

the children to enjoy after summer swims. Reflecting back on her proud gold country heritage, her many years of good health, her large and ever-growing family, she would often say, "I am a very lucky lady." We were lucky to have known her, and are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to honor such a full and profound life.

RECOGNIZING THE WOMEN LEADERS OF GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I would like to take a moment to honor a few women from New York who were trailblazers of the gun violence prevention movement.

Barbara Hohlt, Tina Johnstone, Ellen Freudenheim, and Robyn Ringler are founders of and volunteers with New Yorkers Against Gun Violence who worked tirelessly to pass the original Brady Bill in 1993, which strengthened federal background checks on firearms purchasers. These women, along with my constituent Donna Dees-Thomases, and countless others went on to organize the historic "Million Mom March" which will celebrate its 15 year milestone this year on Mother's Day.

These volunteers and activists are the backbone of the movement for sensible gun laws and safer communities. With the leadership of these courageous women and others like them, New York has taken important steps to improve our gun safety laws, including requiring background checks on all gun sales. It is critical that Congress follow through on sensible reforms to close existing loopholes, prevent accidental handgun deaths, and provide law enforcement with the necessary resources to keep dangerous firearms out of the wrong hands.

In keeping with the theme of this Women's History Month: "Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives," I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the testimony of one mother in particular, Karin Wilson. She was a talented Brooklyn artist who in 2005 delivered these words before the United Nations. If you take the time to read her words, you'll understand the toll of gun violence on our society and the need for bold action in Congress.

NO CHILD'S LIFE SHOULD END WITH A BANG
KARIN WILSON, MILLION MOM MARCH, BROOKLYN
ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS JULY 2005

I lost my beloved son, my only child Christian on December 3, 1999. Just 28 days after he turned 19, he was a man-child, not quite an adult but past adolescence. The millennium came in a way I could have never imagined. The pain is indescribable; the magnitude of my loss makes me inconsolable. I've been wronged and robbed! I'm from the United States, I live in the state of New York, born and raised in the Borough of Brooklyn, which is just across the river from here. The U.S. is one of the most powerful and technologically advanced countries on this planet. We haven't fought a war in this country since the American Civil War, a war that was fought from 1861-1865.

Yet in my neighborhood and in many others in this country we hear gun shots at

night. Parents start doing silent headcounts of their children after hearing the sounds of gun shots. We have neighbors, friends and family members who were killed or maimed with a firearm. Because of my son's death I became part of the largest grassroots anti-gun violence movement in the United States.

Let me tell you how my life has changed. I won't have the comfort of my son looking after me in my old age. I won't have my son around making sure I'm eating well, taking my medications properly, taking care of my bills, making sure that my house is warm in winter, and sidewalks shovelled and de-iced when it snows. I don't have any more graduations to attend, or opportunities to applaud successful career achievements. I no longer hear funny stories or jokes (and I was told my son was one of the funniest guys around, he kept people laughing and feeling good.) But worst of all I can't look or touch him anymore.

When you people leave here, and fly back home to your country, you probably have wives and husbands, children and grandchildren. You know it's through our children we get a little bit of immortality. You know your face, your body type, your values are going to be around long after you're gone . . . because of your children. Children are our legacy.

Well I was robbed. And it looks like I won't have a legacy now. My face, my body type, my values will probably disappear when I die. It doesn't look like any part of me will appear in the future. In the next century it will be as if I never, ever existed. And, that's pretty sad.

I've learned that there is nothing definite, overt action to overcome the inertia of grief. Most of us have someone who needs us. If we haven't, we can find someone! So instead of praying for the strength to survive, I prayed for the strength to give away.

I joined the MILLION MOM MARCH. I went from being a victim of gun violence to a survivor of gun violence. And, now I'm an advocate for survivors. I'm thoroughly committed to saving other children. Though I couldn't save my own child's life, I'm going to do all I can to save yours.

I know it is possible to reduce the number of deaths and injuries caused by gun violence. Our children have the right to grow up in environments free from the threat of gun violence. My son certainly had that right which he didn't get.

Our children want to grow old. All humans have the right to be safe from gun violence in their homes, neighborhoods, schools and places of work and worship.

Gun violence is a public health crisis of global proportions that harms not only the physical, but the spiritual, social and economic health of our families and communities.

The Million Mom March has a slogan, which I subscribe to 100 percent: "No child's life should end with a bang".

I am trying to understand why my child had to die by gunshot, but I don't understand. I know that you people listening to me have very powerful positions in your governments, and you'll probably never cross paths with women like me again. So I implore to listen compassionately to what we have said today.

If I had one wish, it would be that all governments would monitor the manufacture and distribution of firearms and bullets with the same degree of care that they use to monitor the removal of nuclear waste from reactors.

We have an opportunity to change laws and create real accountability on these items. We have to stand up now and be counted on to do the right thing!

RECOGNIZING THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to all of the victims of the Khojaly Massacre which occurred on February 26, 1992 in the small Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. The Khojaly Massacre claimed six hundred and thirteen innocent civilians and remains one of the most devastating acts of violence in South Caucasus history. To date the fate of one hundred and fifty Khojaly civilians remain unknown.

Due to the rising tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan there are countless casualties and innocent lives taken daily. More so than ever the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict calls for fair, political, and comprehensive settlement in order to encourage multi-national stability and economic prosperity. As co-chair of the Minsk Group, the United States remains devoted to working with both sides to achieve these goals. As we honor the victims of the Khojaly Massacre we must stay committed to working together to protect the human rights of all.

STOP TARGETING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I voted on Wednesday, March 25, in favor of H. Con. Res. 27, authored by Budget Committee Chairman TOM PRICE, because it is my belief that Congress has a responsibility to address our nation's fiscal crisis.

This proposal is simply a visionary document and a way forward in the budgetary process so we can continue the debate about the financial challenges our country faces and return to funding the government through regular order.

Like last year's proposal, the budget plan for FY 2016 calls for significant reductions in discretionary spending, reduced taxes and the full repeal of the President's costly health care reform law. It proposes a balanced budget in less than 10 years and recognizes that we can no longer ignore the trillions of dollars in mandatory spending on entitlement programs that almost completely consume our nation's budget.

This year's plan also asks Members of Congress to again lead by example by cutting their own pay, benefits and office budgets in the quest to reduce our debt and put this nation on sound financial footing.

Further, the proposal protects our nation's defense and security forces. I have repeatedly said that we must get serious about the national security threats that exist in this world and what is required of our forward presence and response forces.

This budget gives the United States the flexibility and capabilities that are essential to the rebalance of our security posture toward the Asia Pacific, our enduring security commitments in the Middle East, and the need to respond to contingency operations around the globe.

Our nation has no greater asset than the folks who have served and are currently serving our nation, both military and civilian alike. Their dedication and service to our nation is unwavering and it is important that Congress provide the best equipment, training, and compensation so these men and women can meet their duties in full. The House budget plan restores national security spending and helps our defense maintain its current strength.

These are all measures that I have and will continue to support; however, it is disappointing that this proposal, just as in past budget proposals, unfairly targets only one group of Americans for additional sacrifices: the civilian federal workforce.

I have serious concerns that this resolution again forces federal employees to contribute more towards their retirement, approximately six percent, which is the equivalent of a pay cut, and eliminates their defined benefit retirement plan for deficit reduction purposes. It also goes farther than previous budget plans by proposing to decrease the rate of return on the Thrift Savings Plan's Government Securities Fund (G Fund).

America's First District is full of hardworking and dedicated citizens who serve the people of this nation every day, such as on the front lines of the War on Terror or in support roles for our military. Still others provide invaluable services at places such as VA hospitals, cancer and Alzheimer's research laboratories, and law enforcement agencies such as the FBI and DEA. And yet, federal civilian employees continue to see their pay cut and their benefits reduced on nearly every occasion.

Federal employees have already endured a three-year pay freeze; furloughs due to sequestration; and were required to not work because of indecision and political gamesmanship that resulted in a government shutdown on October 1, 2013 lasting 16 days. In addition, employees hired since 2012 have seen required contribution increases to their retirement, bringing our federal workers' total sacrifice to date to \$159 billion over ten years.

It is because of these sacrifices that I supported legislation to allow furloughed workers to receive back pay for time out of work during the 2013 shutdown. In addition, I introduced the Federal Employee Combat Zone Tax Parity Act, which would extend the tax credit available to military personnel who serve in combat zones to the civilian federal employees that work alongside them.

Congress charges federal employees with important duties and expects these duties to be performed with the highest caliber of expertise, but rather than being recognized for their service, these public servants see their salary and benefits continually used as a pawn in the game of politics. We continue to ask our federal civilian workforce to do more with less.

According to data collected by the Office of Personnel Management's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, there has been a decline in federal employee job and workplace satisfaction for the fourth consecutive year. A score sheet compiled by the Partnership for Public Service shows that government-wide, federal employee job satisfaction and commitment fell 0.9 points in 2014 to a score of 56.9 out of 100. Morale among our nation's civilian federal workforce is at a historical low and these continued attacks keep the highly-skilled and experienced people we need from seeking a federal job.

Enough is enough.

I am fully ready and willing to enact deeper cuts to my own salary, benefits and congressional operations, which are provisions included in this year's budget, but we must stop singling out federal employees simply because Congress continually fails to address the out-of-control spending.

There is no question that our nation must get its spending in order, and federal employees have been and are certainly willing to continue to do their part to help in this effort.

Their daily contributions to their fellow citizens and to the cause of freedom are simply innumerable, and yet during deficit reduction debate over the last several years, federal employees have been asked to contribute much more than their fair share. Our federal civilian employees live a life of selfless service and they deserve our appreciation.

Mr. Speaker, I voted in support of H. Con. Res. 27 because it is Congress' constitutional duty to budget and appropriate. Congress must get back to regular order. Congress does our federal employees no favors when governing by continuing resolution and through crisis management. We must bring more certainty to the annual federal appropriations process.

This budget proposal is a means for Congress to further discuss our country's fiscal challenges, but I will continue to push for deficit reduction efforts in the future that focus more realistically on addressing the true drivers of our debt, rather than targeting those who serve their nation every day.

HONORING MS. JOSIE BACALLAO

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Josie Bacallao, an outstanding individual in the South Florida community.

Ms. Bacallao is currently President and CEO of Hispanic Unity of Florida (HUF). Founded more than 30 years ago by community leaders, HUF was formed to ease the acclimation transition for immigrants from other nations. Today, this nonprofit organization provides assistance, through 19 programs, to Broward's diverse community. HUF remains the county's largest agency dedicated to the immigrant population, providing them with the tools they need to build a new life. Having been born in Cuba, raised in South Florida, and educated at Florida International University, no one is better suited to lead this organization.

Prior to her work at HUF, Ms. Bacallao was Vice President/Marketing Director for the Sun-Sentinel Company and worked for The Miami Herald/el Nuevo Herald as their VP/Marketing for more than 20 years. Beyond her professional background and work, she also sits on the board of CareerSource Broward, Greater Ft Lauderdale Alliance, and the Advisory Board of Florida Blue. She is a member of the Ft Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and the Broward Chamber of Nonprofit Organizations.

Throughout her career Ms. Bacallao has been recognized for her achievements. She

was honored with the Silver Medallion from National Conference for Community and Justice; was named to the Broward County Women's Hall of Fame; and received United Way of Broward County's Human Services Professional Award. Legal Aid and Service of Broward County bestowed the Russell E. Carlisle Advocacy Award on Ms. Bacallao for her work in creating pro bono immigration clinics. She also received one of the most meaningful awards of her career, The Jim Moran Foundation Award, for her work leading a nonprofit organization.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Josie Bacallao for her continued service to South Florida, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025:

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chair, I would like to submit a letter that was signed by over 4,800 faith leaders supporting the Congressional Progressive Caucus' alternative budget.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As clergy and faith leaders of many faiths, we urge you to support The People's Budget, introduced by the co-chairs of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Congressmen Keith Ellison and Raúl Grijalva. The Federal budget should reflect our values and shared priorities, and we believe that this proposal achieves that goal.

The teachings of our respective faiths are steeped in the understanding that we have a communal responsibility to care for the most vulnerable in society. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ensuring that all workers receive a fair wage are not simply policy positions: they are sacred obligations.

The People's Budget would create desperately-needed, good paying jobs, repeal sequester and all Budget Control Act spending caps and end Corporate Inversions that allow U.S. companies to avoid paying taxes. The Budget's proposals invest in veterans, women, communities of color and their families and K-12 education. It expands the Earned Income Tax Credit and unemployment insurance and enhances the social safety net. It reauthorizes the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and implements comprehensive immigration reform, including a pathway to citizenship. In short, The People's Budget, if passed, would set our nation back on the path toward a fair and healthy economy.

These priorities were among those laid out by the Washington, DC Interfaith community in releasing our own Faithful Budget, which lays out how government spending could align with these moral priorities: <http://bit.ly/faithful-budget>. The "People's Budget" echoes many of the key proposals outlined in the Faithful Budget, so we're proud to support it. You can read more about