

This riveting scientific research on cancer, fossil energy, transportation, and agriculture is blazing new trails in every aspect of our everyday life in our country, to say nothing of how our State is better off for it.

□ 1015

He has fought for legislation that is important to UK and student financial aid. Bill has been a leader in the Science Coalition and actively involved in the Council on Governmental Affairs and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities. Over the years, he has deservedly gained the utmost respect of his peers in Federal relations.

As he departs his post, Mr. Speaker, at the University of Kentucky, it is my intention to ensure Bill Schweri receives the recognition that is due him for his tireless efforts on behalf of students and families all across Kentucky, and specifically living in Kentucky's Fifth Congressional District. We hope he knows he always has the thanks of a grateful Big Blue Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me as we honor my friend Bill Schweri as we bid him a joy-filled retirement.

POTABLE WATER

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, just last month, hundreds of thousands of residents in Toledo, Ohio, were left without access to potable water and faced an extended drinking water ban, after unsafe toxin levels, likely caused by a Lake Erie algal bloom, were found at a city water treatment plant. In January, Charleston, West Virginia, residents faced a similar ban on their drinking water after a chemical spill.

George Bernard Shaw once said:

Success does not consist in never making mistakes, but in never making the same one a second time.

One would think, after two new incidents that left hundreds of thousands of Americans without access to clean drinking water, this body would jump into action to prevent this from ever happening again. And yet, Mr. Speaker, the House hasn't only refused to act, yesterday we actually voted to prevent the administration from acting.

Again and again my colleagues continue to introduce bills and riders that would endanger our drinking water while ignoring basic scientific principles in the process. Today more than 117 million Americans get their drinking water from systems that rely on rivers, streams, and wetlands which, at this very moment, are not clearly protected under the Clean Water Act. Let me say that again: 117 million Americans are getting their drinking water from bodies of water that may not be protected from pollution or destruction.

American families deserve clarity, and that is exactly what the adminis-

tration is trying to provide with their proposed Clean Water Act rule; and, unbelievably enough, that is exactly what the House voted to prevent yesterday.

For years we relied on the Clean Water Act to protect the Nation's waters. For my constituents back home in Chicago, that meant everything from the wetlands on the shores of Lake Michigan to the inland streams that flow across the Great Lakes region. But two Supreme Court decisions in 2001 and 2006 changed all that, leaving us with a confusing, time-consuming, and frustrating process for determining which of the Nation's waters are now protected under Federal law and which are not.

It is imperative that we close what has become a harmful loophole, and that is what the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers are trying to do with their proposed rule clarifying the scope of the Clean Water Act.

Let's be clear: The EPA and the Corps of Engineers are acting within the authority granted them by Congress under the Clean Water Act to legally clarify the statute's jurisdiction. This clarity is desperately needed, especially in the Great Lakes Basin. Half the streams in the Great Lakes States lack clear water protection simply because they do not all flow all year.

This lack of protection has taken its toll, slowing permitting decisions for responsible development and reducing protections for drinking water supplies and critical habitats. The EPA and Army Corps' proposed rule would restore Clean Water Act protections to wetlands and tributary streams because the science clearly shows that these water bodies are connected.

Before proposing its rule, the EPA analyzed more than 1,000 peer-reviewed scientific articles, and the findings are irrefutable. Tributary streams and wetlands are clearly connected to downstream waters. Pollution is carried down the river, polluting bigger and bigger waterways.

Healthy wetlands improve water quality by filtering polluted runoff from farm fields and city streets that otherwise would flow into rivers, streams, and great water bodies across the country. Wetlands and tributaries provide vital habitat to wildlife, waterfowl and fish, reduce flooding, and replenish groundwater supplies.

We cannot protect and restore the Great Lakes and our drinking water supplies without first protecting and restoring the wetlands and upstream waters that feed into them. Congress passed the Clean Water Act with the intention of protecting our waterways, and that is what it did for almost 30 years. Now this administration is trying to bring back these protections this House has undermined.

Let's not make the same mistake twice. Let's let the experts do their job.

HONORING THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS ON 100 YEARS OF SERVICE TO VETERANS

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, we rise today to pay special tribute to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, also known as the VFW, on the 100th anniversary of its organization in September 1914. The Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was also organized in 1914.

Over the past century, members of the VFW have worked tirelessly to ensure that veterans receive the respect, honor, and support they deserve. The VFW was formed when the American Veterans of Foreign Service and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines merged during a conference at the former Schenley Hotel, which is now the William Pitt Union at the University of Pittsburgh.

A Pennsylvania Historic Society marker that sits between the Soldiers and Sailors Hall and the William Pitt Union commemorating the occasion reads:

The Veterans of Foreign Wars organized September 14-17, 1914, at the former Schenley Hotel near here. Veterans who had served in Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and China were among its founders.

Since its founding, the VFW has done tremendous work to serve veterans and family members. The organization played a central role in the creation of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the GI Bill. In addition, the VFW helped spearhead the creation of the Vietnam War, Korean War, World War II, and Women in Military Service Memorials.

It continues this legacy of service by helping veterans and their family members secure VA benefits, including disability claims and pensions. The VFW continues to play an important role as Iraq and Afghanistan veterans return home and adjust to civilian life.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join us in recognizing and expressing sincere gratitude for the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the important work they have done and continue to do to stand with those who have stood for us.

SOCORRO, TEXAS

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, today, as we continue our journey through the 23rd District of Texas, I would like to highlight the historic city of Socorro, in El Paso County. It is located in the center of El Paso's Mission Valley, a valley named for three historic missions founded by Spanish priests, soldiers, and colonists.

Socorro is also home to the Socorro High School Bulldogs. They are known for many things, but particularly they are known for their prowess in baseball. Socorro High is a former State

champion in baseball. In a State as big as Texas, that is a pretty impressive feat.

The roots of Socorro began to take shape in 1680 when Governor Antonio de Otermin and Father Francisco de Ayeta led the Spanish and Piro Indian refugees who were fleeing the New Mexico Pueblo Indian revolt to the El Paso area. Two years later, they built a mission, Nuestra Senora de la Limpia Concepcion del Socorro, the second-oldest mission in Texas. Unfortunately, this first mission was swept away by a flood on the Rio Grande in 1744 and a second mission was built.

Today it may be hard to imagine, but the Rio Grande in those days was a wild river, much different from the dry riverbed or placid stream of today. And a powerful flood also washed away the second mission in 1829.

In 1843, the main part of the present Socorro mission was completed, and at that time, Socorro had a population of about 100 people. The city of Socorro is one of those cities in Texas that has seen several flags flown over it. Founded by the Spanish, it became a part of Mexico from 1821 to 1848, and as a result of the U.S.-Mexican war, Socorro became part of Texas.

The area around El Paso can be arid and harsh, but the secret to Socorro's longevity has been its acequias, a well-designed system of irrigation canals still in existence today. These acequias provided water for crops and vineyards.

The development of Socorro suffered a setback in 1881 when the railroads laid their track all the way to El Paso but they bypassed Socorro. This shifted the development and the political power into the city of El Paso itself. And yet the determined city of Socorro continued to grow, and it diversified and developed various industries. Its resolute citizens were determined to stay in the area.

Later on, unscrupulous developers started to build homes and residential subdivisions there that didn't have paved streets or water or sewer, but Socorro residents again rose up against these builders of these colonias to make sure that their city survived and prospered. And today, the city of Socorro is home to some 32,000 people, making it the 95th largest city in Texas.

The city of Socorro is El Paso County's second largest municipality, and there is a lot of history in Socorro, a lot of places to go and see. If you have got a young kid, a young child, you will want to hang out where the community gathers, and that is at Bulldog Championship Park, which includes a splash park, an amphitheater, walking trails, and a pond.

There is also the Socorro Entertainment Center, known as Speaking Rock, operated by the Tiguas, a Pueblo tribe located in the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. The Entertainment Center welcomes recording artists like B.B. King and the Gipsy Kings, Everclear and Korn, just to name a few.

Socorro is served by the Socorro Independent School District, with one high school, three middle schools, and five elementaries.

I invite people visiting the 23rd to stop by Socorro, enjoy Texas culture. It is an infusion of Southwest history and Southwest traditions.

SUPPORT THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, later today, the House will consider the Employee Health Care Protection Act, and I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

As I traveled West Virginia during the August recess, I heard from small business owners and workers across the State that their health insurance premiums are increasing. I also heard that their deductibles are increasing quite rapidly.

Given that the Obama administration's own Centers for Medicare & Medicaid studies found that 11 million small business employees will see their premiums increase due to ObamaCare, it was sad, but not surprising, that businesses in West Virginia and around the country are feeling the pinch of this law's misguided policies.

Yesterday a report issued by the American Action Forum found that the Affordable Care Act regulations are reducing small businesses' pay by \$22.6 billion annually, and the rising premiums spurred by the law have cost our Nation's economy more than 350,000 jobs.

In my State of West Virginia, more than half of our private sector workers are employed by small businesses. Making sure that health insurance on the small group market is affordable is important to both the family budgets and to make sure those small businesses can continue to grow and provide jobs.

We saw last fall the tremendous problems and uncertainty that occurred when roughly 5 million Americans who purchased insurance on the individual market received cancellation notices, but recent testimony at the House Energy and Commerce Committee has indicated that millions more workers who have employer-sponsored plans could get similar notices starting as early as this year.

If a worker is forced to change health insurance policies, their new plan might not include their doctor or their community hospital. This is another example of overreaching government that is taking away the freedom of individuals and businesses to make the health care decisions that best fit their unique circumstances.

The bill the House will consider today is very simple. If a plan was offered on the group health insurance market in 2013, that plan can continue

to be offered for the next 5 years. Any worker covered by one of these plans will not be fined under the individual mandate. The Employer Health Care Protection Act keeps the President's promise that people who like their insurance, health insurance, can keep it.

□ 1030

It also provides more affordable alternatives for small businesses whose health care costs are soaring. This bill is a commonsense step forward.

There is still much more work that needs to be done. We need to go back to the drawing board and enact true health care reform. We should build on the good ideas, like helping those with preexisting conditions and allowing children to remain on parents' benefits until the age of 26. These are good things.

We should get rid of bad ideas like the job-killing employer mandate, the individual mandate, and regulations that have cost many Americans the insurance plan and the doctor that they choose. We should enact meaningful medical liability reform, we should help spur association health plans, and allow insurance to be sold across State lines to broaden competition in the individual insurance market.

We need to come together to fix our broken health care system. But today, the least we can do is keep the promise that the President made to the American people and allow current plans to continue to be available. I ask my colleagues to support the Employee Health Care Protection Act.

THE WISDOM OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the effective action and wise caution shown by the President of the United States with regard to ISIS. We were all disgusted by the beheading of American journalists and alarmed by ISIS' early military successes.

Those who oversimplify the Middle East focus exclusively on the evils of ISIS and demand its immediate destruction without sufficient examination of the costs and the effects. The President recognizes that the situation calls for action but that its complexity also calls for caution. He has ordered over 150 airstrikes, which have punished ISIS, killing hundreds of its fighters and securing military victories at Mosul Dam, protecting the Yazidi minority, protecting our Kurdish allies, and protecting the Shiite Turkmen, four important military victories. And, just as importantly, we have pushed back ISIS and prevented its further expansion in Iraq.

Yet, the simpleminded argue that all of our problems in the Middle East would disappear if only we had a President with a different personality. Or