

I just want to take a moment of the House's time to remember the people who died that day, the people who were injured that day, and to think for a moment as to what a wonderful country we have the good fortune to live in.

God bless the United States of America.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask everyone to rise to share a moment of silence with me.

TAX DAY AND IRS ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, Americans strongly dislike tax day, and Uncle Sam is set to take in record levels of Americans' tax dollars again this year. These are dollars that the hard-working taxpayers take out of their wallets, and they are too often used to grow Washington's bureaucracy at the expense of growth elsewhere in the country.

Western Pennsylvanians are rightfully frustrated with the Federal Government's overreach into their daily lives. Back in Pennsylvania's 12th District, I regularly talk with folks who are appalled by the IRS' hypocrisy, corruption, and abuse of power.

From IRS' attempts to shut down people who disagree with the administration's political agenda to Federal employees owing thousands in back taxes, the IRS needs to be held accountable to the people. Washington bureaucrats are not above the law. Americans spend countless hours and precious financial resources in filing their tax returns by April 15. They are following the law. It is only fair for the American people to expect that the IRS does the same.

I was proud to support several bills today that are designed to protect taxpayers, to restore the public's faith in our system of laws, and to prevent the IRS from abusing its power.

□ 1730

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, I stand here today 1 year since Boko Haram kidnapped 270 young girls attending school in Chibok, Nigeria. This kidnapping received international attention for a short time; then, like the girls, the spotlight disappeared, and yet our children remain hidden and subjected to unimaginable crimes.

Innocent girls who cry out to be liberated cannot be forgotten. They are as Maya Angelou's caged birds who sing with a fearful trill of things unknown but longed for still, and their tune is

heard on the distant hill, for the caged birds sing of freedom.

Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues today in saying, "Bring Back Our Girls."

UNITED STATES SET TO BE A NET EXPORTER OF NATURAL GAS IN 2017

(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. Madam Speaker, earlier this week the Energy Information Administration released its annual forecast of U.S. energy trends and predicted that the United States will become a net exporter of natural gas by 2017.

As cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Natural Gas Caucus, I understand the magnitude of this geopolitical transition and the implications for ensuring American energy security through continued natural gas development and investment. By becoming a net exporter of natural gas by 2017, the United States will be able to build and strengthen its economy, help to improve the environment, and remain globally competitive.

As one of the Nation's top producers of natural gas, Pennsylvania continues to help drive record-breaking oil and natural gas production domestically. The Energy Information Administration's recent projections place the United States closer than ever to obtaining energy independence, while signaling longer term market stability that will make energy prices more affordable for businesses and families throughout Pennsylvania and all across the country.

FISHER HOUSE ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fisher House Foundation on their 25th anniversary and to thank them for their services to our military and veteran families.

The Fisher House Foundation is the result of the vision and efforts by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher. They wanted to provide a home away from home for the families of servicemen and -women while their loved ones received treatment, and their vision has come to fruition.

Since the first Fisher House opened in 1990, over 250,000 families have saved \$282 million in lodging and transportation costs. The 64 locations throughout the United States and Germany have provided families 5.8 million days of lodging.

Just a few weeks ago, I was fortunate and proud to participate in the groundbreaking of Nevada's first Fisher House, located across the street from our new VA hospital. What a wonderful day it was.

Congratulations, Fisher House Foundation, and thank you and your volunteers for all you do to make a difficult time just a little easier for our Nation's heroes.

HONORING DR. DONNA E. SHALALA

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize one of the most profound educational leaders of her generation, Dr. Donna Shalala.

As the head of my alma mater, the University of Miami, Donna made it her goal to see UM become the next great American research university. Never one to leave a promise unfulfilled, under her unparalleled guidance, the university has consistently ranked in the top 50 research institutions.

Through leadership, service, and selflessness, Donna has positively impacted our south Florida area as a school administrator and a community leader. It is with great pride, admiration, and affection that I join our community and University of Miami students, professors, and grads in thanking Dr. Shalala for her hard work and dedication.

Donna, you are an outstanding member of our south Florida community, and we will certainly miss you. I wish you good fortune and all the best in this new, exciting, next chapter of your life.

Oh, yes. Go Canes.

Thank you, Donna.

SUPPORTING THE DAY OF SILENCE

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, every year three-quarters of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender kids in this country are verbally harassed at school. Nearly a fifth will be physically assaulted. It is time for the bullying and abuse to stop.

Every year GLSEN organizes the National Day of Silence. This Friday, kids across the country will take a daylong vow of silence to draw attention to the abuse their LGBT friends and classmates have to deal with every day.

Counseling and outreach have done a lot to help these kids, but change is not coming fast enough, so I am once again introducing a resolution supporting the Day of Silence. LGBT kids deserve to be able to go to school and feel safe. I invite my colleagues to join me and cosponsor the resolution.

On another matter, yesterday is the 1-year anniversary that the Nigerian schoolgirls were kidnapped by the terror group Boko Haram. I am wearing these ribbons today to say "Bring Back Our Girls," and I thank our colleague

FREDERICA WILSON of Florida for being a champion on this issue.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DUKE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate Duke University and its Division I men's basketball team on winning the 2015 national championship. Duke's win against the University of Wisconsin at Madison marks their fifth national championship victory.

At the team's helm is the winningest coach in Division I men's basketball history, legendary coach Mike Krzyzewski. We refer to him as Coach K. This year's team, led by senior Quinn Cook, continued the tradition of excellence in my district in Durham, North Carolina, by earning the 88th schoolwide NCAA tournament victory. Even more impressive, Madam Speaker, is the fact that the Duke University Blue Devils had five All-ACC Academic players, which is the most in the school's history.

Today I introduced a resolution, along with my colleagues, to recognize the team for its extraordinary achievement. I urge quick consideration of my resolution and encourage my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Duke University Blue Devils on their historic tournament win.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOKO HARAM KIDNAPPING OF NIGERIAN SCHOOLGIRLS

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Madam Speaker, a year and a day ago today, 276 innocent Nigerian schoolgirls were tragically taken away from their boarding school and their family.

One year later, more than 200 of these girls are still missing, and Boko Haram continues to prey on the Nigerian people. The kidnapping of these schoolgirls is just one example of the appalling acts of terror committed by this group, who, according to the Human Rights Watch, have killed more than 2,000 people and forced 800,000 children to be displaced from their homes.

We simply must do more to combat their efforts.

I commend President Obama for publicly expressing his willingness to assist Nigeria in its efforts to dismantle this group.

Additionally, I encourage the incoming President of Nigeria, President Buhari, to remain committed to his pledge to implement an aggressive effort to combat Boko Haram and to protect his citizens.

I hope, with the anniversary of these attacks upon us, we are all regala-

nized to do what we can to bring back our girls and protect our other innocent citizens from any future attacks.

I thank Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON for her leadership on this issue.

BOKO HARAM IS A CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION

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

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, it is very heartbreaking to think that it has been a whole year since our girls, 276 girls, were kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria. I think the importance of memorializing this is to talk about the nature of terror and its cruelty, to take these children, these babies, away in the name of religion.

It is extremely important for us to galvanize all around the world and to focus on the main thing. The main thing is these are criminal organizations. These are not religiously motivated people. These are people who will maim, cripple, and kill anyone for their political objectives.

I want to thank FREDERICA WILSON for her leadership in bringing us all together today, and Mrs. MALONEY from New York, and I pray that our resolve will be reignited today.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Paycheck Fairness Act. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2013, women who worked full time earned, on average, only 78 cents for every dollar a man earned. The figures are even worse for women of color. African American women earned only approximately 64 cents and Latinas only 56 cents for each dollar earned by a White male. This is absolutely and unequivocally unacceptable in the United States of America. The average woman would have lost \$420,000 throughout her working lifetime as a result of this pay gap.

In my district, women make up 51 percent of the population, yet there is still a 76.4 percent wage gap in their annual median earnings. That is why I am a sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would work to close the gender wage gap by requiring employers to demonstrate that wage differentials are based on factors other than sex, and strengthening penalties for equal pay violations.

Families increasingly rely on women's wages to make ends meet. Equal pay is not simply a women's issue; it is a family issue.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Madam Speaker, small businesses are vital to the strength and dynamism of the American economy, generating 63 percent of new private sector jobs over the past two decades. But it's not just about the entrepreneurs. It is also about helping workers that depend on small businesses for their paycheck, whether it be young people paying down their college loans, immigrants hoping to provide a better life for their loved ones, or moms and dads looking for a little more income while the kids are at school. Small businesses not only strengthen Main Street, they play a vital role in keeping our neighbors prosperous.

One of the many challenges that small businesses face is a cumbersome and overbearing Tax Code. Most small businesses file their taxes as S corporations or sole proprietorships, both of which are taxed at individual rates.

Congress needs to get serious about reforming and simplifying the Tax Code. Creating a broader, flatter tax base will allow for lower rates for both individuals and businesses. I look forward to working with my colleagues to find ways to reform our Tax Code so small businesses and their workers can thrive.

HONORING ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I was tempted to rise when my friend Mr. MCCARTHY from California was speaking of the great, late President Abraham Lincoln and his legacy—really, a dichotomy of a man, a very complicated individual. We know of his great achievements, of ending slavery, of maintaining our Union—great achievements—and very difficult achievements for him as well, passing the 13th Amendment.

We think of how dysfunctional, maybe, Congress is today and the lack of cooperation. Under the conditions that then-President Lincoln was operating, it is a marvel that he was able to pass such incredible legislation with such ramifications, and positively.

But I think one of the great things about Lincoln that oft times goes unnoticed is one of the legacies that was unintended by himself directly: he dies. He is shot on the 14th of April 1865. He dies on the 15th of April 1865.

One of the greatest things about Abraham Lincoln is, on the 16th of April, the Sun rose again on the Republic of the United States, a better nation for his having lived, but continued despite his absence. How wonderful a legacy is that, that this Republic, greater than any man or woman, lives on, a better place for him having lived.

May God rest the soul of Abraham Lincoln.