

unemployment insurance. But by failing to extend emergency insurance, we are creating a new disaster on top of the hardships already facing millions of American families, and we are damaging our economy.

During just the first week that emergency unemployment insurance expired, our economy took a \$400 million hit. Failure to extend that insurance could cost us 240,000 jobs this year due to lost buying power, exacerbating the difficulty for current job seekers and adding more to their ranks.

Mr. Speaker, this is not smart policy. It is coldhearted and shortsighted, and I urge my colleagues to join me in demanding a vote to extend emergency unemployment insurance today.

PRESIDENT OBAMA APPROVES "PRISON BREAK"

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, President Obama's lax immigration policies continue to put the lives of Americans at risk. Last year, administration officials released into our neighborhoods more than 36,000 criminal immigrants who had nearly 88,000 convictions. The crimes included hundreds of convictions for murder, rape, and kidnapping, and thousands of drug-related crimes. This would be considered the worst prison break in American history, except it was approved by the President and enabled by immigration officials.

The release of criminal and illegal immigrants into our communities already has killed or injured thousands of innocent Americans. The responsibility for this can only be laid at the doorstep of the White House.

If the President cannot be trusted to enforce current immigration laws, how can he be trusted to enforce future immigration laws?

OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

(Mr. KILMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the threat of ocean acidification to my region and others. I live in the most glorious part of this world. As a dad, it is a joy to share the Pacific Northwest natural resources with my two little girls.

But those natural resources don't just contribute to our recreational experiences; they contribute to our economy, too. In Washington State alone, the shellfish industry contributes more than \$250 million to our economy and supports more than 3,200 jobs. Our coast depends on a strong fishing industry.

All of that is threatened by ocean acidification. Last week, in Tacoma, I listened to businesses, fishermen, and researchers detail how we are begin-

ning to see the effects of our changing ocean chemistry. It has impacted shellfish—we know that—but we have not yet begun to comprehend how ocean acidification disrupts our larger marine ecosystem.

That is why this week I am introducing the Ocean Acidification Innovation Act, which would encourage Federal agencies to better leverage existing Federal dollars by creating incentives for the private sector and researchers to strengthen our ability to research, monitor, and mitigate the impacts of ocean acidification.

Mr. Speaker, we need to act now. Our economy depends on it.

MEMORIAL DAY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Memorial Day is the day we set apart to honor those who have given the "last full measure of devotion" in service to our Nation. It is fitting that we quote Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to mark this day, because though Memorial Day was not federally recognized until 1967, its origins trace back to the Civil War, when observances of what was then called Decoration Day sprang up throughout the country.

This Nation has been blessed by periods when war is not a recent memory; and in those times, the significance of Memorial Day can get lost in the pleasures of early summer, travel, and family barbecues. But we should always set aside time to remember the sacrifices made to safeguard our Nation.

We are now well into our second decade of having troops continually in active theaters of combat, and many have experienced the loss of a loved one. Remember them in your thoughts and prayers, especially on Memorial Day.

THE VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when our men and women in uniform take an oath to support and defend the Constitution, they enter into a contract with our government; and if they survive and return, they are veterans. Part of that contract entitles these veterans to quality health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Recently, it seems as though we are failing to uphold our part of this agreement. More than 8 million veterans seek medical care through the VA each year. Yet each year, we hear the same complaints of long wait times, canceled appointments, and concerns about the quality of care being administered.

One of the largest VA facilities in District 30 of Texas, which is my district, has major problems that are not

new and have been reported time and time again, year after year, with little change. This is simply unacceptable. We owe it to our veterans to provide timely and quality health care. Anything less should be met with great criticism and responded to with much-needed reform.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation will be judged by how we treat our veterans. Our veterans put their lives at risk every day while deployed. Their lives should not be at risk while seeking medical care here at home.

CONGRATULATING JESSE ZHANG

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

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jesse Zhang, an eighth grader from Missoula, Montana, on winning the Montana State Geography Bee last month. This week, Jesse was one of 54 students from across the Nation to travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National Geographic Bee.

Jesse is a true example of the Montana work ethic. He studies geography for several hours each week and has a passion and commitment for learning that will continue to take him far in life.

Jesse, congratulations on this incredible achievement, and best of luck as you continue to pursue your goals. We appreciate your hard work. You make Montana proud.

□ 1230

THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, I have stood here at this podium many times speaking on the extension of unemployment insurance benefits for what is now about 2.8 million people, and the need for immigration reform, about 11 million undocumented workers, yet you have not acted. Both have very strong bipartisan support, yet you have not acted.

How about looking at this in a way that makes our country proud? That is to look at the concept of "through no fault of their own." We are a great country, and we are a compassionate nation. We understand "through no fault of their own."

Remember, Mr. Speaker, to qualify for unemployment benefits, you must be unemployed through no fault of your own. The DREAMers, those who were brought here to this country through no fault of their own, let's act for them, especially those with no benefits and no status through no fault of their own.

DEEPENING THE PORT OF SAVANNAH

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today, when the House passes the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, included in it will be the largest infrastructure project in the history of Georgia. Deepening the Savannah River from 42 to 47 feet will open up our port to lots of different countries and lots of different kinds of vessels from all over the world. 352,000 jobs are related to the Port of Savannah. The cost-benefit ratio is a dollar spent, five-and-a-half dollar return.

It has been studied by four different Federal agencies and signed off by four Federal agencies. In fact, there were 64 individual studies on environmental impact, historic impact, traffic impact, and nearly just about everything else under the sun.

It is a project that Georgia companies will greatly benefit from, as will all the Southeast, because 62 percent of what the port does is export goods and services. So it opens up the door to all kinds of new markets.

I have to thank the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on a bipartisan basis for all that they have done and thank Mr. SHUSTER for coming to Savannah three different times to look at this project personally.

We are very excited about this. Let's pass this bill today. Let's get the Senate to pass it. Let's get the House and the Senate moving, and let's get Georgians and the whole Southeast back to work.

PUNISHMENT FOR SEX TRAFFICKERS

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, sex trafficking is a growing problem. According to the Polaris Project, some 27 million people worldwide are victims of sex trafficking, of which 1 million are children. Just last year in Nevada, 107 children were recovered after being victimized by traffickers. And we don't even know how many others wait for our help.

That is why I am pleased to vote today on several bills intended to strengthen the punishments for perpetrators, increase protections for potential victims, and ensure that victims are given the support they need to recover and rebuild their lives.

I am also encouraged that we are coming together to condemn the horrendous kidnapping of the girls in Nigeria, whose only crime was to seek an education.

Sex trafficking is horrific. It must be stopped. It denies the fundamental rights and dignity of its victims. Today, we can take a step in that di-

rection. We can take action to speak for those who have no voice. So I encourage my colleagues to join me with a resounding "aye" on this package of bills.

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, next week, our Nation will celebrate Memorial Day to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our Nation. May is also National Military Appreciation Month. We are grateful to those in our military for their service, and we strive to make sure they receive the benefits and the services they were promised and that they have earned.

Unfortunately, the quality of services for veterans does not always match our gratitude. Veterans often face long wait times in scheduling appointments, and a record backlog of cases continues to go unaddressed. Serious allegations of mismanagement are raising many questions.

This is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 4031, the Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act, which will be considered tomorrow by the House. This legislation would allow the Secretary of the VA more personnel flexibility, resulting in more accountability.

This Memorial Day and Military Appreciation Month, it is an honor to serve the men and women in uniform who have given us so much.

HARBOR MAINTENANCE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, after a lot of hard work and collaborative effort, I am pleased that the Water Resources Reform and Development Act conference committee, which I was honored to serve on, was finally able to come to a fair, bipartisan agreement on the new water bill that will create jobs and keep our ports globally competitive.

As a representative of the Nation's busiest port complex in Los Angeles and Long Beach, and cofounder of our PORTS Caucus here in Congress, I have fought hard from my first day in Congress to increase funding for our Nation's ports by fully utilizing our Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to ensure that money that is collected at our ports goes back to our ports.

They don't call me Ms. Harbor Maintenance Tax for nothing around here. It has been a long journey, but I am thrilled that after countless hearings and meetings with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with the leadership from Chairman SHUSTER and

Ranking Member RAHALL that our proposals to fully utilize our Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and to allow ports to use these funds for expanded uses is included in this final water bill.

When we pass this bipartisan measure, it is a victory not just for the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, but for all our ports—our ports in Savannah and all those in this Nation. When our ports are strong, Mr. Speaker, our Nation is strong.

SCANDAL AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the chorus drawing attention to the appalling situation with the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have learned of the death of 40 veterans due to drawn-out wait times for medical care at facilities in Arizona. Even more disturbing is the coverup to not allow scrutiny and awareness of these tragedies. This may just be the tip of the iceberg.

These men and women offered their lives defending the freedoms of our Nation, and yet our Nation can't afford them the decency of prompt medical care.

Even with these sad and tragic cases, there are still hundreds of thousands of veterans who are waiting in line for services, medical care, and compensation for disabilities they received while serving our great Nation.

It is time for Congress to take swift action to demand better results and greater accountability. It is time that Congress reform the veterans health care system to allow greater flexibility and more options so that veterans are not stuck waiting for care.

Mr. Speaker, these men and women have earned benefits through their service to our Nation. We must keep our promises, and we must honor these American heroes.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS' PLAN TO RESTORE AMERICAN PROSPERITY

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Americans are concerned. They are concerned about their jobs. They are concerned about their health and the economy. Last week, 37 percent of Americans ranked these as the most important issues facing our country.

House Republicans have a plan to replace ObamaCare, to create jobs, to grow the economy, and to help hard-working Americans take home more of their paychecks.

While there are some difficult decisions ahead of us, there are some simple decisions that we can agree upon right now. Americans need the repeal