

States with over 9,000 employees and revenues upward of \$195 million. Mr. Speaker, that is no small feat.

Ted steered the company through its brand transition, which was a difficult undertaking in today's restaurant industry. He worked hard to ensure the upward mobility of his employees so that every employee had a chance to achieve a better life. For example, Mr. Speaker, he initiated a company program that helped entry-level employees become managers within a year; and within 5 years, they could run their own franchise.

Mr. Fowler is more than just a respected leader in the restaurant industry. He truly cared about the people who worked and dined at Golden Corral. For instance, since 2001, Golden Corral has served more than 4 million free meals to active and retired military personnel on Veterans Day. He also oversaw Camp Corral, a free, one-of-a-kind summer camp for children of wounded and disabled or fallen military servicemembers. Since its founding, Camp Corral has grown to 20 camps in 16 States and has served over 4,000 children. It is because of big-hearted causes like these that I am proud to call Ted Fowler a friend.

Encouragement and leadership exemplified through many of his company programs are some of the reasons why Mr. Fowler is a past recipient of the North Carolina Restaurateur of the Year Award, the Foodservice Operator of the Year, and the Gold Plate Award.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize and congratulate a proven job creator and an even better man. Ted Fowler embodies all the qualities of a noble, compassionate businessman. I wish him good health and happiness in his retirement.

PRESERVING SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an impending crisis that is going to be coming upon us in 2016. Mr. Speaker, not too many people know or realize that our Social Security disability trust fund is going to be insolvent, bankrupt, underfunded—whatever term you want to use—by the middle of 2016. Mr. Speaker, what that means is that our fellow Americans—approximately 11 million of them—who receive Social Security disability checks are going to be looking at a 20 percent reduction in their benefit come the middle of 2016 if we do not step up to the plate and reform this critical program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Ways and Means Committee here in Washington, D.C., and 2 years ago, I questioned our Treasury Secretary from the White House. I said: Mr. Lew, where is the White House's proposal to deal with this issue? Nothing in the budget from the White House, nothing in the Treasury Secretary's testimony

addressed this canary in the coal mine that is coming down upon us in 2016.

This year I asked the same question, and essentially what I got was the proposal that they are going to take from Social Security retirees the contributions they make to Social Security retirement and transfer them into the disability trust fund.

Mr. Speaker, in my private practice, my private life as a businessman before I came to Washington, D.C., that was essentially robbing Peter to pay Paul. That is not acceptable.

We need to protect Social Security retirees. We also, Mr. Speaker, need to protect our fellow Americans who suffer from disabilities. We need to do better than robbing Peter to pay Paul. That is why I am looking for input from colleagues on the other side of the aisle, for people across the Nation to say, How can we reform the Social Security disability trust fund so that it meets its obligations and it stands with the disabled community in a way that says, You know what? If you want to return to work, you can.

Because right now, Mr. Speaker, in my humble opinion, the Social Security disability trust fund penalizes those who suffer from disabilities if they return to work because then they lose their benefit. That doesn't make sense.

I support the work ethic of America, and that is why I support reforms that are going to take care of the disability trust fund, that make sure that our fellow Americans receive the benefits that they need and rely upon. But we are also going to stand with our disability community and make sure if they want to return to work and have a capacity to return to work, we in Washington, D.C., will stand with them and reward that work ethic.

Bottom line: I am going to protect our Social Security retirees because to put them in further harm's way, as we know the impending Social Security crisis that is going to come to a head in 2033, just around the corner, will do—to take from that retirement fund is further weakening our Social Security system. We can do better. We must do better.

I care about those retirees. I care about those disabled fellow Americans. That is why I say today that we are not going to maintain the status quo of robbing Peter to pay Paul, but we are actually going to get to the business of reform. We are going to protect retirees and take care of our fellow Americans who are disabled.

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 10 o'clock and 11 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. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Jon Randles, Victory Life Church, Lubbock, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Holy and most high God, we come before You, grateful for Your gift of life. All good things come from You. We acknowledge that powerful truth.

I pray for these leaders who serve in this Congress today the wisdom to make choices that are righteous, just, and good for all Americans and beyond. I pray those leaders the humility to remember that if they seek Your ways, You will guide their journey to those choices that are always best. I pray that all of us, as Americans, strive to know who we are, to know Whom and what we serve, and to know where we are going.

Bless them as they lead us, and may we all seek with our lives to leave a shadow that makes a difference for freedom, truth, goodness, and always with encouragement.

Acknowledging You, we pray.
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 Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND JON RANDELS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome to the House of Representatives today's guest chaplain and my fellow Lubbock, Texas, native, Jon Randles. Jon is joined here today by his wife, Kelly; his two sons, Zack and Sam; and their wives, Autumn and Jennifer; his daughter, Hayley; and her husband, Chance; as well as their grandchildren. Also here are 70 members of his congregation.

Jon has been engaged in two career paths: he has served as both a pastor and a nationwide motivational speaker. He began pastoring the first of his four churches as a college sophomore at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. He has a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and did doctorate studies in ancient Roman history at Texas Tech University.

He served as Director of Evangelism at the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In 2010, as a contractor for the U.S. Air Force, he crafted a program for senior officers to mentor members of the junior force.

In 2013, after 20 years as an evangelist and a motivational speaker, he returned to pastoring and is currently the senior pastor at Victory Life Baptist Church in Lubbock, Texas.

In all of his endeavors, Jon has encouraged excellence and character. But most of all, Jon has impacted countless lives by his witness and testimony of Jesus Christ.

Jon has the heart of a lion and a tremendous amount of faith. As he battles pancreatic cancer, he is an amazing example to all of us how to run the race God has set out for each of us.

May God bless Jon Randles, and may He continue to bless the United States of America.

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.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Agriculture Week.

If you look around this great building, you will find countless references to our early economy, which depended largely on our Nation's abundant farmland. This vital industry impacts every person in this country, from the food we place before our family to the businesses that keep our citizens gainfully employed.

My home State of Minnesota is the fourth largest agricultural exporter in the country, and Stearns County, which is in my district, is the largest dairy producing county in Minnesota. We are the Land of 10,000 Lakes and 80,000 farms.

As a member of the Agriculture Committee, I am proud to work on behalf of both farmers and consumers to ensure this vibrant industry continues to thrive. Please join me this week in thanking a farmer.

THE GOP'S "WORK HARDER FOR LESS" BUDGET

(Mr. ISRAEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, the Republican budget that has been released today should be called "Work Harder for Less." It squeezes hardworking Americans, making it harder for them to buy a home, harder to send their kids to college, and harder to enjoy a secure retirement.

How does it do these things, Mr. Speaker?

If you want to buy a home, it makes it harder because it continues to stagnate paychecks. If you want to send your kids to college, it makes it harder by slashing tuition assistance and student loans. If you want to save some money for a secure and enjoyable retirement, it privatizes Medicare—again—after all these years of attempts.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican budget takes the tools of opportunity away from hardworking Americans all in order to provide bigger and deeper tax cuts for the superwealthy. It is the same old-same old spiced up with another repeal of the Affordable Care Act, and the American people will understand what the Republican priorities are versus ours.

AMBASSADOR GERARD ARAUD VISITS SOUTH CAROLINA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as cochairman of the French Caucus, I had the opportunity to escort French Ambassador Gerard Araud across South Carolina, where he met enthusiastic citizens of French heritage along with business leaders who appreciate our valued alliance.

South Carolina's association with France was highlighted by the arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette at Georgetown to support the American Revolution. His portrait is one of only two here in the House Chamber.

Today, French investments are extraordinary with the joint Michelin plants in Lexington, providing over 2,000 jobs at a nearly 2-million-square-foot facility. At the Savannah River site in Aiken, the Ambassador toured the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication facility using AREVA advanced technology to convert weapons-grade plutonium into green fuel. These investments produce jobs for Americans and profits for France.

In between tours, the Ambassador was honored to speak to the Columbia Rotary Club, South Carolina's largest civic organization, led by President John Johnston, with introduction by French Huguenot, Rusty DePass.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

THE GOP'S "WORK HARDER FOR LESS" BUDGET

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, well, today the Republicans are unveiling yet another Republican budget that would ensure hardworking Americans have to continue to work harder and get less.

Our country deserves a budget that puts these hardworking families first, not this damaging budget that guts middle class priorities making it harder to buy a home, harder to send your kids to college, and harder to have a secure retirement. It is all at the expense of handouts to special interests.

This "work harder, get less" budget continues to squeeze the middle class by keeping wages stagnant, cutting student loans, and privatizing Medicare. House Democrats stand ready to pass a budget that invests in our families so that they can take home bigger paychecks, send their kids to school, and save for retirement.

The Republican budget takes the tools that build the American Dream away from hardworking Americans to give bigger tax cuts and bigger tax breaks to the superwealthy.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my Republican colleagues will work with us in a bipartisan fashion to fashion a budget that works for all Americans.

CELEBRATING THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the 191st occasion of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Savannah, Georgia. Among the largest Irish celebrations in the Nation, the St. Patrick's Day Parade is held in the downtown historic district and is always a meaningful occasion for the citizens of Chatham County and the State of Georgia.

In 1824, the Hibernian Society of Savannah, which was formed to aid the early Irish immigrants, began what would become the second largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the Nation. Peak years have estimated up to 400,000 visitors to the area for St. Patrick's Day festivities. Georgia is proud to welcome visitors from all across the Nation, and it continues to be successful due to the hard work and dedication of those working in Savannah, Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize and honor the members of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, including Chairman Kevin Halligan and the Grand Marshal, Mr. Hugh Coleman, for their tireless efforts and outstanding commitment in organizing this year's parade. Thank you all for all you do in our community and the State of Georgia. I wish you much success in today's event.