

materially from the Ex-Im Bank; Universal Industrial Gases in Easton; Fluortek, Inc., in Easton; Victaulic Company of America in Easton; Noble Biomaterials, Inc., in Scranton; Lehighton Electronics in Lehighton; and Copperhead Chemical Company in Tamaqua.

Mr. Speaker, we have to do the sensible thing and renew the Export-Import Bank. It is as plain as the nose on your face; it is as true as the law of gravity.

LAMENTING DEATHS IN THE AMERICAN FAMILY

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the wake of last week's devastating shooting in a church in Charleston, South Carolina.

The killing of any human is a real tragedy, but to lose nine innocent people while they were in a Bible study simply because of the color of their skin is heinous beyond words. On behalf of the people of southwest Alabama, I want to share our condolences with the families of those who lost loved ones.

Let me be very clear. In today's society, this kind of hate-based act and particularly hate-based on race or ethnicity is deplorable and unacceptable. We are one Nation, and there is no place in our country for racism.

As a southerner, but more importantly, as an American, I feel as if there has been a death in my own family because these deaths were in my family, the family of all citizens in the United States of America.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, I stood on the steps of the Supreme Court as the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act was struck down.

On a beautiful day in June, much like today, I stood there with the words "Equal Justice Under Law" inscribed on the top of the Court and celebrated a truly historic decision that finally, after decades of injustice, granted LGBT Americans the right to have their marriages recognized by the Federal Government.

That day was even more important to me because I stood on those steps with many of my close friends and many of my staff whom I deeply care about, many of whom for the first time had their basic humanity recognized by the highest court in the land.

I am looking forward again, in the next coming days, to stand on those same steps as the Supreme Court hopefully rules that every American has the constitutional right to marry the person they love.

I am optimistic and hopeful that marriage equality will soon be the law

of the land. As a vice chair of the LGBT Equality Caucus, I am committed to continuing to provide Federal policies that recognize the rights of all Americans, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

doing as an advocate for safe and responsible gun ownership in order to prevent needless gun violence.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS 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, I rise today to recognize veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. The month of June is the Veterans Affairs Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month.

Unacceptably, we lose 22 heroes a day to mental illness, often connected to PTSD trauma. We must take steps to reduce this horrible statistic. Even one is too many. Mr. Speaker, 22 is a disgrace to everything these heroes fought for.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is widespread, affecting one in five when they return home. Only 40 percent will seek treatment, leaving the remaining three-fifths unaware of their condition, uneducated about the resources available to them, and often fearing that seeking help could hurt their career.

Mr. Speaker, our servicemen and women deserve the best treatment, and so I pledge to continue supporting initiatives that put our troops and veterans first.

I am honored to stand here today to raise awareness about post-traumatic stress disorder and urge others to fight the fight to combat this terrible disease.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE USS GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

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

Mr. Sires. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the christening and launch of the USS *Gabrielle Giffords*, the Navy's 10th littoral combat ship.

My former colleague in the House of Representatives, Gabrielle Giffords, could teach us all a thing or two about honor, courage, and commitment.

On January 8, Navy spouse and former Representative Giffords was shot in Tucson, Arizona, while meeting with many of her constituents and has since made an incredible recovery. She still works tirelessly to serve the people of Arizona, as well as citizens all across the country.

I am pleased that the U.S. Navy christened the USS *Gabrielle Giffords* last week in a ceremony led by Dr. Jill Biden, the sponsor of the ship. Dr. Biden aptly noted that former Representative Giffords represents the same qualities that the Navy embodies, and I could not agree more. As this vessel travels the world, I hope it will inspire patriotism and resiliency.

I am proud that the Navy has chosen to honor former Representative Giffords in this prestigious manner, and I am encouraged by the work she is

CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Juneteenth, a celebration that commemorates the ultimate implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers marched into Galveston, Texas, with the news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were now free. Two and a half years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, its promise was realized at least.

Juneteenth is a celebration of African American freedom, and it also serves as a reminder to constantly strive for the expression and extension of the American idea—one of freedom, independence, and liberty.

This year, I had the honor to join in the 40th annual Buffalo Juneteenth Festival, the third largest in the Nation. People of all backgrounds partake in cultural activities that promote and preserve the African American heritage.

Juneteenth has established its position as an important tradition in western New York and in neighborhoods, towns, and cities throughout America.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Juneteenth to celebrate our Nation's rich African American history.

YWCA BRADFORD

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the YWCA of Bradford, Pennsylvania, on celebrating its 100-year anniversary.

The YWCA of Bradford, which started as the Young Women's Christian League in 1915, seeks to eliminate racism; empower women; and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

In the 1980s, the YWCA was converted from a social organization to one based on service. Since then, it has been the home of McKean County's first program to provide services to victims of domestic and sexual assault.

During its centennial year, the YWCA of Bradford expanded its programs to include services and shelters for the homeless, mentally ill, and intellectually disabled. Meals on Wheels and a food pantry are among the other new amenities offered by the organization.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor an organization that has worked so hard to improve its community, and I thank the YWCA of Bradford for its dedicated service to the citizens of McKean County, Pennsylvania.

LET'S ACT TO CUT DOWN GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, last week, we witnessed an act of pure hatred and evil in Charleston, South Carolina.

This is a time to mourn the victims, to pray for their families, for a community to heal, and for Congress to take action against unchecked and widespread gun violence.

Thirty-plus people are killed every day by someone using a gun. Mass shootings are becoming almost commonplace; yet we continue to do nothing. No legislation will stop every tragedy, but passing commonsense gun laws will at least stop some. We need to pass background checks as our first line of defense against criminals and the dangerously mentally ill getting guns.

We don't know what laws could have prevented the shooting in Charleston, but we do know that background checks help keep guns from dangerous people, and that saves lives.

If the Republican leadership has a better idea to cut down on gun violence, let's see it. If not, let's bring commonsense, bipartisan reforms like my bill to expand criminal background checks up for a vote.

BLUE STAR MOTHERS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is time we recognize the important role Blue Star Mothers play in supporting our troops by passing my bipartisan resolution which calls for August 2015 to be designated as Blue Star Mothers of America Month.

The Blue Star Mothers have been tireless advocates for our troops and have assisted by providing hundreds of thousands of care packages, sending letters to troops stationed overseas, and hosting thousands of events and ceremonies.

Blue Star Mothers of America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan service organization that was chartered by Congress in 1960 and has currently over 11,000 members in 42 States.

Women who have a son or daughter that is currently serving or previously served in the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for membership. Many of these Blue Star Mothers have seen their loved ones sent into harm's way.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to stand with the Blue Star Mothers of America and support House Resolution 140.

STEVE WILBURN DOESN'T GET IT

(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, there is just one more congressional workday before the charter for the U.S. Export-Import Bank expires. If Republicans allow it to expire, thousands of Americans will lose their jobs and many small-business owners will be hurt, people like Steve Wilburn.

Steve is a pretty amazing guy. He is a former marine who was wounded in Vietnam; he owns a small business, and he is a Republican. Today, Steve runs a biomass-to-energy company, and thanks to the help of our Ex-Im Bank, he had a tentative \$300 million deal with the Philippines; but they sent him a letter saying that, if the Ex-Im Bank goes under, so does his deal. Steve won't get the contract, and instead, it will go to a South Korean firm using a South Korean export bank.

Perhaps our ideologically driven friends on the right can explain to Steve and to his employees who are going to lose their jobs why this is a good thing.

We should join together. Let's pass the Ex-Im Bank for American jobs.

NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH

(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 support of Min-

nesota's dairy industry and National Dairy Month.

In my home State, dairy is one of our largest agricultural products. We are one of the Nation's top dairy-producing States, and Stearns County, in my district, is the top dairy-producing county in Minnesota.

Dairy farming is more than a profession; it is a way of life for many Minnesota families. I have had the privilege of visiting dairy farms across my district and have seen firsthand the hard work these men and women do day in and day out. From waking up before sunrise to milk their cows, to breeding, to delivering and raising newborn calves, it is just another day at the office for these folks.

I am proud of Minnesota's dairy industry, and I hope that every American will take some time to grab an ice cream cone and appreciate the hard work that goes into making some of our Nation's favorite food.

Happy Dairy Month to all of our hard-working farmers.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

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

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues who have spoken before in support of the Export-Import Bank, which is an absolutely vital tool that helps businesses of all sizes compete in the world market.

It does this not by competing with private sector lenders, but by partnering with them. The Bank fills gaps and provides loans to folks that the private sector is often unwilling or often unable to provide, and it costs the taxpayers nothing. In fact, since 1990, it has generated \$7 billion in deficit reduction.

The Export-Import Bank is overwhelmingly supported by Republicans and Democrats; business groups, like the Chamber of Commerce; and labor, like the AFL-CIO. Presidents Eisenhower, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and Obama have all been on board.

It sure seems like a commonsense measure, right? I think we have all learned in this Congress that a small, vocal extremist minority can derail the most bipartisan measures. Unfortunately, this is exactly what is happening.

I ask you, Speaker BOEHNER, to not allow that small, vocal extreme minority derail a very good program. That is not the way our government is supposed to work.

Southern Minnesota is working, too. Businesses like Davisco, Fastenal, and AGCO all rely on the Bank. The last thing they need is for Congress to get in the way and stop the growth, putting their prosperity at risk.

Speaker BOEHNER, all we are asking for is a simple thing. Bring it to the floor, and let us vote. If it passes, America is better off.