

Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, many of you may not be aware, but this week is National Nurses Week.

I am honored to be able to stand on the floor of this great institution to talk about the nursing profession, what nurses mean to our health care industry and what nurses mean to each and every one of us when a family member is being treated at a time when we need the most compassion, we need the best care, and a nurse is the one who steps into that room and offers that compassion and offers that care on a daily basis.

I have a special place in my heart for nurses because my wife, Shannon, is a nurse, somebody who not only has served patients in their home, on the hospital floor, at the beginning of life and at the end of life, she has also helped teach the next generation of nurses.

We, in Washington, hear constantly about a nursing shortage in this country; and we, in Washington, need to remember that it is up to us to enact policies and programs that are going to encourage more young people to go into the nursing profession.

I want to honor all nurses this week during National Nurses Week because I want to recognize the hard work that they do and the impact they have, not only to the nursing profession, but to America as a whole.

Whether it is the support nurses provide at major hospitals throughout my congressional district in central and southwestern Illinois or in smaller, critical access hospitals that provide some of the most localized care in places like Staunton, Illinois; Clinton, Illinois; Litchfield; Hillsboro; and even my hometown of Taylorville, they are vital to the success of not only the health care industry they serve, but to the health of the patients that they are trained to care for.

As baby boomers continue to retire, ensuring that we have enough educated nurses should be one of the priorities of this institution that I mentioned earlier. We should continue to support funding for nurse education programs at all of our universities, colleges, and hospitals, so that patients can continue to receive the quality care that they are used to in our health care delivery system.

So happy National Nurses Week, and thank you to my wife Shannon and to the nearly 3 million other registered nurses for all that you do for the health and wellness of our country.

A special thanks to my wife, Shannon. I love you.

FIND THE KIDNAPPED GIRLS AND STOP THE KILLING IN NIGERIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, among other challenges in this world

and in this Congress, Nigeria faces a killing machine. In the last 48 hours, again, Boko Haram struck and killed 300 people. This killing has been going on for a minimum of 5 to 10 years.

Yesterday, five Members—five women of the United States Congress held this sign to indicate that we, as mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and those who care about children, all of our colleagues stand united to find the kidnapped girls and to stop the killing in Nigeria.

We stand united to find the vile and evil Abubakar Shekau, the head of the Boko Haram killing contingent. We saw him most recently grabbing attention by standing in front of a tank, holding a gun, and citing the most ludicrous and insulting prospect that one could hear. He held up \$12 and indicated that he would sell the kidnapped girls.

Mr. Speaker, that is not all that he is doing. He has been killing and pillaging. He has caused parents to have to, in essence, go after him with sticks and stones.

Yesterday, we spoke not only with the leadership at the Nigerian Embassy, a relationship that the United States prides in terms of the contribution Nigeria has made, but it is no doubt that, in this instance, we want Nigeria to do more and more and more.

We asked, by speaking to the leadership in Nigeria by phone, that President Goodluck Jonathan stand up and indicate Nigeria's commitment to finding these girls and, in essence, bringing this horror terrorist to justice.

At the World Economic Forum, his opening remarks did just that. He spoke about the help that was coming from the United States, the leadership of President Obama and Secretary Kerry, and the other nations that are coming together to be able to find these girls.

Outside of Syria and Afghanistan, in terms of mass killings over the recent years, this stands, clearly, in the eye of the storm.

We ask to have created a victims' fund. We want to be able to ensure that these parents who are, literally, broken and the children that may be found—or the wounded ones—have the opportunity to be made whole.

We believe that it is important to create an elite police or military force, one that is focused to utilize the resources of intelligence and the law enforcement resources that are being sent to Nigeria by the United States. That deployed elite military and/or police force—special ops, if you would—would have the sole purpose of getting those kidnapped girls.

The reason why this is so very important is because Nigeria has porous borders. There is speculation that these girls may be in Cameroon, may be in Chad, may be in Niger, Benin, all places that will make it even more difficult to find these innocent children who simply came to school to be able to take an exam, so that they could do better in life.

How dare we allow this brutal killer to last much longer without being brought to justice?

So that elite force would bring this vile and evil person, who has no intent to do anything more than to continue to ramp up his publicity and the world's attention to his violence, bring him now to justice, move quickly utilizing the resources and focusing.

It is also important that all of the world's institutions declare Boko Haram—the ridiculous group that says: we don't want any western education, and all girls should be married—declared a terrorist organization.

It must be done swiftly, so that all the world's focus will be on this dastardly, devastating, vile leader of this organization and the organization.

We can collaborate with the African Union and the U.N. peacekeepers. Then we want to provide armed protection for all of the schools as they finish out or continue their educational training.

Mr. Speaker, let me say to you these are like the boys and girls that are in the schools of America right now. These are primary education children. These are secondary.

I ask my colleagues to join in the outrage of this ridiculous and horrible situation. I ask that we are finding our girls and capturing this terrorist leader.

PUTTING AMERICA BACK TO WORK

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, later today, the Republicans, in violation of their own rules, are going to push through a permanent extension of research and development tax credits, at a cost of \$16 billion a year. That is another \$16 billion a year of deficit to be added to the national debt—over the next 10 years, \$160 billion.

Now, that is not to say that research and development tax credits don't have tremendous merit. They can do a great deal to encourage American innovation and research, new design, development. They can boost our economy. They can help our international competitiveness.

Sure, they, among many other programs and many other investments, are and can be good for the economy; but they are going to violate, waive their own rules, and say: we are not going to pay for it, we are just going to magically fund it, and don't worry about the new debt and deficit.

Now, the Senate has passed a different version. They have 62 provisions in their bill, which include energy efficiency, saving consumers money, new R&D for solar and wind, alternate fuels, among many, many other things that they put in there, that they think also have merit to help consumers, help boost the American economy.

The Republicans over here say: no, those other 61 are off the table, unless you kill or cut some other program. We can't afford them.

Then there is another issue that also comes to the floor. We had, this week, testimony from the Congressional Budget Office. The highway trust fund goes flat this summer. That means the Federal Government, beginning this summer, will make no new commitments to the States for repairing the 140,000 bridges on the national system that need repair or replacement, repairing or replacing the 40 percent of the national highway system that is in very sad repair, the \$60 billion backlog in our transit.

Nope, we can't afford a penny of that. In fact, the Ryan budget says we are going to abandon—abandon—Federal investment in the national transportation system, and we are going to devolve it to the States. The States will fund, pay for, and somehow coordinate a national transportation system because we simply can't afford it.

Well, oddly enough, the shortfall in the trust fund is \$16 billion a year. That is the exact cost of the R&D tax credits.

Why can't they wave their magic wand and say, well, hey, a million direct jobs and a couple million more indirect jobs in transportation, not only in construction, but in design, engineering, in manufacturing and research, we don't want to lose those?

We are not talking about maybe keeping or getting a few jobs. We are talking about losing well over a million direct jobs and a couple more million indirect jobs in the area of transportation, but their magic wand doesn't work for transportation.

Now, there could be a lot of cynical reasons for why they are just pushing this one R&D proposal. It probably doesn't have anything to do with campaign contributions or powerful interests that are out there. I am sure it doesn't.

One has got to wonder: Why is transportation—national transportation—old hat and unaffordable, but R&D, somehow wave the magic wand, and we can afford it?

Now, I was conflicted at coming here this morning because, at the same time, one of the greatest advocates that this body has ever had for national transportation, James L. Oberstar, died suddenly the other night.

I thought Jim would—rather than having me go up to his memorial service today, he would rather have me come to the floor and advocate for something he believed in and knew was essential for the future of this country, which is adequate investment in our system, a coordinated national system of transportation and infrastructure, an energy-efficient, 21st century system, and a repair to our 20th century system.

That is what we need. No more of these political shenanigans on the Republican side. Let's get serious about real investments and putting America back to work.

□ 1030

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, so often folks will use this time in the morning to draw attention to failures or to divisions, but I want to use this time to draw attention to successes.

This is National Charter Schools Week, among other things, Mr. Speaker, and I happen to have two charter schools in my district. I represent only two counties, Mr. Speaker, Gwinnett County and Forsyth County, in the great State of Georgia. Both have outstanding public school systems.

And so often when we start talking about charter schools, Mr. Speaker, we talk about an either/or, as if somehow charter schools and public schools are in competition with one another, but that is not the story that I tell from the great State of Georgia. In fact, Gwinnett County, one of my two counties, won the Broad Prize in 2010 for the absolute finest urban education school district in the Nation. Interestingly, they are now reeligible to win that prize again this year after a 3-year waiting period. They are in the final two. Just amazing stories of young people and their successes. And they come through, among other things, two charter schools in my district.

We have the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, GSMST, Mr. Speaker. They don't have a football team. They have a robotics team, and an outstanding robotics team at that. If you want a future in the STEM fields, you can find no better education in the United States of America than the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, and it is free if you just happen to live in Gwinnett County. A wonderful story of success through the charter school program. Absolutely any student in the county is eligible. In fact, it takes a lottery to get in, Mr. Speaker, because so many young people, so many families want their children to be able to avail themselves of this charter school program.

The Washington Post called it the 17th most challenging high school in the land. U.S. News & World Report called it the third best high school in the land. I, of course, believe it is the number one best high school in the land, but an amazing testimony of what you can do when you free an institution, when you free the teachers, when you free the students to be the very best they can be.

Now, right next door, Mr. Speaker, to GSMST, the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, we have the Maxwell High School of Technology. Now, the Maxwell School aims to take folks, these young people who are trying to find their way in life, and prepare them for a job tomorrow—program after program, Mr. Speaker,

whether it is Web design, whether it is welding, architecture, technology field after technology field, not thought of theoretically, Mr. Speaker, but thought of from how can you graduate from high school and begin to provide for yourself and your family. That is not available in the normal public schools, but it is available at the Maxwell High School of Technology. And again, any student in Gwinnett County is welcome to come and be there.

Mr. Speaker, we still live in a land where there is more that unites us than divides us. We still live in a land that brings people together rather than tears people apart, and the charter school debate should be that debate. It should be the debate not that pits public schools against private schools; it should be the debate that brings us together around making sure that every young person in this land, every family in this land who has a dream of what they want to do with their life, that we have the public schools in this land that can help them fulfill that dream.

Mr. Speaker, we are doing that successfully in the Seventh District of Georgia, and I look forward to joining my colleagues in this Chamber to make sure we can do that successfully in every single congressional district in this land.

CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JOHN HOUBOLT

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

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Houbolt, a native of Joliet, Illinois. He was one of the great unsung heroes of the Apollo program.

Politicians are fond of citing President Kennedy's famous speech made in this room at a joint session of Congress more than 50 years ago to "commit this Nation, before this decade is out, to landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth." Politicians like to imagine that anything is possible if the right politician and speechwriter can muster just the right words to stir a country to action, but engineers know differently. If you do not have a workable engineering concept and a set of design parameters that respect both available resource limitations and engineering reality, then no amount of fine words from politicians is going to make any difference. Dr. John Houbolt provided that crucial engineering concept that made the 10-year success of the Apollo program possible.

John Houbolt came from humble beginnings, working 16 hours a day on his family's dairy farm near Joliet, Illinois, where he developed an early interest in aviation, building model airports in his free time. He graduated from Joliet Township High School and Joliet Junior College. He obtained a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Illinois in civil engineering. He then went on to obtain a