

a casket or an urn. They should have the opportunity to be buried with dignity. No veteran should die in poverty and then find that they can't get a burial with dignity.

I also believe that we should have our veterans who are hurt after they leave the military be accorded the opportunity to have places to live such that they can access them easily and use them efficaciously. This is why we have filed the HAVEN Act, H.R. 3743. The HAVEN Act would accord \$20 million—by the way, that we don't have; I believe that if we can spend money we don't have to put them in harm's way, we can spend money we don't have to take care of them when they get home—\$20 million, \$5 million a year, a pilot program to allow NGOs to match the \$20 million and provide the type of facility that a veteran would need to move efficaciously, to move and have a great degree of functionality within his or her home. This is the kind of thing that a grateful nation ought to do. This piece of legislation is currently in the Senate defense authorization bill, and in that bill this legislation lies. But there is some question as to whether or not it will survive a conference committee. I pray and I hope for this piece of legislation, \$20 million over 5 years to modify homes for disabled veterans, those who are hurt after they have left the military, to help them. There is already a program for those who are hurt while they are in the military. This is not duplicative. This does help veterans who need help.

I believe we are the land of the free because we are the home of the brave. I believe that if we are going to continue to be the land of the free, we must make sure we must protect those who are the brave.

God bless you.

VIOLENCE IN THE STATE OF TAMAULIPAS, MEXICO

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

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to the violence in the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Last month, three of my constituents were murdered in northern Mexico. Erica Alvarado Salinas, Alex Alvarado, and Jose Angel Alvarado were visiting their father near Matamoros, Mexico, on the other side of my hometown of Brownsville, Texas. The siblings were abducted on October 13 by armed men. Their burned bodies were found on October 29 in a field in northern Mexico.

Today I call on the United States State Department to ensure that the Mexican Government thoroughly investigates these heinous crimes and that those responsible be brought to justice and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. These cold-blooded murders demonstrate the brutal violence in northern Mexico.

In a travel warning dated October of 2014, the State Department warns:

Matamoros, Reynosa, Nuevo Laredo, and Ciudad Victoria have experienced numerous gun battles and attacks with explosive devices in the past year. Violent conflicts between rival criminal elements and/or the Mexican military can occur in all parts of the region and at all times of the day. The number of reported kidnappings for Tamaulipas is among the highest in Mexico, and the number of U.S. citizens reported to the consulates in Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo as being kidnapped, abducted, or disappearing involuntarily in the first half of 2014 has also increased.

For the last century and a half, residents of northern Mexico and south Texas enjoyed a bicultural experience where crossing to work, eat, shop, or visit family and friends was a part of everyday life. This way of life has been ripped apart. We should demand that those whose criminal acts have destabilized Mexico be held responsible.

Martin Luther King said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Our country must ensure that those who murdered Erica, Alex, and Jose be brought to justice.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Arne Panula, Catholic Information Center, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, Lord of life and death, in this season, as days grow dark and cold, as leaves fall in the sad autumn twilight, so we recall that souls fall each day into eternity, and that one day the falling leaf will be ours.

"For here we have no lasting city, but . . . seek the one which is to come." The true measure of the present is life's end: what excites or exasperates in the moment diminishes in eternity.

And, conversely, these things that seem minute in the present—an act of kindness, a smile, a heartfelt prayer, a small sacrifice—are the grains of sand that accumulate and toward eternity become a mountain, a monument of grace.

Help us, Heavenly Father, never to lose sight of life's end, never to overlook those grains of sand but, rather, collect them for eternity's hour.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CONGRATULATING KEVIN HARVICK

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

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire Kern County community, I would like to congratulate Kevin Harvick on winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup championship at Homestead this weekend.

Sunday's win capped off an incredible season, exemplifying the determination, resilience, and fortitude needed to excel, especially in such a long and competitive racing season.

These attributes that embody Kevin's success are ingrained in our community. Our families get up early, work hard, and put in long hours to get the job done. Kevin's racing is a reminder to the world that the Bakersfield way drives champions.

Your hometown is proud of your achievement, Kevin. For all the kids across Kern County who watched races, like myself, at Mesa Marin and now at the Kern County Raceway Park and dreamed of becoming a NASCAR champion, they now have someone to emulate.

Congratulations again to you, to DeLana and Keelan and your entire family, and to your crew chief, Rodney Childers, and the entire 4 team for an incredible season and championship. Kevin, as you said, not bad for an '08er.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, it has been more than 500 days since the Senate overwhelmingly passed bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform. But

House Republicans have done nothing. They refused to act. If the Republicans are unwilling to use their power to act, then the President must act. In fact, recently, 117 of my colleagues and I sent a letter to President Obama urging him to act now.

Since 1952, every single President, regardless of political party, has used their broad executive authority to shape our Nation's immigration policy. So the President's decision to use executive action is not unprecedented. Neither is it ideal. But, unfortunately, it is necessary.

We can no longer stand by while we separate mothers from their children, throw young people out of this country. The only strategy that the Republicans in this House have had has been deport, deport, deport.

ISRAEL TERROR ATTACKS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest condolences to the families of the four Israelis, three of whom are also American citizens, who were murdered by Palestinian terrorists in Jerusalem during morning prayers in a synagogue.

My thoughts and prayers are with the people of Israel who again have to endure another tragedy at the hands of Palestinian terrorists.

It is no coincidence that this latest string of attacks on innocent Israelis comes after the Supreme Leader of Iran urged Palestinians to use violence against Israel and called for Israel's destruction, as did the terrorist group Hamas.

This is another example of Iran's dangerous meddling in an effort to attack our U.S. interests and Israel, and Hamas's continued incitement of violence and terror.

There is now a clear link to terrorism in both the West Bank and Gaza, and there can be no U.S. taxpayer dollars going to support a unity government that is backed by Hamas and the Palestinian Authority.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support increased funding for medical research. In the last decade, funding to the National Institutes of Health has been cut by nearly 25 percent, and America's health, position as global leader, and economy are paying the price.

In 2013, NIH funded 640 fewer competitive research projects than the year before. Fewer opportunities sent a signal to young people to avoid careers in medical research. Meanwhile, as

America is falling behind, Japan, Germany, China, and India are dramatically boosting medical research funding.

Underinvestment in medical research is financially shortsighted. Every dollar of NIH funding generates \$2.21 in local economic activity.

We should be investing in ways to alleviate the burden of chronic diseases, such as Alzheimer's, which costs the Nation \$200 billion a year, and cancer, which costs the Nation another \$216 billion.

We cannot afford to wait. I encourage my colleagues to join Congresswoman DELAURO and me in supporting H.R. 5580, the Accelerating Biomedical Research Act. The time to reverse these cuts is now.

NEW GERMAN-AMERICAN CAUCUS LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the efforts and hard work of the German-American Caucus over the past several years and the great leadership of caucus Cochairman JIM GERLACH.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. GERLACH since before I was elected to Congress, and I am honored to take his place as the next cochairman of the German-American Caucus alongside Congressman BILL KEATING.

Under Mr. GERLACH's leadership, the caucus has grown to nearly 100 members and helped foster a great appreciation for the many ties and connections shared between our two countries.

From meeting with very important government, business, and industry leaders to hosting networking events on the Hill, the German-American Caucus has served as an important medium for the exchange of information.

Pennsylvania is proud of its German heritage. The Commonwealth hosts one of the largest German populations in the country. Accordingly, I look forward to working with Ambassador Peter Wittig and Congressman KEATING and the leaders of the German American Business Council as we move towards the 114th Congress.

I promise to do my best to live up to the leadership that has been provided by my good friend Congressman JIM GERLACH.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we observe American Education Week, I would like to pay tribute to America's public schoolteachers and administrators for their leadership and service to our communities.

Teachers are proof that you really can change the world if you care

enough. That is why so many, even when faced with diminishing resources and budget cuts, work tirelessly to ensure our students receive the education they deserve.

Our promise as a nation depends on our teachers. We all must do our part to support America's educators. That is why I oppose sequestration cuts that threaten school districts and teachers. That is why I worked to pass bipartisan legislation to provide food nutrition programs to schoolchildren during the summer months.

I have donated nearly 1,500 books to schools in my district and was proud to have launched the Robin's Readers program in my district, which is a literacy partnership between my office and Second District schools.

This week, I encourage you all to reach out and get to know your local schools. Offer to volunteer your time and energy to their efforts. But, most importantly, thank an educator.

REAGAN DEFENSE FORUM AND SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, from day one as a Member of Congress, I have always known that our number one constitutional responsibility is to the common defense of this Nation at home and abroad.

We should make the smart financial investments in our men and women in uniform—their readiness, their training, and their weapons—as if our lives depend on it. Because their lives do.

This weekend, I gathered with some of the greatest defense minds in our Nation to discuss the safety and security of our country at the annual Reagan Defense Forum. A common narrative from this forum was that the defense cuts under sequestration are dangerous and undermining our national security.

If so, then why are these dangerous cuts allowed to stand?

The American people, the military, Members of Congress, and even the President recognize the world is not becoming a safer place but much more dangerous. Ronald Reagan's policy of peace through strength worked, and it worked well. The time has come to remove these cuts and restore our Nation's strength so we can live up to our constitutional responsibility.

ACT ON IMMIGRATION REFORM NOW

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

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, we all agree that it is up to Congress to overhaul the broken immigration system. However, despite all the talk and promises, there is one thing that is clear: this Republican Congress has done