

funding for transportation infrastructure in this country. It is a crisis. We are becoming third or maybe fourth world in our infrastructure. Bridges are falling down, potholes, and transit systems that are falling apart; it is time to invest in America.

#### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FAILURES

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Veterans Administration failed to contact thousands of veterans who submitted applications for health care. Apparently, those applications were incomplete, but the VA did not tell the vets to correct the applications and resubmit them; so the applications were left pending on a shelf with no action by the VA and no health care for the veterans. Reports state that nearly 300,000 veterans died waiting for a resolution from the VA.

Of course, the VA blamed the veterans. This is a farce. The veterans never even received a follow-up call to finish their supposedly incomplete applications.

These mistakes are that of the VA, not the veterans. The VA should be ashamed. Government bungling stood in the way of these warriors receiving health care and broke a promise the Nation gave to them.

The VA's dysfunctional bureaucrats need to be removed, and veterans should be allowed to have a voucher that gives them the privilege to go to their own doctors, doctors who are more concerned about health care than paperwork.

And that is just the way it is.

#### REMEMBERING MARTIN OLAV SABO

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of the floor today to pay homage and honor to a great Minnesotan and a Member of this body, Martin Olav Sabo. He was the Congressperson who preceded me to represent the Fifth Congressional District.

I can say without any reservation that very, very few people can boast to be greater public servants than Martin Sabo in my State of Minnesota or in America.

Martin Sabo served for more than 40 years in public life, 28 years in Congress. He was the chair of the Committee on the Budget, and he was also a good friend to all. I will say that he was always gracious and well-mannered. He was a helpful person, and he was available to mentor literally hundreds of Minnesota politicians, public activists, and servants.

It is with a heavy heart that I give these remarks because, of course, it

would be wonderful to have all of our friends, including Martin Sabo, be with us for a long, long time; but, of course, every one of us does leave this world, and when they do, they would be very, very lucky to make the mark that Martin Sabo did—a great man, a great Minnesotan.

□ 1345

#### CHANGE NEEDED AT WMATA

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, our Metro system, informed us that they would be suspending operations all day today and into tonight.

While I appreciate that the new general manager had to make this decision to keep our riders safe, what this does is highlight many more widespread problems throughout the system that have been present for years that we need to address. We know a culture change in management needs to happen.

When our delegation met with the new manager at the end of last year, we told him we needed to have a management change and that we needed to see some action taken quickly. I am appreciative the Transportation chairman is going to have hearings on this.

I want to read to you an example of why we need changes here. A trainee at Metro talked about the incompetence there. He said:

I'll be honest with you. I studied harder for fast-food jobs and waiter jobs when I was in college than I did for their training program at Metro. Their testing program is a joke.

This is from a Washingtonian article in December of last year.

WMATA and Metro lifers who haven't left for years need to start leaving so that we can have a new management culture there.

#### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleagues for a Special Order about Women's History Month.

This month of March we are blessed with the opportunity to discuss the opportunities particularly presented by

the Republican Party and the philosophies of the Republican Party as they relate to women, women's history and women's future and the opportunity to be involved in building women up and providing opportunities in the future, an opportunity culture that is shared by men and women to make sure that our homeland is safe and secure, to make sure that our families are in an environment that will be uplifting. These are some of the topics we will be discussing today.

I am joined by several colleagues, one of whom I would like to call on first. Incidentally, the first colleague I am calling on is a Republican man with whom I graduated from law school as a student at the University of Wyoming College of Law.

My own home State of Wyoming is the first government in the world to continuously grant women the right to vote. That occurred in 1869. Colorado, the home State of this gentleman, is the first State to grant women the right to vote.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

Mr. BUCK. I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming, my friend and law school classmate, for her great leadership on this issue.

I am proud to come from a State that was not only the first to give women the right to vote, but the first to elect women to the State legislature. My wife Perry is continuing that great tradition as a member of the Colorado General Assembly.

Many women have impacted our neighborhoods, our communities, and our Nation. But I want to speak briefly today about the many women who will impact our world.

They have ideas and ambitions and callings. They have machines to invent, deals to negotiate, people to heal, diseases to cure, and legislation to pass.

Republicans are advancing an agenda to help these women impact our future. We are focused on making the country more secure, on creating jobs, on replacing ObamaCare with a patient-centered alternative, on extending opportunity to all children, and on protecting the freedom at the heart of our prosperity.

Women don't need government getting in their way. That is why the efforts of Congress to reassert its authority and roll back executive overreach are so vital.

Congress has the responsibility to create an environment where women thrive. In 100 years, I hope we are celebrating the women who made this country great, not lamenting the government that stopped them.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for being here today and acknowledging the importance of Women's History Month and the involvement of women in politics and government and for his leadership in his home State of Colorado.

Next I would like to yield to a long-standing colleague who is well known

to the House of Representatives. VIRGINIA FOXX has done more on workforce development issues in the last couple of years than have been done in many, many years in the House of Representatives.

She is the first in her family to graduate from college, earn a master's and doctorate degree, and then went on to be the president of an institute of higher learning, a community college.

Her presidency there also lifted education in her home State. She is the chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina's Fifth District (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LUMMIS for her leadership in this Special Order this afternoon and for all the great work that she has done.

She is a wonderful role model for women. She has lent her expertise as the former treasurer of her State, and has brought much, much talent to the House of Representatives. I appreciate all that she has done since she has been here.

We all know, I think, that March is Women's History Month, which honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout the history of the United States.

Since 1917, when Republican Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, 313 women have served as U.S. Representatives, Senators, or Delegates.

Many Americans might assume that their congressional Representatives come from exclusive and rarified backgrounds. Well, my story could hardly be less rarified.

As a child, my family's home didn't have electricity or running water. My parents, while dedicated and hard-working, were very poor, with little formal education. Girls with my background weren't likely to end up in Congress.

Fortunately, I was pushed by the right people, teachers and administrators who wouldn't let me settle for less than my best.

In the mountains of North Carolina, I learned firsthand the power of education and its vital role in the success of every American. Although it took me 7 years while working full-time, I became the first in my family to go to college and earn a degree.

In the 1970s, I was a member of the League of Women Voters. Through the League, I attended school board meetings in my county as a public observer to encourage accountability of elected officials. I went to countless meetings, many times as the only person representing the general public.

During one meeting of an all-male school board, a local reporter leaned over and said: These guys are incompetent. Why don't you run for the school board?

My instinctive response was: I am not qualified.

I think many women fall prey to this attitude of self-disqualification and underestimate their abilities. I took another look at those board members and changed my mind.

Eventually, I ran for the school board. While I lost that first race, I won the next election for school board, and I haven't lost an election since.

So while I may not have had wealthy parents or an Ivy League education, I did have what every single American has: opportunity.

A few weeks ago I spoke to a local Girl Scout troop about Congress and its role in our government. As the group was leaving my office, one of the parents pulled me aside and said how glad she was that the girls had the opportunity to hear from a woman in my position.

Women are a stronger presence than ever before on Capitol Hill. We have rich and varied perspectives and a commitment to good ideas and teamwork. The women of the 114th Congress are shaping our Nation, and it is an opportunity and responsibility that we take seriously.

Although I am now serving in my sixth term as a Representative from North Carolina, I am still really a teacher at heart, having spent the lion's share of my life working as an educator and administrator in North Carolina colleges and universities.

I believe confronting the challenges facing American schools and workplaces is critical to providing opportunity for every individual to get ahead.

That is why, as chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, I have led efforts to modernize and reform the Nation's workforce development system. I appreciate very much my colleague mentioning that.

In 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law. This bipartisan, bicameral compromise between the SKILLS Act that I authored and the Senate's Workforce Investment Act of 2013 streamlines and improves existing Federal workforce development programs and fosters a modern workforce that American businesses can rely on to compete.

House Republicans have also fought to limit one-size-fits-all Federal dictates that hamper innovation and limit the ability of States and local schools to address their students' needs.

Last fall we passed the Every Student Succeeds Act, which reverses Washington's micromanagement of classrooms and gives parents, teachers, and local education leaders the tools they need to repair a broken system and help all children reach their potential.

Unfortunately, many Americans still struggle to realize the dream of higher education because our current system is often expensive, inflexible, and outdated. Too many students are unable

to complete college, saddled with loan debt and ill-equipped to compete in our modern economy.

The United States is the world's summit of opportunity, and we have a responsibility to act now to preserve that role. House Republicans are pursuing reforms that will help all individuals, regardless of age, location, or background, access and complete higher education, if they choose.

We are working to empower students and families to make informed decisions. We want to simplify and improve student aid as well as promote innovation access and completion. We are committed to ensuring strong accountability and a limited Federal role.

By keeping college within reach for students and preserving the excellence in diversity that has always set America's colleges and universities apart, our country and our economy stand to benefit.

While Women's History Month celebrates the incredible accomplishments of women throughout America's history, the most lasting tribute we can pay is our efforts to improve this Nation for the next generation of women.

Rather than simply being discouraged by the many problems facing our country and our world, I have learned to be an agent of change focused on the problems that can be solved and the people who can be helped.

I thank my friend who encouraged me back in the 1970s to run for the school board because of the opportunities it has provided me to help other people throughout my life.

Mrs. LUMMIS. We are tackling five big priorities that women care about this year: national security, jobs, health care, upward mobility, and balance of power.

You just heard from Congresswoman Foxx about jobs, about education, and upward mobility that comes through those avenues.

The other areas we are talking about include national security and health care. No one in Congress is better prepared to address those issues than our next speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the first woman to represent the Second District of North Carolina, which includes all of Fort Bragg, home of the airborne and Special Operations Forces.

She has served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee since 2012 and currently serves as chairman of the Republican Women's Policy Committee.

Prior to running for office, she worked as a registered nurse for over 21 years and owned a general surgery practice with her husband Brent in Dunn, North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS), someone with real life experience in the areas of health care and who represents a district that is so profoundly influential in this Nation's national security.

□ 1400

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. I thank my friend and colleague from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS). I just want to say how much I appreciate her leadership, especially today, as we are talking about Women's History Month and the different roles that we, as women in Congress, are playing, and how we want to formulate and build the structure into the future for all women. I thank her for her service to all of us in representing Wyoming.

Mr. Speaker, this month is Women's History Month. It is an opportunity to highlight the various ways women in America are pushing the envelope to leave a positive and lasting imprint on society.

As the first woman to represent North Carolina's Second District, and the first woman in our State to represent Fort Bragg, national security remains one of my utmost priorities.

So when I learned of a proposal to deactivate the 440th Airlift Wing located at Pope Army Airfield in Fort Bragg, I rallied my North Carolina colleagues. For nearly 2 years, we went toe-to-toe with the Air Force on this misguided decision.

The 440th is known for its ability to rapidly mobilize and execute last-minute exercises. It is unique in its mission and provides unparalleled levels of training to paratroopers of the 18th Airborne Corps.

Deactivation of the Airlift Wing would undoubtedly affect our military readiness and it could jeopardize the safety of our paratroopers. Given the global uncertainty abroad right now, this decision just doesn't make sense.

To fight this ill-conceived decision, I coordinated with my North Carolina colleagues to question top military leaders here at the Capitol. During these same meetings, we sought answers to tough questions and asked for data to back up their justification for the Wing's closure.

As a woman representing the military base, I have remained unwavering in my work to acquire answers. I have asked for meetings with the Air Force Reserve, the Army, the Pentagon, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and local Fort Bragg commanders.

The threat of terrorism abroad and the growth of radical groups like ISIS makes the decision to deactivate even more baffling. Constituents back home in North Carolina feel the same way, so I have charged forward in my efforts to prevent its closure.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to reiterate that the Republican women in Congress are making history in a variety of ways. As women, we are working to create new opportunities, restore a confident America, and ensure the safety and security of every family living in our country.

Again I thank my good friend, Congresswoman LUMMIS, for hosting today's Special Order, for being the person that she is, representing Wyoming,

being a leader amongst all of us, as women in Congress, and allowing us to speak about the individual initiatives that we are tackling as women.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentlewoman and acknowledge her expertise on health care, and want to raise an issue that I would love to hear her comments on.

One of the bills that I am cosponsoring is a bill called the Research for All Act, and it would acknowledge that most medical research focuses on men, and studying women is suggested, but not required.

Now, sometimes different drugs have different effects on women than they do on men, and vice versa. For example, there is a diabetes drug study that shows that their drug may lower women's risk of heart failure, but increase a man's; and unless we have adequate studies done on both men and women, we won't recognize those differences or nuances in treatment options that should be tailored differently to men and women.

Based on your experience in nursing, your lifelong career there, do you have any comments about other healthcare initiatives that women are working on here in Congress?

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. First of all, I thank the gentlewoman for her piece of legislation on that particular issue because it shows the importance and how incredibly accurate you are when you are saying that there are so many differences in treatments geared towards women and geared towards men.

When you highlight heart conditions, that is the number one killer of women in this country, when we look at disease. Heart disease is the number one. When we look at this, we know that women respond differently to symptoms of heart disease than men do, and so do the drugs. So that is a perfect example of why we have to be focusing from a perspective where we consider both genders.

There are so many things that are being worked on here in Washington by the women leaders that we have. For instance, some of the things that we have been able to pass on a large bipartisan scale have to do with breast cancer.

The USPSTF came out with a decision saying that women between the ages 40-49 don't necessarily have to have mammograms, and so, therefore, their insurance companies shouldn't have to pay for it.

I worked across the aisle on legislation to stop that from moving forward, and we were able to put a 2-year moratorium on that decision so that we can actually bring a consensus together.

The last thing we want to do for women in this country is send out more mixed messages on breast cancer and the treatment of and the prevention of. So we are working with our colleagues, as Republicans and Democrats.

Another perfect example of a healthcare decision that is being made

by the USPSTF right now is essentially interrupting the process for men to get a PSA test, which is the only way we can diagnose prostate cancer. It is a simple blood test, and right now they are making decisions as to whether or not insurance companies should have to pay for that. I think that is devastating.

And then, of course, I will just say, Medicare remains one of the major issues that we are working on. I will tell you that all of the women in the Republican conference are dedicated to this effort.

There are some new rule changes that are coming out from CMS now that we are all targeting, and we have got to do that for every senior in this country who is receiving Medicare. They need the health care that they deserve, and we have got to do everything we can to make sure that it is accessible to them.

But, obviously, the largest—the elephant in the room, if you will, is, of course, the Affordable Care Act, and we continue to be dedicated to this issue.

In North Carolina, I can tell you it is a mess with the insurance plans. The individual plans themselves have skyrocketed from 30 to 40 to 50 percent increase in premiums, with an equal increase on the deductible.

The out-of-pocket costs that families in North Carolina now are spending is outrageous. They are literally making decisions to not go to the doctor when they need health care because they don't want to have to pay extra.

This is unacceptable. It certainly was not the intention of the Affordable Care Act.

As you know, my dear colleague, we have had many of the solutions to this problem, and I believe that the women in our conference are going to lead and be a strong voice to our leadership for us to move forward so that we can show the American people that we have alternatives to the Affordable Care Act that will continue to give them good coverage, but also continue to support good health care.

The 21st Century Cures Act we passed in 2015 is another perfect example of all of us coming together to ensure the American people get the coverage, the cures.

What better way to save dollars in health care than to come up with cures?

If we could just find one on Alzheimer's alone, we would save incredible amounts of money.

Listen, I am just proud and honored to be able to have a voice, especially when it comes to health care because, as we know, health care touches every life, and we have to do everything as Members of Congress, as mothers, as sisters, to do everything we can for the American people.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Alzheimer's, which you mentioned, is a disease where two-thirds of the patients are women, which also means that men are 50 percent less likely to get it. So the importance of having women making policy

on these issues is very high because we are the ones who are dealing with frequently female relatives, be they mothers, sisters, aunts, who are suffering from Alzheimer's.

When we have people like Congresswoman ELLMERS, who has a nursing background, a medical professional background, we have the opportunity to use that expertise that she has gained in her prior career, in her capacity as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, where much of the healthcare-related legislation originates in this Congress.

In addition, our new Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, has put together several idea-gathering groups to make sure that we are building an agenda for the next Congress that will address these issues that have festered during the last 8 years; among them, the unacceptable consequences of ObamaCare that have created the situations which you described in your home State.

Can you give us a sneak preview about what some of these idea meetings are bringing to light about the direction of healthcare policy, as crafted by the Republican Party, about your role in those idea sessions, and how we intend to roll out health care that truly is affordable?

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Well, I will just say that I have had the honor of being part of the Republican Study Committee group that has worked on alternatives to the Affordable Care Act, and we have come up with about 10 or 12 different issue-based sections that are good policy that really have been there for a while, that many of our members have had; and we have actually culminated it into a plan of action that would take care of the issue and cover those things that the Affordable Care Act is leaving the American people behind.

One of the issues is choice, being able to choose a plan for your family that you feel is appropriate. Unfortunately, the Affordable Care Act, it was promoted as something that provided incredible choice. You were going to be able to go to your doctor. You were going to be able to go to the hospital you wanted. It was going to bring down the cost. And none of those things have come to be true. So now we have to go in and we have to change that.

You should be able to buy insurance across State lines or from a different perspective rather than what you have within your own State. You should be able to have a healthcare savings plan where you can put dollars away and be responsible for yourself.

Young people are in a different situation. They shouldn't have to spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars every month on a healthcare plan that they cannot afford when they can have a much more economical issue there, another situation that they can deal with.

Another big issue is tort reform at the national level. I think this is something that will also save dollars. There

are many, many ideas from the business side of it, with small businesses to larger businesses having better choices, being able to negotiate healthcare plans.

So when we are talking about health care and we are talking about the affordable care, what we really are talking about is healthcare coverage. And I think that is one of the most important parts of this discussion that many times, I think, gets confused.

We are talking about healthcare coverage, which leads to better health care. We should be doing everything we can to make sure that it is accessible to every American, and to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves.

Pre-existing conditions is a huge issue. We have to be able to deal with that. We know that we cannot leave the American people hanging. In other words, when we talk about wanting to repeal it, we know that there has to be a process in place to make sure that there is a safety net for all of those families who have been forced off of their insurance plans and on to an affordable care plan that was not their choice, only they were forced to do it because it became law.

Now we have to make sure that we are providing an option for them, one that will move them from one place to another, a much better place.

I will just say again that we are dedicated to this issue. It is the main reason I ran for Congress to begin with. I will not let up on this until we actually have the solutions that we are looking for.

□ 1415

I am looking forward to our working together over this next year on this issue and just moving health care forward in so many different ways. Unfortunately, the Federal Government does have a lot to do with what is working and what is not working, and I am just very happy to be part of that conversation.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank our colleague for her dedication and commitment to health care for Americans that will truly work for them.

Speaking of which, and in recognition of a wonderful woman who is an example of the types of healthcare issues that we are addressing this afternoon as part of our focus on Women's History Month, we have been joined by the good gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON), who would like to pay tribute to a woman from his great State of Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona, Congressman MATT SALMON.

Mr. SALMON. First, before I start honoring this wonderful woman, I would like to say that I learned early in my life, in my church, that if you want to talk about something, you convene a meeting with a bunch of men; if you want to solve something, you convene a meeting with women.

Mrs. LUMMIS. My former Senator, Alan Simpson, used to say: "The cock croweth, but the hen delivereth the goods."

Mr. SALMON. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak very, very lovingly and admiringly about one of the most wonderful people I have ever gotten a chance to know in my life. Her name is Laura Knaperek.

I first met Laura when I was a State legislator. I was assigned to be on the health committee, and Laura was a citizen activist that came down to champion the cause of families, and specifically families with children with developmental disabilities. I was amazed then at her passion, and I remember telling her: You ought to run for office some day.

She was a beloved member of the Arizona community and a tireless champion for those with developmental disabilities and one of the strongest advocates for families I have ever met in my life. She sought to lift people's lives around her.

She was first elected to the State legislature in 1994. She set herself apart as a selfless public servant. A few weeks ago, our Speaker, in talking to the Conference, mentioned that there are two types of people in politics: there are doers, and there are be-ers. Laura Knaperek was a doer. She was not interested in having the title of being a State legislator; she was interested in solving the problems of the day.

She was diagnosed, in 2012, with ovarian cancer. I remember seeing her shortly after that diagnosis, and there was no despair and no concern. Without missing a beat, she just wanted to talk about how she could uplift other people's lives.

I remember Laura decided to champion an idea in Arizona, which I believe is an idea whose time has come. It is the right called the Right to Try. I think it was one of the very first States in the country that has tried to pass this by referendum. Laura was successful in doing this.

It basically allows individuals with terminal diseases access to things that aren't necessarily approved by the FDA yet. If it is their last-ditch chance, they ought to have a shot at life, and that was Laura's contention. She championed this idea, and it passed overwhelmingly at the ballot.

I am sad to say that, 4 years after her diagnosis, she succumbed to this dread disease.

I was shocked because Laura was on Facebook and every other social media outlet constantly championing ideas and thoughts of others, and she never said anything about herself. She never wallowed in self-pity. She was the kind of person that realized that the greatest service that we can do is serving other people.

In my church, there is a saying that, when you are in the service of your fellow being, you are in the service of God. I think Laura understood that better than anybody.

Because of Laura, I introduced H.R. 3012, the Right to Try Act, introduced the last session of Congress. I think that Americans deserve the same opportunity that Arizonans have to be able to try to save their life and do whatever is necessary to save their life if they are terminally ill and they have no other options, no hope.

I think that we can honor Laura and others like her by allowing everybody across the United States who suffers from a terminal illness the access to every tool available to help them fight for their precious life. The Right to Try, to me, is, in reality, a component of the God-given right to life. The Right to Try offers hope to those who have nowhere else to turn.

Laura Knaperek passed away at the age of 60, leaving behind her husband, Robert, their 6 children, 19 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

I ask my colleagues to join with me today in honoring Laura's life and pray that we continue Laura's fight to allow those with terminal illnesses another chance at life.

I thank the gentlewoman.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for that warm tribute to a woman who selflessly provided an option that women and men can use in the event that they are terminally ill where a possible drug treatment or other type of treatment has been identified that has not yet cleared the FDA drug analysis and has not yet been approved but may be tremendously helpful to preserving these lives that will be otherwise cut short so early, especially a woman of Laura's caliber, who, at 60 years of age, died, leaving such a wonderful family.

I thank the gentleman for sponsoring the legislation giving people the same opportunities that Arizonans have.

Have you reintroduced that piece of legislation in this Congress?

Mr. SALMON. Actually, we are going to be reintroducing it, and we are probably going to rename it Laura's Law in honor of Laura Knaperek.

There are very few times in your life that you meet somebody that you think they got the memo mixed up in Heaven, that God sent a memo that said that this person that is supposed to be an angel actually got to come down to Earth. That was Laura. She was an angel, a living angel, and somebody that gave a lot of people reason for hope through the course of her life, and she never, ever sought recognition. All she sought was helping others and changing other people's lives.

Do you know what? That is the standard I think we all aspire to, but there are rare occasions where we find somebody that just embodies everything that is good.

Mrs. LUMMIS. As we celebrate Women's History Month, we look for that junction between women who have done historic things, women such as Laura, and the way that they have paved the way for policies that can be implemented that provide opportuni-

ties for people that are in a similar condition as hers to have some hope and a chance at a longer life.

We are grateful that Congressman SALMON has been willing to pick up the torch of her good work and bring it to the attention of, and hopefully the approval of, this Congress.

I thank the gentleman for his role in this Congress, for acknowledging the importance of Laura's life for today's Special Order on Women's History Month, and for carrying on her fine work in his capacity as a fine gentleman who is doing the best to represent his State, and in doing so, enhances the opportunity for every American in this Nation. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SALMON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. SALMON. I do want to say one other thing.

I know that the gentlewoman is going to be retiring after the end of this term, and I just want to say what a true honor it has been to serve with a statesman such as yourself. You are truly one of the bright spots in this place.

There have been a lot of times when I feel like I kind of had to kick myself extra hard to get motivated to come back and get on that plane and come to Washington, D.C., and leave my family behind; but there are people that give me hope, and you are one of those people. You will be sorely missed. It doesn't matter whether you are a woman or not a woman. You happen to be. You are a fine, fine individual, and I am proud to know you.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman. It is an honor to serve with you.

I know you are completing your second tour of duty in this Congress as well and will be returning to a lovely family in Arizona. Those of us who are from the West are blessed to live in beautiful places with people that create a society that matches the scenery, and you are an important part of that society.

Clearly, Laura was an important part of that society. She enhanced your life; and you, in turn, enhance ours.

I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his service.

Here, in Women's History Month, I can't help but toot the horn of my great State of Wyoming, the first government in the world to grant women the right to vote. We also had the first woman Governor, the first woman justice of the peace, the first woman grand juror, the first women who were elected delegates to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, and the first woman elected official in the country, who happened to be the State superintendent of public instruction, Estelle Reel.

All of these women were trailblazers. This all happened 50 years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitu-

tion granted all American women the right to vote.

Wyoming territory, in 1869, became the first government in the world to continuously grant women the right to vote, and it has been my privilege as a woman from the great State of Wyoming to follow a woman colleague, Congresswoman Barbara Cubin, who served 14 years in this body. I now, in my eighth term, make a combined total of 22 consecutive years where our beloved State of Wyoming has been represented in this House of Representatives by women. And that is really saying something, since Wyoming only has one Member of Congress. It is, indeed, a great honor.

These women, however, we cannot just celebrate their past, our past, and the opportunities that we enjoy in this great Nation. We have to use what we have learned as American women to enhance the lives of our fellow Americans as we serve here, which is one of the reasons that we are both celebrating Women's History Month and discussing specifically, today, what the Republican Party is doing.

Women's History Month is our opportunity to celebrate the incredible accomplishments women have made to America. But the most lasting tribute we can pay this month is our effort to make history for the next generation of women. That is why House Republicans are building an agenda to restore a confident America where every American feels secure in their lives and their futures.

The five big priorities that women care about that we are working on together this year include: national security, which was discussed by RENEE ELLMERS; jobs, which was discussed, of course, by VIRGINIA FOXX; health care, where we have several nurses and medical practitioners that are women that are deeply involved in this legislative project; and upward mobility, something that is important to all Americans, but especially women.

When you consider how many women heads of household there are; when you consider that a rising tide lifts all boats, and when women earn more money, families do better, children do better, women do better, and men do better, it is very important, when we are talking about upward mobility, that opportunities are provided for women by having a Tax Code that does not burden them and by having jobs that come back to this country that have previously left this country.

We can do that by changing our Tax Code in a way that allows us to bring jobs back to this country so those employers and their employees are not penalized by higher taxes that we have through a Tax Code that makes sure that corporations pay more taxes here than they do in other countries. That is why we have what are called inversions. That is why people are leaving this country to take their jobs to other countries. We need to bring them back, providing more opportunities to have

great jobs here in this country for women, heads of household, and for all members of our society and culture.

With women making the majority of healthcare decisions in this country, we need to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act with an act that will provide opportunities for a marketplace for insurance that acknowledges that some people have preexisting conditions and you will not be penalized for such, that acknowledges that some people just want catastrophic coverage and later in their life can move into a system that maybe provides more specific coverage, and that allows you to shop for insurance across State lines. You can find a product that works specifically for you and that has a pool of participants large enough so that a very small population State like mine can be involved in a bigger pool, thereby bringing down the risk and bringing down the costs for those of us in very small States.

□ 1430

We have to be looking also at specific healthcare issues. Multiple sclerosis is much more prevalent in the Intermountain West than it is in a lot of other areas.

Research being done right now at Cornell University is showing that there is a possible connection between multiple sclerosis and a fungus in the soils.

These are the kinds of unusual connections when research is done that will allow us to address certain healthcare issues that may be more prevalent in one region than another, a healthcare system that is flexible and affordable and recognizes that not all healthcare issues are the same for men or women, for the Intermountain West versus the coastal States, for the African American population, for the Hispanic American population, for the White population.

These are all things that need to be discussed in the context of an affordable healthcare system that recognizes the tremendous scientific advantages that we enjoy by virtue of having a first-class higher education system.

We have to make sure that that higher education system continues to advance opportunities for all people that can contribute to the body of knowledge that have made America the greatest country in the world.

Women currently making up the largest component of the higher education population will be leading the way among them.

Mr. Speaker, before I wrap up this Special Order that has acknowledged women's history in this country and acknowledges the work that is being done here in Congress to make sure the future for American women is brighter, better, more prosperous, and more fulfilling than ever, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a champion of healthcare revision that will benefit both men and women.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming

for yielding to me on this important topic. I am privileged to be here on the floor listening to this discussion that we have today.

I think of the many, many hours that roll back as far back as 2009, when the healthcare debate began to get intensified here in this Congress. From the beginning, for me, it was about freedom.

I often say to people that the most sovereign thing that we have is our soul. We are in charge of that. We are in control of that. With God's help, we are in the management of our own soul. The Federal Government hasn't figured out how to tax it, how to nationalize it, or how to manage it.

That may be a point of profundity, but what is the second most sovereign thing that we have, aside from our soul? Number two is our skin and everything inside it, our bodies.

The Federal Government has figured out under ObamaCare how to nationalize that, how to do—I call it a hostile takeover of our skin and everything inside it—and tell us: We are going to tax your paycheck and we are going to command you to take that money and pay a health insurance premium, not the policy of your choice, but the policy of Uncle Sam's choice.

Then that policy, the rules written within it and the thousands of pages of rules that have been written on ObamaCare since, will determine whether you get health care or at least whether you get it paid for out of your health insurance policy or not. That I call a hostile takeover of my skin and everything inside it.

It is abhorrent to me for a free people to be subjugated to such a law. Yet, the other side of this is that we have had elections in 2010, 2012, 2014, and now an election coming up in 2016.

The results of this upcoming election might be the one where we finally set the full 100 percent "rip it out by the roots as if it had never been enacted" ObamaCare.

"Repeal it completely and entirely as if it had never been enacted" actually are the last words of the repeal bill that I wrote in the middle of the night after it passed here on March 22, 2010, a sleepless night, I might add.

The question was: What is the other side of the glorious repeal of ObamaCare? A number of really good things that we would have done by now if it weren't obstructed by the policy that exists in front of us that is named after our President.

The first and I think most important one is to provide for selling insurance across State lines. There is legislation there that has existed for years called the McCarran-Ferguson Act.

It is legislation that enables the States to write the mandates and the specifications in such a way that the States can be lobbied by large health insurance companies whose goal is to have a monopoly within each of those States.

That is trade protectionism that is allowed. It is in violation of the Com-

merce Clause in the Constitution, I might add. But the McCarran-Ferguson Act enables that.

We need to repeal the components of the McCarran-Ferguson Act so that a young man, while at the beginning of this dialogue in 2009 or 2010—a 23-year-old young man would be paying about \$6,000 a year for a typical health insurance policy in New Jersey, but a young man, same age, similarly situated in Kentucky, would be paying about \$1,000 a year.

This would let the young man from New Jersey buy the policy from Kentucky, which, eventually, the competition would bring the price down in New Jersey, probably wouldn't bring it up in Kentucky, and we would see that the opportunities we would have as Americans we could trade for health insurance in any State.

Free trade zones on health insurance, what a wonderful thing. Then the Federal mandates would be gone. They would be away.

That would mean that especially young people that could wisely manage their investments would be able to buy a health savings account. The way they were set up in 2003, a couple at age 20 could have invested \$5,150 a year. That was the max-out in an HSA.

If they spent about \$2,000 a year for normal medical costs and accrued the balance of that at the 40-year average of interest rate, they would arrive at 65 Medicare eligibility with approximately \$950,000 in their health savings account.

Uncle Sam's interest in that HSA at that point, that nearly \$1 million, would be to tax it as real income when it comes out of the HSA.

Well, I would say instead, if you could buy a Medicare replacement policy in the dollars, when we did the math on this, for the couple for \$144,000, the government would tax the balance. I would say keep the change tax free.

If you take yourself off of the Medicare rolls, the entitlement rolls, by buying a replacement annuitized, paid-up-for-life policy to replace the Medicare liability, keep the change tax free, say, \$150,000, around \$800,000 tax free, that becomes your retirement account.

The HSA has become now a life management account where you would be planning your health insurance. The more money you had in your HSA, the more deductible you could sustain, the higher deductible and the higher co-payment.

With that nest egg of an HSA, you could negotiate the health insurance premiums down. You would manage your way, get your exercise, get your check-ups, because you would want to be able to live long and healthy to spend all of that mad money, if you choose, that balance of \$800,000.

That is the kind of thing that is in front of us if we can get ObamaCare out of the way. Sell insurance across State lines, expand HSAs, address the

tort reform piece of this, which is billions of dollars a year that is unnecessarily spent on tests that are done to protect from the liability that is there.

With these packages, other good ideas that come from other Members doing this in the fashion and vision by our Founding Fathers, we go out to where all of the solutions are, out to the voices and ideas of the people, bring those ideas here.

Each of us, our job, the gentlewoman from Wyoming's job and mine, is to sort through the good ideas, bring the best ideas here to Washington, let our best ideas compete with the other good ideas, and put that out on the President's desk for the solutions that we really need.

I appreciate the attention and the opportunity to speak.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa for his leadership on this issue, for being a devoted husband, father, and father-in-law.

I know that the women in his life have influenced his perspective on these healthcare issues, as have so many of us. I thank him for participating in this discussion, this Special Order, celebrating Women's History Month.

I want to conclude the Special Order by highlighting two Republican women with whom I serve in Congress who are truly doing courageous things in their lives with their families.

First of all, Congresswoman CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, who is the highest ranking Republican woman in this conference, is our conference leader. She is the mother of three children.

One is a special needs child, a friend to all of us, a delightful young man who was born while she was serving in Congress, as were her other two children.

The devotion that CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS has to her family and to parents of special needs children has brought about important legislation that is good for parents and special needs children all over this country.

As we celebrate this Women's History Month, I want to acknowledge our colleague CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS for her important role in this Congress as a leader on this issue and many others.

I also want to acknowledge our colleague JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER, who is from the State of Washington. JAIME, during a pregnancy which occurred while she also was serving as a Member of this Congress, as she still does, experienced a pregnancy that would have brought about the death of her child.

But because she was courageous enough to test and, like Laura's Law, allow a rather experimental treatment where she was injected with a saline solution in utero that allowed that baby to continue to mature until its birth, at which point it was allowed to grow and had dialysis, and then, at a point at which that child had become big enough and healthy enough, received an organ transplant from JAIME

HERRERA BEUTLER's husband, the father of the child.

That child and that father and that mother, who we continue to serve with here in this Congress, are all doing well. This is the first known child to survive, given the condition that that child was identified as having before it was born.

Most doctors recommend that a parent terminate that pregnancy or, in many cases, that pregnancy will be terminated on its own without any involvement outside of the womb.

But in JAIME'S case, she took the extraordinary step of having a saline injection to allow that child to continue to grow and mature in a way that allowed it to be born.

This is a lovely child, another friend of all of ours, because, occasionally, that child visits us here in the Cloakroom behind this floor of the House.

What an honor to serve with these two courageous mothers who, while having these children and going through these extraordinary issues, are serving their States, their districts, their Nations in this Congress, and contributing to uplifting women in this country through their service to this Congress.

As I conclude this tribute to Women's History Month, I want to remind people that women in this Congress are making a difference with regard to legislation that affects all of us, whether they are in the avenues of natural resources, water, air—the areas that I spend most of my time on—whether they are in the areas of health care, jobs, or higher education.

The areas that women in Congress are interested in are as diverse as the areas that men are interested in, but women bring a different perspective to those same issues. Women look out into the future.

When I served in the Wyoming Legislature, our chief clerk, who sits up there just as these folks do and observes what is happening, was one day asked: Can you tell a difference between the way men and women legislate, regardless of whether they are Democrats or Republicans?

He said: Absolutely. Women are looking to the future. They are not focused on the next election. They are focused beyond the next election for what will be good for their children, their grandchildren, and future of the Nation.

□ 1445

As I observed his comments throughout my legislative years in Wyoming and now throughout my legislative years here, I think there is some truth to that. That is why I think it is so important that women be involved in the legislative process and participate in this great institution, which is the Congress of the United States, for the betterment of future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

## CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, we got word of a decision that may be the death knell for the budget proposal made by the majority of this body. The members of the self-styled Freedom Caucus have announced their refusal to support the plan that their own leadership has put forward. I am truly afraid of what they would offer as an alternative, because the budget being considered in committee this week is a far cry from what American families need.

Mr. Speaker, at its most fundamental level, a budget is two things: a guiding document and a statement of values. The budget that the House Republicans have put forward—the budget that is not enough for the Freedom Caucus—makes it clear that they value special interests more than working families. It is a guiding document to an America that is bereft of opportunity for those who have worked or have studied or have fought for it.

My colleagues and I are here on the floor tonight to support a very different plan—a budget that seeks to give everyday Americans the only opportunity they have ever asked for—the opportunity to work hard, to play by the rules, and to get ahead. It is a budget for the people, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that we call it The People's Budget.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Progressive Caucus budget would invest in our schools, our roads, our bridges, our workers, and our environment to put us back on the path to prosperity in a way that austerity never will, because the cuts of the past few years should have made one thing clear: trimming our spending does little to impact the long-term deficit, but it destroys working families, hinders the most vulnerable Americans, and threatens the future of our Nation.

The People's Budget would invest \$1 trillion in our bridges, roads, railways, and other infrastructure facilities to prevent the kind of devastating failures we have witnessed in Flint, Michigan.

The People's Budget would fully fund Head Start, capitalizing on one of the best opportunities to give our young