

which has a majority of votes on this floor for passage.

The minimum wage today, if it were in 2014 dollars and 1968 levels, would be \$10.77. That means those at the lowest ranks of earners in America have seen their buying power degraded by over 40 percent since 1968, and yet we won't even bring it to the floor. When I say "we," the Republican majority won't even bring it to the floor for a vote, and it has a majority of votes in my opinion.

They won't bring a bill to the floor that ensures equal pay for equal work. Every woman in this House and every man in this House except for the leadership are paid exactly the same thing irrespective of their gender. Americans believe that is the right thing to do. We can't get a bill to the floor.

We need to make higher education more affordable. Student loans have the ability to be refinanced just as mortgages can be refinanced. We can't get such a bill to the floor.

They are tired of Republicans' obsession with undoing the patient protections and cost savings of health care reform. We spent 4 years pretending that we were going to repeal it as opposed to fixing that which could be made better on behalf of the American people.

They are tired of watching Republicans walk away from every opportunity to get our fiscal House in order, as they did with the Biden talks; the Boehner-Obama negotiations; the supercommittee, composed of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats; walked away from averting the sequester; shut down the government; and several missed opportunities to pursue fiscal sustainability.

The American people are, as I said, distressed, dismayed, and, indeed, angry at the Congress, all of us, because they see their board of directors of the greatest country on the face of the Earth not working.

They are tired of Republicans' failure to move forward with bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform. That, again, has the votes on this floor to pass, but they don't bring it to the floor.

The Republican Congress has made it clear that their message to America is: You are on your own.

You are not earning enough minimum wage? You are on your own.

You lost your unemployment insurance? You are on your own.

Sandy comes and visits the Atlantic Katrina visited. And what did we do on Sandy? We said, You are on your own. A majority of Republicans—an overwhelming majority of Republicans—voted against helping those who were struck by Sandy.

Export-Import Bank. You are in a business that is trying to export goods. You are getting a little help. You are being competitive with the rest of the world. What does this Congress say? You are on your own. Yes, we are going to extend it for a short period of time,

but there are a majority of votes on this floor to extend it for a number of years, which will give confidence to the economy and to exporters and lenders that it will be in place. But what did we say? You are on your own.

You want to buy a home? Well, the chairman of the Financial Services Committee wants to eliminate Fannie and Freddie and say, Yes, you are on your own.

You need terrorism risk insurance to build and get a loan for commercial construction? It is not on the floor. You are on your own.

The American people are upset with us—and rightfully so. I am upset with us. This Republican Congress has made it clear that it is about political messaging and nothing else. That is what they said to women when they voted against the Violence Against Women Act, an act which had passed overwhelmingly in a bipartisan fashion when it was adopted and when it was reauthorized, but this Congress could not get a majority of the Republicans to vote for it. It passed after 8 months of delay because Democrats voted overwhelmingly for it—what they said to small business owners when they voted against that Sandy relief, and it is what they told unemployed workers when they voted not to extend emergency unemployment.

While House Republicans are using September to continue sending messages to the American people, House Democrats are talking about lifting up the middle class, giving a jump-start to the middle class. This month will be one of sharp contrast and, yes, next month and, yes, November.

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There are choices to be made, a sharp contrast. The overwhelming majority of the American people are for every one of the issues that I have just mentioned. Poll after poll after poll shows them to be so.

There will be a contrast between obstruction and progress—between Republicans who have said their number one priority is winning an election and Democrats who want to win the battle for economic equality and economic opportunity for the American people.

The American people deserve a Congress that is on their side. House Democrats are committed to doing what is necessary to jump-start our middle class, create good jobs, and open doors of opportunity for all Americans.

Jump-starting the middle class means helping more of our businesses make it in America and create jobs that pay well. We, by the way, passed yesterday "Make It In America" legislation—good legislation, bipartisan legislation. It was done on a voice vote. The reason it was done on a voice vote is because there was some concern that a large number of Republicans might vote against it. That would have been a bad vote for them, so we passed it on a voice vote.

It means equal pay for equal work and greater access to affordable child care. It means access to higher education, spanning job training and opportunity. It means enabling more Americans to own a home, save for retirement, and know with certainty their children will be better off than we are and that they were.

That, Madam Speaker, is what the American people expect us to do. It is so sad that we haven't been doing it. It is so sad that we cannot have the House work its will, which is, of course, what the Republicans said in their pledge to America. That is what the young guns told us they were going to do. We have had more closed rules than any Congress in which I have served. That means that ideas can't be put forward.

Madam Speaker, the American public will have a choice between a stark contrast of who is on their side. Let's hope the next Congress is a Congress of which the American people can be proud.

DEFEND OUR NATIONAL SECURITY FROM ISIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about one of the greatest threats to the United States of America and our allies. An evil that is so barbaric and ruthless that it can't be ignored but only dismantled and destroyed. Madam Speaker, I am talking about the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant, also known as ISIL.

Many of you, many of all of us, have watched in horror as two American journalists—James Foley and Steven Sotloff—and a British citizen, David Haines, were gruesomely murdered by ISIL. As a mother and as an American, my thoughts and prayers go out to their families and to all the victims of this vile terrorist group.

Madam Speaker, ISIL is the most ruthless and well-financed terrorist group in the world. Their goal is simple: kill the innocent and ultimately terrorize the United States of America and our allies. We have an obligation, one that has been long overdue, to stop this barbaric terrorist organization before they strike us at home.

Madam Speaker, we must not let that happen. We must stand together, stand together as a Nation, a people, in a unified bipartisan fashion, to stop ISIL once and for all. Make no mistake about it, we are at war with radical Islam.

ISIL must not have a safe haven in Syria, or anywhere else, with the time and the space to operate and carry out attacks against our allies and our homeland. They must be destroyed.

Our Commander in Chief has asked for the "tools" to defeat ISIL. Madam Speaker, I will support the President in our effort to complete the mission and to defeat the enemy. But I do remain

concerned that the President does not have the long-term vision and the will to complete the mission.

As Americans, we should all want the President to succeed. The cost of failure is far too great. However, the cost of not acting is even greater. The President's rhetoric must match his action and his resolve.

Madam Speaker, Congress will answer the call of the American people and give the President the tools that he has asked for while providing rigorous oversight and requiring accountability for the duration of this military campaign. We must complete the mission.

I, for one, stand ready to work with anyone to defend our national security and protect our very way of life.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is working in Florida for a very simple reason: no one wants to be uninsured. People want affordable health insurance.

Florida enrolled more people in health insurance coverage than any other State using healthcare.gov. This only illustrates just how high a demand there is for affordable coverage in our State.

During the first open enrollment period, some 983,000 Floridians signed up. More than 90 percent were eligible for some type of financial assistance under the law, which drove premiums down to an average of \$79 a month in Florida.

In the span of a few months, our State's uninsured rate dropped from 25 percent to under 20 percent. I am confident that when open enrollment begins this fall, even more Floridians will take advantage of the opportunity to get covered.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, there are 1.06 million Floridians who won't have that opportunity. They don't make enough money to qualify for help buying private insurance in the marketplace, and they have been denied the Medicaid coverage that they are eligible for by Governor Rick Scott and by our GOP State legislature.

Health care reform was designed to help more Americans afford private health insurance and provide basic coverage for low-income people through Medicaid. To do so, the law extended eligibility for Medicaid to people earning up to 138 percent of the Federal poverty level.

Talking in terms of the Federal poverty level seems abstract, but for the millions of Americans working hard for such little income the hardships that they face are very real. Earning 138 percent of the poverty level means barely making ends meet. For a full-time minimum wage worker it means scraping by on less than \$16,000 a year; for a family of four it means bringing

in less than \$32,000 a year, struggling to afford food and other basic necessities. Unfortunately, in Florida, it also means going uninsured. That is unacceptable in 2014 when there is a Federal law on the books that says that they don't have to be.

As a member of the House Medicaid Expansion Caucus here in Congress, unfortunately, I find myself in a position where I have to ask Governor Scott and my former colleagues on the floor of the legislature just a few questions: Are two young parents working fast-food jobs in Miami less deserving of primary care visits than a couple working at the same burger chain in Colorado? Are the chronic headaches of a home cleaner in West Palm Beach somehow less serious than those doing the same work in West Virginia? Is a loved one struggling with substance abuse in Orlando any less worthy of treatment than someone in New York or in Maine? Are these 1,060,000 Floridians somehow undeserving of the coverage our Federal health care law has made them eligible for?

These are some of the most hard-working people in our State. They are proud moms and dads. They are cashiers and housekeepers, security guards and fast-food workers, office clerks, and landscapers. They are veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan. They are adults who have gone back to college to further their careers.

Our desire to give Florida families the same shot at leading healthy, productive lives as Americans in any other State should be enough to convince Governor Rick Scott to call the legislature back into session tomorrow to get it done.

But just in case our responsibility to protect families and promote public health isn't enough, economists have also found that no other State has more to lose by rejecting Medicaid expansion—by rejecting Medicaid expansion—than Florida.

Just this month, a McClatchy analysis of The Urban Institute data concluded that Florida's decision to deny Medicaid to 1,060,000 people will cost our State an astronomical \$66.1 billion by 2022. Florida's hospitals are expected to lose \$22.6 billion over that same period and will continue to bear the burden of providing expensive emergency room care to uninsured patients for nothing in return.

The billions and billions of dollars at stake for Florida through Medicaid expansion would do far more than expand basic coverage to 1.06 million low-income people. These dollars would also generate new growth and opportunity throughout Florida's economy.

That is because when hospitals are actually paid for their services their balance sheets improve, they have more room to invest and to expand. When they build a new surgery wing, they put to work more engineers and construction contractors and they hire new staff and they create good, well-paying jobs in our State.

According to the Council of Economic Advisers at the White House, the economic growth injected into Florida's economy would deliver about 63,000 new jobs between now and 2017. Missing out on that kind of opportunity will be devastating for our State. Failing to cover those 1,060,000 Floridians would not deliver real savings to taxpayers in the long run.

It is time for Governor Scott and the Florida legislature to focus less on politics and more on helping Floridians, parents, students, veterans, and workers get the coverage they desire and that they are entitled to.

IRS ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in support of five common-sense bills that hold the government accountable to the people it was created to serve.

It is amazing that we have an agency called the Internal Revenue Service to which we have surrendered almost unlimited power for the purposes of collecting revenues of this country. Arguably, American citizens will tell you that the IRS has control over their lives, their liberty, and their property, and, some would argue, without due process of law.

You don't tell your taxman: I am not going to answer that question, I am going to take the Fifth, because immediately he will seize your property.

Yet we witnessed on television—as we found out—that the IRS was being looked into for being incompetent and corrupt and maybe the most incompetent and corrupt Federal agency in the country, and that they were actually out investigating groups who were voicing their absolute constitutional right to express their opinion in the political arena and the right to gather and meet, which is guaranteed by the Constitution.

But, no, the first thing we get from the person in charge is: I am going to take the Fifth Amendment. As many can see, we have been battling in the committee process in Congress over and over with the IRS. They have abused our tax system to target conservative political organizations, and this abuse has to be stopped and they have to be held responsible. Of course, when we actually have someone that we see is responsible, the quick solution for the IRS is transfer them somewhere else.

Well, I am proud the House has taken action to curb the power of the IRS by streamlining the removal of Federal bureaucrats who engage in misconduct or destroy Federal records. In front of a Federal District Court, you just try shredding records that a court has ordered you to bring before them and see what that Federal judge will do to you.

We are also voting to prohibit the IRS officials from using personal email