

The health of our national forests is an issue of vital importance for rural America. Not only are national forests a source of immense natural beauty, but they provide us with natural resources, healthy watersheds, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat.

Perhaps more importantly, they serve as economic engines for the surrounding local communities. Our national forests are capable of providing and sustaining these economic benefits, but they need proper management in order to do so.

The U.S. Forest Service manages more than 193 million acres of land across 41 States. Within those 41 States are over 700 counties containing national forestland. These counties and communities within them rely on us to be good stewards of these Federal lands, and there is a direct correlation between forest health and vibrant rural communities.

The people living in these rural areas depend on well-managed national forests to foster jobs and economic opportunities. These jobs come from diverse sources, such as timbering, energy production, or recreation. However, if those jobs disappear, so do jobs that support those industries. It is a snowball effect from there, threatening school systems and infrastructure in these rural communities.

As a result, effective management and Forest Service decisions have significant consequences on our constituents who live in and around national forests. Healthier, well-managed national forests are more sustainable for generations to come due to the continual risks of catastrophic fires and invasive species outbreaks. Especially with the decline in timber harvesting and the revenue to counties from timber receipts over the past two decades, rural economies will benefit immensely from increased timber harvest.

We can continue supporting a diverse population of wildlife through active land management practices, such as prescribed burns. Our national forests are not museums. They were never intended to sit idly. I say it frequently, but national forests are not national parks.

When Congress created the National Forest System more than 100 years ago, it was designed so that surrounding communities would benefit from multiple uses. Our national forests are meant to provide timber, oil, natural gas, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and clean drinking water, not just for the rural communities, but these tend to be the headwaters of the waters that provide water for our cities as well.

During yesterday's hearing, members of the Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee called upon Forest Service Chief Thomas Tidwell to use the tools that Congress made available in the 2014 farm bill in order to strengthen rural economies and improve the health of our national forests. One certainly complements the other.

POLICY FAILURES OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to talk about the policy failures of this body.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at Baltimore, let me tell you why it is not a shock to me. It is because when you disinvest in education, when you provide no places for kids to play and no summer jobs, Baltimore happens. When you refuse to provide resources for job training for decent housing and you have a lack of resources to the communities of highest need, Baltimore happens.

The budget we are working on this week continues to prove that the majority of people in this House care little about the plight of the poor and underserved communities. There is a lack of concern for education.

I sit on the Education Committee as we are talking about reauthorizing ESEA, and the majority passed out of committee the ability to block grant all title I funding. So now children who are poor, disabled, or minority will be at the mercy of their State to determine what kind of education they get. Ohio has one way to do it; Indiana has another way to do it. It all depends on what your ZIP Code is anymore as to what your educational attainment may be. They, further, have reduced Federal funding for education every year of their plan.

I work in a body where the majority wants to block grant Medicaid. So State by State they will determine who qualifies, who is sick enough to qualify. I work in a body where there is no value placed on our greatest asset, which is our people. These are the people who want to reduce block grants and community funding and community policing.

Our communities are crying out every day for our attention. Did what happened in Baltimore get our attention? It should have, and it did. Was it right? No. Violence is never right. But we have to hear the cries of the people in need.

So today, I want to say to the Gray family and all of the people who are in the streets in Baltimore: I apologize. I apologize for a body that has failed you. I apologize for people who only give lip service to the poor. I apologize because we could do better to make your lives better.

Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility as the leaders of this Nation to take care of the people who need us the most.

Miss Gray, I apologize.

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 11 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Michael Siegel, Anshe Emet Synagogue, Chicago, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, instill within the Members of the House of Representatives the deep understanding of the potential that this day holds as they work together for the common good of all people in this great land.

Open their hearts to respond meaningfully to the voices of those who hunger for justice, hunger for equality, and hunger for opportunity.

Give them the strength and wisdom to ensure the security of this great Nation and her friends around the world.

On this day that George Washington was inaugurated as the first President of the United States in 1789, we ask You, God, to bless each and every Member of this august body with the same courage that he exhibited in his time, in order to fulfill the vision and purpose of this great land for us and all who will follow in the future.

Let us pray that together this body, together, will do their part to create a world worthy of God's presence and God's blessing.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, and I rise to support the goals and ideals we have been promoting these past 30 days.

More than 200,000 people in the United States are sexually assaulted each year. One in five women will be sexually assaulted during her college years.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. Our work is not done until the number of sexual assaults is zero. Sexual assault is an affront to our basic humanity. It threatens our individual liberty, family values, and basic human rights. Mr. Speaker, we owe it to our children to live up to those values.

We must reject the passive, quiet acceptance of sexual assault that has pervaded our society for far too long. We must refuse to accept that which is unquestionably unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, although April is coming to an end, we must remain committed to raising awareness, empowering survivors, and preventing more people from experiencing these heinous acts.

WELCOMING RABBI MICHAEL SIEGEL

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my friend Rabbi Michael Siegel of Chicago, Illinois, for his service today as guest chaplain of the House of Representatives.

As the rabbi of the congregation closest to Wrigley Field, for 30 years, Rabbi Siegel's prayers for the Cubs have gone unanswered; however, Michael, again, assures me this is the year.

More seriously, throughout his 40-year career, Rabbi Siegel has been a dedicated leader in the Jewish community, serving both locally and nationally.

Since 1873, Anshe Emet has been a center for Jewish study, cultural activity, and Israel advocacy. Under Rabbi Siegel's leadership, the synagogue has grown and truly fulfilled its commitment to the entire community of Israel—*klal yisrael*—and healing the word—*tikkun olam*. I am grateful for my punctuation and pronunciation keys. I am also grateful that my constituents can be part of a such an inspiring community—*kehila*.

Please join me in thanking Rabbi Siegel for leading us in prayer today as

guest chaplain of the House of Representatives.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to kick off May as National Mental Health Awareness Month.

I stand here to bring attention to the dire need to improve the awareness and dialogue surrounding mental health. Far too long, we as a Nation have neglected mental health. It is one of our most critical health problems today.

Mental illness occurs more frequently, affects more people, requires more prolonged treatment, and causes more suffering to individuals and families than most people could ever realize.

I have personally witnessed and experienced the physical and emotional burden mental illness has on the individual and the family. A close family member of mine took their life at a very young age.

Despite having major hospitals and universities in the Syracuse area, there simply are not enough mental health resources to help, especially in the pediatric realm. People in the central New York area often have to travel hours to receive inpatient care, disrupting lives, jobs, and families. Once released, the followup care is lacking, and oftentimes, the patients immediately regress.

Unfortunately, the lack of resources—in the case of central New York—is not an uncommon issue. As I acknowledge May as Mental Health Awareness Month, this Friday, May 1, I will launch a mental health task force based in New York's 24th District. The task force will be comprised of mental health leaders in the field, including hospitals and employees.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the tens of thousands of students who have been left in the lurch after their for-profit school, Corinthian Colleges, abruptly closed this week.

The closure came as a surprise. It was the middle of their semester. Many of these students are now buried in student loan debt and do not know how or if they can continue their education.

I have urged the Department of Education to make it very clear to these students that they have the option to have their loans forgiven. However, the Department of Education has been encouraging students to transfer to other troubled for-profit schools, rather than have their loans discharged.

Many of the for-profit schools on the Department's list of so-called viable

transfer opportunities are currently under State or Federal investigation. This is shocking and unacceptable.

I call on the Department to remove immediately any school currently under investigation or on heightened cash management from its list of recommended options.

Our students deserve better. Let's give them the guidance that they can trust.

NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, each summer, Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute brings together some of the brightest young musicians from around the country to form the National Youth Orchestra USA.

The members of the orchestra spend the first 2 weeks in residency at Purchase College, taking master classes from the best. They have the chance to perform at the world famous Carnegie Hall, where their performance is heard live around the world; then they go on tour.

This summer, the orchestra will make a historic visit to China. It is an incredible experience, and I am extremely proud that, among the 114 amazing young people, two are from the district I am privileged to represent. Ms. Jasmine Lavariega, a horn player from Astoria; and Laura Michael, an oboist from Manhattan.

Congratulations to them both. Please let your parents know they were right; all that practice, practice, practice paid off. It was worth it. You are performing at Carnegie Hall and in China.

Congratulations.

F/A-18 SUPER HORNET

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

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I come before you today to thank my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee—in particular, Chairman MAC THORNBERRY and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH—for all the hard work they have put into crafting our country's national priorities for the upcoming year, way into the wee hours of the morning.

Specifically, I want to thank them for responding to a critical Navy shortfall and a national security need by including the authorization for funding of 12 F/A-18 Super Hornets in the National Defense Authorization Act.

The Super Hornet is truly the workhorse of naval combat operations against the Islamic State and is playing an important role in protecting our warfighters abroad. Twelve additional Super Hornets will help keep a critical production line open that will allow for