudent thing and withdrawing our membership, we have piled up hundreds of millions of dollars in arrears, late fees.

There has also been an appetite by some here in Congress to partially fund UNESCO and, in effect, turn a blind eye to this troublesome agenda, all for a designation that studies have shown has a minimal, if at all, economic benefit to the local site.

□ 1100

Luckily, Mr. Speaker, we have managed to stave off such a calamitous decision. Reversal of U.S. law on this issue would have set a dangerous example, and it would have shown the world that the U.S. lacks the courage of its convictions and will only do the easy thing when it comes to helping our ally, Israel.

But I know this won't be the last time that we will have to fight this battle, and I would urge my colleagues to not allow any partial funding or any waiver that would undermine our U.S. laws.

I would like to thank my House colleagues who did the right thing and prevented this grave mistake from occurring. We must fully enforce these laws and we must seek ways to leverage our assistance to the United Nations to force the reforms it needs or we have to seek ways to change the way in which we fund the United Nations.

Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker.

WAR ON POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, last week, we marked the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty, which began to pave the way for many of the programs that provided basic human dignities that every American deserves.

Fifty years ago, this Congress began to work together on a war against poverty. Unfortunately, today, some of my Republican colleagues have led a different kind of war. Instead of a war to eliminate poverty, it has grown into a shameful war against those living in poverty. These attacks are numerous, from slashing nutrition assistance to cutting unemployment insurance to attacking Social Security, Medicare, and attempting to dismantle health care.

Fighting the war on poverty should not be a Democratic or a Republican idea. Not only are we all in this together, but poverty does not discriminate between political parties. According to the Brookings Institution, there are more than 21 million people living in poverty who live in Republican congressional districts. Equally, there are over 21 million people living in poverty

in Democratic congressional districts. So the burden is on both parties, equally, to recommit ourselves to creating solutions.

The gap between the rich and poor is wide, and it is growing at an alarming rate. Nowhere is this more true than in my home State of New Jersey. In my district alone, the number of households at the top 1 percent have doubled, while the poverty rate has grown to 28 percent.

This is no way for the world's greatest country to lead. We can do better. And we must do better. We must return to the values that have, and always will, make this country great.

We must make investments in education and job training, because how can a man find work if he does not have the skills to enter the workforce?

We must make investments in nutrition assistance, because how can a child learn if he or she is too hungry to focus?

We must make investments in health care, because how can a mother provide for her children if she can't afford to pay her medical bills?

And most importantly, we must make investments in our fellow Americans, to provide them with the opportunities to fulfill their own potential.

My colleagues focus a discouraging amount of energy on cutting the very safety net programs that have lifted millions out of poverty, both in our urban centers and our rural areas. But these programs work. Without our safety net programs, poverty numbers would be double.

So although there is still much more to do, we have come a long way. Turning our backs on the millions of Americans living in poverty is simply not an option. Nothing is more important to the people I represent in New Jersey than having a decent job that pays a decent wage.

My Republican colleagues are kidding themselves if they think these people are lazy or content. Believe me, no one is content living in poverty. No one. These people want to work. They want economic security. And more than anything, they want to create a better life, not only for themselves, but for their children, so that they can forever be free from the clutches of generational poverty.

So, Mr. Speaker, we must remember that the war on poverty declared 50 years ago is an unconditional one. As President Lyndon Baines Johnson said:

Our aim is not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it.

Congress must renew this commitment by extending unemployment insurance, strengthening Social Security and Medicare, raising the minimum wage, investing in education, and, above all, creating jobs.

Let's work together so that one day we can say that we have won the ultimate war of our time—the war on poverty.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on this coming Sunday, January 19, communities and churches across America will be celebrating the Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a call to defend the sanctity of human life. Since 1983, Americans have observed Sanctity of Human Life Sunday as a day to celebrate the intrinsic value of all human life. This important day also provides an opportunity for pregnancy centers to share about the work they do to bring life-affirming resources to their communities and to empower women and men to choose life for their unborn children.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is held on the Sunday in January that falls closest to the day on which the *ROE v. WADE* and *DOE v. BOLTON* decisions were handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22, 1973.

I look forward to celebrating this Sanctity of Human Life Sunday worshipping with the DuBois First Baptist Church, which is located in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, an area I proudly serve and represent.

That same week, on Wednesday, January 22, the March for Life will be held here in Washington, D.C. What began as a small demonstration has rapidly grown to be one of the largest pro-life events in the world. The peaceful demonstration will be attended by hundreds of thousands of Americans, including many from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, our Founders who penned our Declaration of Independence recognized this first principle, as they stated:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life.

Mr. Speaker, today, we continue to live out this principle. For all of us, protecting the unborn is a value system. It is a cause. It is a distinct understanding that every child, every human life, has a purpose in this world; and that life is sacred, and it must be protected.

The only way to offer a voice for those who have no voice is to band together. By educating our children and effectively communicating with our communities on the importance of life, this is how we will successfully lead this fight. Both Sanctity of Human Life Sunday and March for Life are spent doing that—celebrating life and spreading our message.

Mr. Speaker, as for the right to life, Americans, born and yet to be born, deserve as much.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, it is un-American that House Republicans are refusing to hold a vote on extending benefits for Americans who have worked and are now unemployed. It is particularly astounding, with a Speaker from Ohio, where unemployment has just ticked up, that the Republican Party refuses to bring up a vote on extending unemployment benefits.

Since 1948, this is the first time that Congress has allowed extended unemployment benefits to expire with unemployment rates as high as they are. Long-term rates, especially among older workers—people who have worked their entire lives—are at the highest levels and doggedly resistant to amelioration.

More than 1.3 million Americans, including nearly 40,000 Ohioans, have lost benefits because of House Republicans. If House Republicans get their way, by the end of this year, 5 million Americans and their families will have been denied unemployment benefits—people who have worked their entire lives.

Speaker BOEHNER, that includes more than 128,000 Ohio families being denied benefits they have rightfully earned.

My office has been receiving call after call from constituents who don't know why they lost their benefits and asking what they can do now. In one particular case, a woman put in the required years for her job and was ready to retire. She believed in work. She valued work. She spent her life doing it. Unfortunately, suddenly, just before she put her papers in to retire, she was laid off. She lost her job as a result of cutbacks, through no fault of her own. Her husband is disabled and unable to work. Extended unemployment benefits were helping the family make ends meet. Republicans in this House took away this family's ability to pay their bills. She is now begging friends and relatives to help pay their heat bill, to keep the lights turned on, and to pay their medical bills. The uncertainty and stress this family is now facing is unfair and completely un-American.

Extending unemployment benefits to people who work is not only the right thing to do, it actually is better for our economy. The Economic Policy Institute estimates if we do not extend unemployment benefits, it will cost our economy 310,000 more lost jobs because people who aren't able to hold their family budgets together anymore don't buy as many groceries, can't pay their gas bills, can't pay their mortgages, and they fall into poverty.

Why would Congress want millions more falling into poverty while creating more job loss in the Nation? Creating jobs and growing our economy should be our first priority here in Congress.

As Paul Krugman put it in a recent New York Times article:

No matter how desperate you make the unemployed, their desperation does nothing to create more jobs.

So let's come together to strengthen our economy, to stop offshoring millions and millions of jobs in this country, and let's extend unemployment benefits to the people in this country who have earned them. Until then, I urge Republicans to at least allow a vote on restoring unemployment benefits to those Americans who have worked for a living and deserve the respect of this Congress.

HONORING SPECIALIST TERRY K.D. "DANTEZ" GORDON

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

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great American hero, Specialist Terry K.D. "Dantez" Gordon, who was among six U.S. soldiers who passed away due to wounds suffered when their Black Hawk UH-60 helicopter went down in Afghanistan's Zabul region on December 17, 2013.

Specialist Gordon was born in Shubuta, Mississippi, on September 21, 1991. After graduating from Quitman High School, Gordon enlisted in the Army in the summer of 2011, fulfilling his basic training requirements at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He then went on to complete his advanced individual training at Fort Lee, Virginia, where he became a generator mechanic.

Dantez was assigned to Echo Troop, 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Riley, Kansas. He was later trained as a door gunner and attached to Bravo Company, 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment. There, Specialist Gordon was tasked with firing and maintaining manually directed armament during missions, protecting the helicopters' crew members and passengers throughout the deployment to Afghanistan.

□ 1115

Dantez Gordon loved helicopters. He knew very early on that he was meant for the Army because that is where he could fly in a Black Hawk.

His family said they were surprised at first that he wasn't going into the Marine Corps like his father, but it became quite apparent that his interests were centered in going up in a helicopter. His family members were nervous, yet they realized that he loved what he was doing and he was not afraid.

Dantez loved his family, his friends and his country. He was fortunate in that he loved what he was assigned to do, and he would talk about it any chance he got when he came home on leave with anyone who would listen.

Specialist Gordon is remembered by those closest to him as always being happy, especially when he was outdoors or playing baseball. He was a practical joker, and he loved to make people laugh.

His family and his community saw him as an all-around, very devoted, humble, smart, and respectable young man who lost his life way too soon. He lost his life fighting for our families and for our country, and for this, our country, and particularly, the State of Mississippi, will be forever grateful.

"Like ripples in the water," his aunt said, "Dantez Gordon affected people he may have never even met," adding that the world is a better place because he was there.

In an article that described the moment when Specialist Gordon's flag-draped coffin was taken off the plane at Key Field in Meridian, Mississippi, on his final journey home, a family member observed: "As they unloaded him off the plane, the sun peeked through the cloudy gray sky, and as they put him into the hearse, the clouds closed back up." It was as if the sky opened up to pay its final respects to its beloved native Mississippi son.

Specialist Gordon's awards and decorations include the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Ribbon, the Afghan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Combat Action Badge and the Aviation Badge.

Specialist Gordon was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star by executive order for meritorious service from August 13, 2013, until December 17, 2013, upon which no greater honor can be demonstrated than by this ultimate sacrifice. He will always be remembered for these actions.

Dantez Gordon is survived by his parents, Terry W. Gordon of Pachuta, Mississippi, and Sabina R. Edwards of Shubuta, Mississippi; as well as his sister, Terruna Gordon; stepfather, David Edwards; and two half brothers, David Edwards and William Edwards.

I was so moved at his funeral service to see what was really a celebration of his life.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to leave you with a quote from Dantez's father: "Dantez was my hero long before joining the military, but now he's America's hero."

How true that statement is. Dantez's love for his country and his dedication to protecting our freedoms took him from Shubuta, Mississippi, to Afghanistan. Christ said in John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than he that give his life for another."

For his courage and final sacrifice, he will never be forgotten. Thank you for this opportunity to place focus on a true American hero.

RENEW UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to