

to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HANNAH AND FRIENDS

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with Representative JOLLY to recognize a wonderful organization in my district dedicated to helping children and adults with special needs, Hannah's House.

Many football fans know the name Charlie Weis. He has coached at the University of Notre Dame, New England Patriots, and the New York Jets.

What many of you don't know is he and his wife, Maura, are passionate about helping people off the field.

In 2003, Charlie and Maura founded Hannah and Friends for their daughter Hannah, who has global developmental delays. They wanted to find a way to inspire a special group of people with abilities different from the athletes that he coached. Hannah and Friends provides grants to low- and middle-income families who have children with disabilities.

Hannah and Friends is helping individuals with special needs every day to realize their potential and plan for their future and to achieve their own personal best.

THE GREAT LAKES

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the Great Lakes represents the largest source of freshwater on this planet. They support more than 1.5 million jobs. They provide those who live near them with countless opportunities for outdoor enjoyment and recreation.

My community of western New York considers its proximity to Lake Erie as one of its greatest assets. We must strive to guard the Great Lakes against imminent and future threats, and this week the House did just that.

Today we introduce the Guarding the Great Lakes Act, which will continue to help protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp and other invasive species. The act will also take necessary steps to focus on permanent solutions by beginning work on water quality and flood mitigation projects.

Yesterday the House passed the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act, providing \$300 million in Federal funding annually to support projects related to the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes for each of the next 5 years. These are two excellent steps forward as we continue to protect these great bodies of water.

CONGRATULATIONS, KARON KARAMI

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I am grateful to express my appreciation for Karon Karami, the South Carolina Second Congressional District's scheduler and office manager.

After interning for several months in the Washington office, Karon joined the Wilson team in December 2012. Although a native of Great Falls, Virginia, and a graduate of the University of Virginia, Karon has grown to adopt South Carolina as her second home.

The scheduling position is most challenging, but Karon has excelled. Her ability to connect with constituents, coordinate with my wife, Roxanne, and her eagerness to assist them has made a difference for the citizens of South Carolina.

Beginning in January, Karon will join New Hampshire's First Congressional District Congressman-elect Frank Guinta's office. I know her parents, Mo and Fatemah Karami, are proud of her accomplishments. I wish Karon best wishes and look forward to seeing her future successes.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and the President should take actions to never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism. The President's pardoning of Guantanamo terrorists endangers American families.

"ORION"—INNOVATE, EXPLORE, DISCOVER

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable achievement of the *Orion* spacecraft's first test flight. The project represents the next frontier for NASA's deep space exploration program.

Last Friday, December 5, *Orion* lifted off from Cape Canaveral, and by all accounts, it was a flawless mission. This test flight sent *Orion* 3,604 miles above Earth, traveling at over 20,000 miles per hour.

Orion and the Space Launch System are national priorities aimed at taking our astronauts to Mars and beyond. This exploration will inspire our Nation and capture the hearts and minds of young Americans.

More importantly, I am proud to say Colorado played an enormous role in making *Orion* a reality. Lockheed Martin and United Launch Alliance facilities played a leading role in this mission.

Other Colorado contractors that played an important role include Lockheed Martin Space Systems, Advanced Solutions Inc., Ball Aerospace, Deep Space Systems, Denver Research Institute, Erickson Metals of Colorado, ISYS Technologies, Red Canyon Engineering, SEAKR Engineering, St. Vrain Manufacturing Syzygx, Syzygx, and TTJ&B Inc.

Orion supports thousands of jobs all around the country and is an engine for

innovation and space exploration in our State and the Nation. This is something that we all can be proud of as a Nation, and we look forward to further space exploration.

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN MIKE MCINTYRE

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

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and colleague from North Carolina, Congressman MIKE MCINTYRE. MIKE and I are blessed to represent the southeastern region of North Carolina and some of the most hardworking, genuine, and thoughtful people you will ever meet.

MIKE has his priorities in order. He has dedicated his life to God, his family, and serving his constituents, and he has done so with unparalleled honor and integrity.

In Congress, he has been a voice for common sense, and he has never been afraid to reach across the aisle to get things done for our local communities. During his years of service on the House Agriculture and the House Armed Services Committees, MIKE has, time and again, stood up for issues folks care about back home in North Carolina.

I am honored that I inherited Robeson County from MIKE, a place my family has called home for generations, and I am thrilled to call MIKE and his amazing wife, Dee, my constituents.

I can tell you firsthand that MIKE is respected across southeastern North Carolina because he has a sincere passion for the people he represents and serves.

I thank MIKE MCINTYRE for his leadership to North Carolina over the years. It has been a privilege to get to know MIKE, to call him a friend, and to work with him to make life better for the folks of North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the House will join me in wishing MIKE and Dee well in their future endeavors. We are going to miss him around here.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to renew the call for Congress to act on comprehensive immigration reform. The job of Congress is to legislate, and immigration reform needs a legislative solution. It is, therefore, disappointing that we will be finishing this Congress in a few days without the House having passed or even voted on comprehensive immigration reform. But I hope that starting immediately in the new Congress, we can work together to pass comprehensive, commonsense, and compassionate legislation that will provide opportunities to those who

want to come here and opportunities for the 12 million undocumented residents who are already here.

This legislation can grow our economy, decrease our deficit, secure our borders, protect our workers, unite families, and provide an earned pathway to citizenship. A majority of Americans support this framework, and it has the support of both labor and business as well as religious and civic organizations. Let us come back in January ready to get the job done and pass comprehensive immigration reform.

GRUBER WASN'T TALKING ABOUT REPUBLICANS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, a lot of my Republican friends have been upset with the comments of Jonathan Gruber, where he was quoted accurately as saying about ObamaCare: "A lack of transparency is a huge political advantage. Call it the stupidity of the American voter or whatever."

He also said that they—President Obama and the Democrats—proposed it and it "passed because the American people are too stupid to understand the difference."

Now, I would say to my Republican colleagues: chill out. Don't worry. Not a single Republican voted for that bill. Not a single Republican in the Senate voted for that bill. He wasn't talking about Republicans. He wasn't talking about the Democrats, Independents, or Republicans who voted for Republicans to come to the House or the Senate. He was talking about the people he was paid millions by to work on ObamaCare. That is right—he called the Democrats stupid.

He wasn't talking about Republicans. He knew we were smarter than that.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF COACH VINCENT ASCOLESE

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the life of the legendary North Bergen High School football coach Vincent Ascolese.

Coach Ascolese, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, neighbor, and friend, passed away on December 3 after a long battle with cancer.

His career as a high school football coach spanned 50 years, beginning with 11 years in Hoboken, New Jersey, and then taking over the North Bergen football program in 1973. He retired after the 2011 season as New Jersey's third winningest coach in history.

As a member of the Hudson County Hall of Fame and the New Jersey Football Coaches Hall of Fame, he guided the North Bergen Bruins to 12 Hudson

County crowns and six State championships.

As a Jersey City native, Coach Ascolese was named Hudson County Coach of the Year 14 times, and in 1997, he was named the Toyota Coach of the Year for the Eastern United States. In 2011, North Bergen's home field was renamed as the Vincent Ascolese Field.

Coach Ascolese will be remembered for his lasting impact on and off the field and his ability to inspire his players and the community. My thoughts are with the Vincent Ascolese family, former players, and the North Bergen community.

HONORING JOSE DIAZ-BALART

(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 would like to congratulate my friend, journalist, and television anchorman, Jose Diaz-Balart.

For over 30 years, Jose has been reporting on momentous events from international crises to breaking news in order to properly inform his diverse audience.

As the first U.S. journalist to broadcast in two languages—English and Spanish—simultaneously on two networks, Jose has proven to be a valuable voice to the Hispanic American community. Throughout his career Jose has been the recipient of many accolades, including three Emmys, the George Foster Peabody Award, and the 2014 CHCI Medallion of Excellence.

Jose's role in our society should not be taken for granted. There are hundreds of journalists in Cuba and around the world who are being persecuted and imprisoned for showcasing the realities within their own countries. Jose speaks for them.

I congratulate Jose for 30 years within the industry and thank him for his commitment to the principles of independent journalism and freedom of the press.

THE CR/OMNIBUS

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last night, the House Rules Committee filed the 2015 government funding bill.

My top priority is keeping the government open, and this bill will prevent the kind of widespread economic damage that would be caused by a government shutdown, but funding the government is more than just about dollars and cents. It is a statement about our national values. We must make difficult choices with limited resources and fight for what we stand for.

This so-called CR/Omnibus provides \$1.1 trillion to fund the government through 2015. It provides funding to combat ISIL and support our troops, fight Ebola in West Africa, and it in-

vests in critical science and research programs.

However, I am deeply disappointed that it responds to the President's executive action on immigration by providing only short-term funding for the Department of Homeland Security. I strongly oppose several controversial policy riders that impact women's health and the environment.

As we begin a meaningful debate on this bill and as the new Congress approaches, we must ensure actions and decisions reflect our values and our ideals to ensure that we protect our country, grow the economy, and provide every American a fair shot at success.

THE CHRISTMAS RESOLUTION

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, it is the most wonderful time of the year, a time when millions of Americans gather together to celebrate Christmas. For many of us, Christmas is a time to remember the humble birth of our Savior on a holy night more than 2,000 years ago in the town of Bethlehem. We give thanks for Jesus' message of love and peace and remember the sacrifice He made for us all. It is a season of giving, of love, and of joy.

According to a recent poll, 9 out of 10 Americans celebrate Christmas. Sadly, however, there is a troubling effort in America led by a vocal minority to remove the symbols and traditions of Christmas from the public arena.

There have been many examples of atheist groups working to remove public nativity displays and other decorations. Just last year in my home State of Colorado, an anti-religious organization filed a lawsuit against school officials for their support of student-led involvement with Operation Christmas Child.

Mr. Speaker, these petty efforts by groups offended by the religious significance of Christmas violates the freedom of religion our Founding Fathers provided for us in the Constitution. This Congress and in Congresses past, I have introduced a resolution to protect the symbols and traditions of Christmas for those who celebrate the holiday.

The resolution also disapproves of efforts to ban references to Christmas. We must not allow those who chose to take offense to shut down the religious celebration of every other American.

THE 66TH ANNIVERSARY OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my newly-introduced