

putting innocent people at risk by flying a gyrocopter onto the Capitol lawn, Mr. Hughes does have a point about the pervasive influence of money in politics. I have seen it get worse and worse during my 20 years in Congress.

The Citizens United decision by the United States Supreme Court in 2010 created super-PACs and multi-millionaires who buy candidates. As of April 8, 2015, there were 1,360 super-PACs in existence that controlled nearly \$700 million in the 2014 election cycle, according to OpenSecrets.org. The American people have lost confidence in the House and in the Senate partially because super-PACs influence candidates and politicians.

Too many times I have seen bills come to the floor of the House that seem influenced by money. Just last week, the House voted on H.R. 650, the Preserving Access to Manufactured Housing Act of 2015, which does nothing but line the pockets of Warren Buffett by enabling his near-monopoly of the mobile home industry to strap poor people with higher interest rates while his companies are being protected from government regulations against predatory lending.

It is my disgust at this influence of money in politics that has led me to be a cosponsor of H.R. 20, the Government by the People Act, introduced by my colleague Congressman JOHN SARBANES. H.R. 20 would curb the influence of super-PACs so that small donors can have a voice again.

We in Congress owe the American people a vote on this bill so we can inspire confidence in our democratic process. House leadership should bring this bill to the floor, but I know it won't happen. There isn't the stomach for reform bills in this Congress, even for bipartisan reform bills. Maybe it does take a statement like Mr. Hughes' to bring this issue into the national debate and to make Congress address our out-of-control fund-raising.

I ask my colleagues in both parties in the House of Representatives to look seriously at the John Sarbanes bill, because the Government by the People Act will help to restore the confidence of the American people. We cannot stop what is already public law, and we cannot change Citizens United unless we go back through the legal process, but we can have an alternative. That is what the John Sarbanes bill does, so I hope Republicans and Democrats will look seriously at becoming cosponsors.

I ask God to bless America.

EMPOWERING AND EDUCATING WOMEN AS TO THEIR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I was just thinking that one of the reasons I like spring so much and so well is that we get an oppor-

tunity to interact a bit more with young people, with our children, and I have seen many around here this morning all over the place, and I simply want to welcome them.

Also, yesterday, I got an opportunity to visit two schools. The first was the Proviso Area School for Exceptional Children in Maywood, Illinois, where we just had a wonderful time. Then, in the afternoon, I did a book fair at the Lovett Elementary School with its principal, Dr. Haney. The young people at Lovett were saying they just love being at Lovett, so it was a refreshing day.

Like many of my colleagues, I also use a lot of interns and fellows who come and learn and work and who are engaged and involved. The statement that I am going to read today was developed by one of my interns, Jakie Martinez. Jakie has been working on health issues, and she came up with this statement. So I come here today to speak of a health concern that many women are likely to develop in their lifetimes.

Known as one of the most common gynecological disorders, uterine fibroids affect nearly 70 percent of Caucasian women and more than 80 percent of African American women by the age of 50. For many of these women the associated symptoms of this diagnosis will significantly impact their quality of life, work, personal relationships, and daily activities. The prevalence of uterine fibroids is one that increases with age. Although we see a commonality in the disorder and its symptoms, the greater public has not yet received the proper continued education into the causes and treatment options available for women who suffer from these fibroids.

In response, we see that hysterectomies are the most commonly performed major gynecologic surgery in the United States, with over 400,000 hysterectomies performed annually; yet there are also several minimally invasive surgical options for the treatment of uterine fibroids that feature less blood loss, shorter hospital stays, smaller incisions for minimal scarring, and less need for pain medication than with traditional open surgery. It is important to remember that the best surgical option for each woman, whether it is open or minimally invasive, is reserved for a case-by-case evaluation.

In recognizing the health and educational needs of women in the United States, it is important that the greater public be educated in greater detail on the alternatives to more or less invasive surgical treatments so that women can have access to a full spectrum of treatment options. After all, it is my hope that women will become more educated and empowered in regards to their reproductive health and in the understanding of safe options available for the treatment of symptomatic fibroids.

I thank Jakie Martinez for writing this statement. It is very important.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, GALLATIN, TENNESSEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, it isn't often that Members can take to the House floor to share good news, but, this morning, I have an opportunity to do just that.

Today, I rise to honor the 150th anniversary of the First Baptist Church on East Winchester Street in my hometown of Gallatin.

Founded in 1865 by a former slave named Robert Belote, the First Baptist Church is a congregation steeped in history and poised to continue changing hearts and changing lives for many years to come. Its mission is to be a "church of welcome," and over the years, they have certainly lived up to that goal.

In the beginning, their congregation was known as Union Church because they welcomed ex-slaves from all denominations—Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian. No matter your background or your upbringing, there was a place for all of God's children within their pews.

□ 1215

The church has been destroyed multiple times over the years, first by heavy winds and then by fire, but they always rebuilt and reemerged stronger than before.

They weathered the Reconstruction era following the Civil War, the economic uncertainty of the Great Depression, and the rise and the fall of the Jim Crow South. They are truly a statement to Christ's promise in the Gospel of Matthew when He proclaimed, "Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Today the church's attendance climbed to approximately 1,000 people. I have had the opportunity to join my friends and neighbors at First Baptist Church for worship on many occasions. I have sat under the powerful teaching of their pastor and my dear friend, Reverend Derrick Jackson, and I can tell you that, 150 years later, God is still doing mighty work in the life of this special community of believers.

I am thankful for how First Baptist Church has personally ministered to me and so many others in our community, and I wish them many years of continued growth and prosperity.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. President, please help us stop this madness. The same way President Reagan demanded Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall, you have an opportunity to stop serial malpractice on the part of Congress refusing to meet its obligation to

fully fund our transportation responsibility.

Twenty-three short-term extensions of the transportation program in recent years is as embarrassing as it is destructive. No country became great building its infrastructure 9 months at a time.

You can bring this charade to a halt. With all the major agenda items on the table this spring for Congress, there is no way that we are going to be able to do anything but extend the May 31st transportation deadline, when the funding authorization expires. That is the most recent time when Congress kicked the can down the road, what it approved last fall all the way to this spring. I said at the time, When spring comes, we will be right back in the same situation. And we are.

This does not mean that we need to write off the entire year and beyond. It certainly does not mean that we need to throw this issue into the middle of the next Presidential campaign, which unfortunately has already started. You should give us a reasonable deadline: July 1st, August 1st, or even September 1st. Under no circumstances should you let this bleed into the next Federal fiscal year, starting October 1st.

We lost an opportunity at the end of the last Congress to force responsible action in the lame duck session after the 2014 election. We were close, but it eluded us. Please don't let that happen again. Make clear you will not sign any transportation extension beyond the end of the Federal fiscal year.

Mr. President, you don't have to dictate a solution. You have already indicated what you want in a robust 6-year bill; you have given an outline of how you would have Congress fund this significant reauthorization. Your Secretary of Transportation, Anthony Foxx, has been traveling the country, advancing a vision for transportation for decades to come; and he is clear about the need for bold action to properly fund it.

You and your administration have also made it clear that you are willing to sign any reasonable bipartisan legislation that meets the standards that we need. It needs to be sustainable; it needs to be dedicated; it needs to be big enough to get the job done. Let Congress put up or shut up. Force it to act by not extending the deadline past October 1st.

Recently, the historic solution driven by Speaker BOEHNER and Leader PELOSI took a problem that long seemed intractable here on Capitol Hill since 1998 on Medicare payments and the funding under the so-called “doc fix,” but yet enacted a permanent solution on a bipartisan basis, overwhelmingly approved in this House and in the Senate. It required leadership and for some people to relax somewhat their partisan talking points—if not their core principles—but we all got the job done under your leadership.

Let's do the same on transportation funding. Let's lay down an absolute

deadline. Let's refuse to let it slide past October 1, 2015. Let's all work together, demanding Congress do its job. Several hundred Members of Congress signed a letter recently circulated by Congressman RIBBLE and Congressman LIPINSKI, my colleague from Illinois, saying that that is what should happen. Well, let's actually do it.

Together, Congress can be forced to act. We can rebuild and renew America, putting hundreds of thousands of people to work at family wage jobs, making our communities more livable, our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure. It is not going to get easier if we stall. It is not going to be a smaller problem if it is going to be done next year or the year beyond. Let's decide this summer we are going to get the job done. Mr. President, you can help us by demanding that it be done according to a strict timeline, no later than October 1st.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, over the last 4 years, House Republicans have worked hard to put this Nation on a better path forward. We have passed numerous pieces of legislation to encourage job growth and strengthen America's standing in the global economy. We have also passed bills that would decrease energy costs and increase transparency in how tax dollars are spent.

Despite the short time we have had, the obstacles we have faced, and the enormity of our task, House Republicans have managed a number of conservative victories. For example, legislation I authored was signed into law last summer to streamline the Federal workforce development system, including the elimination of 15 duplicative programs.

We have worked tirelessly to minimize the damage caused by ObamaCare. The first pieces of legislation to pass in the 114th Congress included the Hire More Heroes Act, which would make it easier to hire veterans by exempting those who already have health insurance from being subject to the employer mandate in the President's health care law, and the Save American Workers Act to change ObamaCare's 30-hour definition of full-time employment and restore the traditional 40-hour workweek, which has long been the standard for full-time work.

Additionally, the House Republican working group has laid out an alternative vision to ObamaCare. It includes allowing affected States to opt out of ObamaCare's costly rules and regulations and to opt into a patient-centered

system focused on choice and lower cost.

House Republicans have been vigilant against any attempt that would impugn the Second Amendment rights of all Americans to own and bear firearms. Our Republican committee chairmen are using their gavels to exercise the constitutionally prescribed system of checks and balances to hold oversight hearings exposing the Obama administration for its unconstitutional overreach.

Much of the economic turmoil that has gripped this Nation is the result of the Federal Government spending beyond its means. In North Carolina I often hear from constituents who are worried that our ballooning national debt threatens economic stability and jeopardizes the American Dream for their families.

House Republicans have responded to those concerns by passing laws cutting Federal spending 2 years in a row for the first time since the Korean war. We banned earmarks and achieved the most significant spending reductions in modern history. We have protected tax cuts for individuals and families.

Unfortunately, President Obama's budget ignores our crushing debt burden. Despite proposing \$2.1 trillion in new tax increases, the President's budget never balances because it spends too much.

In contrast to the President's budget proposal that ignores our crushing debt burden, House Republicans recently approved a budget that balances in less than 10 years without raising taxes while cutting \$5.5 trillion in unnecessary spending. This budget not only places our country on a path to pay off the overwhelming mound of debt we face but will also spur economic growth and increase opportunity.

Balanced Budget for a Stronger America also provides a framework for completely repealing ObamaCare and calls on Congress to pass comprehensive tax reform that lowers rates for individuals, families, and employers.

Following approval of the budget, the House continued its record of tackling tough issues by passing bipartisan legislation to help stabilize Medicare and secure seniors' access to their doctors. By transitioning to a new provider payment system focused on quality, value, and accountability, we have laid the groundwork for future Medicare reforms.

It has been said that no one hears the plane that landed safely. What that very apt adage suggests is that we are often unaware of the good work being done every day, and it isn't until something goes wrong that people take notice.

House Republicans are working hard to continue our good work and advance solutions that will build a healthy economy, empowering all Americans to seek new opportunities and achieve a better life.