

communities to come together and carry on this great tradition for generations to come.

It is truly an honor to have this celebration take place in my home district, and I want to thank President Bill Deely of the Groundhog Club Inner Circle and everyone from Punxsutawney and the surrounding area for their hard work and planning to make this year's Groundhog Day such a special event.

LET EPA DO ITS JOB AND PROTECT OUR WATER

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, from the shores of the Delaware and the banks of the Allegheny, to the streams and the creeks that feed them, Pennsylvanians know that water is vital to our health, our recreation, and our wildlife.

Mr. Speaker, our waterways remain at risk. To protect them, the EPA is considering a rule to restore Clean Water Act protections to thousands of waterways in Pennsylvania and across the country. When finalized, this rule will mark the biggest step forward for clean water in more than a decade.

Unfortunately, polluters and their allies are now working to derail this clean water rule. They have even scheduled a rare, joint House-Senate hearing to set the stage for this dirty water attack.

I say it is time for Congress to get out of the way and let EPA do its job and protect our water, as is its charge.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the President's budget proposal which was released yesterday.

While I appreciate the President putting forth his vision for the future of our Nation, that vision is neither one that our Nation can afford, nor one that I can support.

Each year, the President brings us a budget that increases spending, raises taxes, and seeks trillions upon trillions of new debt upon our great Nation. If the Republican-led House had agreed to these budget requests, our Federal Government would be 20 percent larger today.

This year, the President's budget proposal proposes another \$8.5 trillion in deficits that will push our debt to well over \$26 trillion in the next 10 years, slowing our economy and leaving the next generation with the legacy of higher taxes and less opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, we must work together—Democrats and Republicans—to balance our budget by cutting wasteful spending, holding the line on spending increases, reforming programs, and reducing the size of government.

Kansans know and the American people know that a leaner, more efficient and effective government is critical to strengthening our economy and creating prosperity and opportunity for every American.

IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND STATE OF OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROTOCOLS AT PORTS OF ENTRY

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the Peace Bridge in my western New York district is the second busiest border crossing between the United States and Canada, making it essential that people and goods are able to move quickly and efficiently across the bridge. The second phase of a cargo preinspection pilot project at the Peace Bridge recently concluded and is currently under evaluation.

While I have confidence that the bill will call for expansion of preinspection at the Peace Bridge, the pilot revealed several challenges which create delays and require immediate attention.

Internet speeds on the Canadian side of the bridge exceed those on the American side, enabling faster screening. Radiation detectors on the American side are older and often inaccurate, resulting in false negatives that create delays. Finally, empty trucks are not required to provide a manifest, resulting in unnecessary secondary inspections for empty vehicles.

Last week, I wrote to Secretary Jeh Johnson highlighting the urgent need to rectify these issues. We must improve the quality and state of the infrastructure and protocols at ports of entry across the country.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Speaker BOEHNER for appointing me to serve as the Republican cochair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. It is a great honor to serve as a voice defending the rights of people worldwide to live free of repression and violence.

I have served as a member of the Commission since its establishment following the passing of our dear colleague Congressman Lantos. A Holocaust survivor, he understood what it was like to live under the thumb of a brutal and oppressive regime.

While we vowed "never again," today, hundreds of millions of people worldwide live under governments that restrict the rights of free speech and religious expression—regimes that persecute minorities, women, and children.

We are blessed to live in a country where individual rights are protected

and cherished. Despite our differences, Democrats and Republicans work hand in hand to protect these rights at home and expand them worldwide.

I am particularly honored to share the leadership of the Commission with Congressman MCGOVERN. We have worked together to promote human rights for many years now, and I think there is much we can accomplish together.

REPEALING OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT FOR THE 56TH TIME

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, with all that we should be doing to help address middle class anxiety, to help the economy along, to help with student debt, to help with the challenges that all of our constituents face, what will we be doing this week? We will be repealing the Affordable Care Act for the 56th time—56.

I get it. The first couple of times, Mr. Speaker, I get it. The first couple of times, the Republicans believed that this was a government takeover of health care, that there were death panels, that it was unconstitutional, that it would raise costs in the health care section, that it would be a job killer. None of that turned out to be true.

In fact, the opposite turned out to be true. The Supreme Court said it was constitutional, it actually helped lower costs in the overall health care system, and we are now adding jobs in the private sector faster than we have added them in 10 years.

None of that was true.

What is true is that the Affordable Care Act has given 10 million or more Americans the security for the first time of having health insurance. It has cut the uninsured rate in my State of Connecticut in half.

Do you know what that means? It means that Ann Christman—51 years old, a single mother, could never afford health care insurance—now, she has it. She went to a doctor, and her breast cancer was diagnosed early. She said:

The cancer has been detected at a very early stage, which, with a 98 percent survival rate, has saved my life.

Respectfully, let's leave it alone.

AMERICA DESERVES AN EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT THAT SOLVES OUR NATION'S PROBLEMS

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

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, a huge congratulations to the New England Patriots for winning Super Bowl XLIX—surgical passes from quarterback Tom Brady, a thunderous spike by tight end Rob Gronkowski, and a

crucial goal line interception by rookie cornerback Malcolm Butler.

Although our Patriots earned a thrilling fourth Super Bowl title, I also congratulate the Seattle Seahawks and their fans for battling until the very end of their terrific season.

Maine is Patriots nation. We appreciate hard work and results. In this Chamber, Republicans and Democrats engage in passionate debate on issues critically important to American families. We have been sent here to move the ball down the field together, to put points on the board for hardworking taxpayers.

Patriots fans, Seahawks fans, and families coast to coast deserve an effective government that solves our Nation's problems. Then we will have a healthy, growing economy with more jobs, fatter paychecks, and more freedom.

Here in this Chamber, we are all Patriots, we are all Americans, and we work for the people.

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RICK ORLOV

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, many of us have love-hate relationships with the news media and with various reporters, but today I wanted to rise and express my condolences for a reporter in Los Angeles whom we mostly had a love relationship with and very little hate.

Rick Orlov was a reporter for the Daily News, and he covered Los Angeles City Hall for almost 30 years. I served on the Los Angeles City Council for 10 of those, so I got to know him well.

Do you know what? He earned everyone's respect. Somehow, he made no enemies. Rick was a true newsman, and he focused on writing the news that mattered. He was not interested in gotcha reporting. His longstanding institutional knowledge allowed him to understand and tell the whole story.

Rick Orlov was not only a great reporter, but he was a great man. I considered him my friend, and he really was a piece of Los Angeles. His death is a huge loss for the city and for all of us who had a chance to know him.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, the President presented his budget yesterday, and I am disappointed to say that it is just more of the same tax-and-spend policies that we have seen over the past 6 years—\$4 trillion of spending, \$2 trillion in new taxes, and more deficits for the next 10 years.

I have only been in Washington for a month, but the prevailing message

from the President seems to be that politicians know better than the people, that Big Government is the solution, and that huge deficits are just part of life. This experiment has failed and has hurt the hardworking taxpayers in my district, who built our economy. Since 2009, the debt has grown from \$10 trillion to \$18 trillion. The new budget has the debt at \$26 trillion in 10 years, and interest payments alone on our national debt will quadruple in the next 10 years.

Now more than ever we need a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution. It is a simple concept: force the Federal Government to live within its means. Families do it; businesses do it; cities, counties, and States are doing it. I urge my colleagues to join me as cosponsors of House Joint Resolutions 1 and 2.

FULLY FUND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

(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, this month, in a very short period of time, the Department of Homeland Security is going to run out of money. Our enemies, they plot, they plan to do us harm, and this Republican majority in this Congress refuses to give the Department of Homeland Security the full funding they need to keep us safe. What we will do this week is the 56th repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. Speaker, some in this Chamber may be willing to cater to their base for political reasons, but catering to our enemies in order to cater to the base is unacceptable.

Making it easier for our enemies to attack and do us harm by refusing to fund the Department of Homeland Security so you can score points with your base over a difference you may have with the President on an executive order is not what the American people want, expect, or deserve.

The contrast could not be more clear, Mr. Speaker. There is one party in this House that is willing to undermine our homeland security and to undermine the middle class' economic security. There is another that wants to strengthen both.

OVERTIME

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my support for America's middle class.

Currently, government rules allow for only 11 percent of salaried workers to be eligible for overtime pay. Contrast that to 1975, when the income threshold for overtime pay covered 65 percent of our salaried workers. This is because Department of Labor rules pro-

hibit workers who earn more than \$23,660 a year from earning overtime pay.

Recently, I was joined by more than 30 of my colleagues in calling for this administration to raise the income threshold to \$69,000. At this level, we could cover the same number of workers who were eligible in 1975. For 35 years, American workers have increased their productivity, yet they have not been rewarded. Let's remember that it is a strong middle class that drives economic growth.

Be bold, Mr. President. Your administration can help middle class families. Raise the income threshold for overtime pay.

A COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR ALL

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, making higher education available to everyone has to be a top priority, and the President's budget makes a major commitment to increasing access to high-quality education from preschool through college, particularly at our Nation's community colleges. With the high cost of attending a 4-year institution, community college is often a viable option to so many driven students who are seeking a higher degree without incurring overwhelming debt.

In the President's addresses, he addresses the challenges that so many students face today. In his proposal, his budget makes 2 years of high-quality community college free to responsible students, saving 9 million students an average of \$3,800 a year in tuition.

In my home State of New Jersey and across the Nation, community colleges offer educational opportunities to students just beginning higher education, to people already in the workforce who are looking to gain additional training, and for the unemployed looking to change careers. The President's proposal could benefit them all and countless others for whom higher education currently seems unattainable.

I would just hope that my Republican colleagues across the aisle will join us in making sure that a college education is an attainable goal for all Americans.

GROWING OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, it is week five of this new Congress, and the American people are still waiting for action to create jobs. Instead of doing that, Republicans seem focused on appeasing and pandering to the most extreme voices in their party. Even some Republicans are appalled by this Republican agenda now that they control Congress.

One Republican Member told the National Journal: