

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate our 46th Earth Day, it is critical that we recognize the opportunities that stem from addressing some of our most pressing environmental problems.

All too often we hear the argument that environmental policies are agents of economic destruction. From the Clean Power Plan to renewable energy development and energy-efficient technologies, every time a new environmental policy is proposed, we hear the same rhetoric: This will kill jobs, drive up costs, destroy trade, and stifle America's ability to succeed.

But the reality is those claims are simply not true. They have been debunked and proven wrong time and again, but the truth doesn't seem to matter when it comes to protecting our environment.

Without a doubt, one of America's greatest assets is the ingenuity of its people. Throughout our Nation's history, American innovation has triumphed in the face of great challenges. Unleashing that American innovation can bring big wins for both the environment and the economy.

There is no better example of this than when we look at our renewable energy sector. For decades, America has chased the promise of clean, domestic energy.

In recent years, costs for numerous critical clean energy technologies—wind power, solar panels, super-energy-efficient LED lights and electric vehicles—have fallen dramatically.

The accompanying surge in deployment has been impressive. While these technologies still represent a small percentage of their respective markets, that share is expanding at a rapid pace and influencing other markets.

Today the U.S. generates 3 times as much wind power and 20 times as much solar power as we did in 2008. This kind of thinking will help States meet the EPA's requirements laid out in the Clean Power Plan.

Compared with fossil fuel technologies, which are typically mechanized and capital-intensive, the renewable energy industry is more labor-intensive.

This means that, on the average, more jobs are created for each unit of electricity generated from renewable sources than from fossil fuels.

In addition to creating new jobs, increasing our use of renewable energy offers more important economic development benefits. Local governments collect property and income taxes and other payments from renewable energy project owners while owners of the land that wind projects are built on also receive lease payments ranging from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per megawatt of installed capacity.

A new study from the U.S. Energy Information Administration suggests

that, in the coming year, the booming solar sector will add more new electricity-generating capacity than any other energy sector, including natural gas and wind.

The more we support clean energy innovation and new technological ideas, the better positioned we are to reap the economic rewards.

Examples of those wins are all around, leading to States and communities investing in clean energy innovation and developing smart, low-cost technologies to help reduce energy costs.

On this front, my home State of Illinois is moving full steam ahead. The city of Chicago has partnered with utility companies and citizen groups to work on a new initiative to get 1 million smart thermostats into northern Illinois homes by 2020.

The innovative partnership offers rebates that will nearly halve the cost of thermostats that allow residents to control the temperatures of their homes via mobile devices. This helps us once again move the needle against climate change.

Of course, clean energy technology isn't our only energy innovation success story. Energy efficiency is truly our Nation's greatest energy achievement.

Without the gains in energy efficiency made since 1973, it is estimated that today's U.S. economy would require 60 percent more energy than we currently consume.

Energy efficiency improvements over the last 40 years have reduced our national energy bill by more than \$700 billion.

Instead of working from the assumption that tighter regulations will hurt our government's export share, we should focus on the edge that we gain from innovation.

This Earth Day, I challenge my colleagues to realize the opportunity that climate change provides us and support solutions that allow us to turn what used to be daunting challenges into profitable opportunities.

MINNESOTA'S SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IS THE LAND OF HOCKEY

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two young men from my district, Riley Tuft and Nick Althaus; Nick Althaus for his memorable performance at the Minnesota High School State Hockey Tournament last month, and Riley Tuft for his performance on the hockey rink all year.

Riley Tuft of Blaine has been named Mr. Hockey, an award given to the best high school senior hockey player in our great State of Minnesota. This season alone, Tuft scored an incredible 49 goals and had 36 assists for 85 points in only 31 games. That is an amazing 2.74 points per game.

Nick Althaus of St. Cloud won the Frank Brimsek Award, an annual award given to Minnesota's top senior goaltender.

In Minnesota, hockey is not just a sport, it is a way of life. Many young men and women work and train to win and participate in the best State hockey tournament in the country.

Congratulations to Nick and Riley for their hard work and incredible success this year, and best of luck in the future, both on and off the rink.

A STRONG WOMAN—INSIDE AND OUT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the strength and endurance of St. Cloud native Laura Knoblach, who just, last month, became the youngest woman to finish a double triathlon.

Laura finished the Double ANVIL Ultra Triathlon, a rigorous event that consisted of swimming 4.8 miles, biking 224 miles, and running two consecutive marathons. She finished all of this in less than 36 hours.

Not only did Laura complete an arduous triathlon, but she did so for a good cause. She created a GoFundMe page titled "A Tri to End Trafficking," which raised money to help educate South African girls and prevent them from becoming victims of sex trafficking.

Laura Knoblach is currently a junior at the University of Boulder in Colorado, where she studies secondary education and majors in English and Spanish. She hopes to one day teach English as a second language.

I have no doubt that Laura will accomplish all of her goals and more, as she is the perfect example that anything is possible if you work hard enough.

A COACH REMEMBERED

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the astounding life and legacy of Coach Dean Taylor, who recently passed away.

Coach Taylor founded the football program at Sartell High School and built it into the powerhouse program it is today.

From Sartell, he went on to become an assistant coach at St. John's University for eight seasons and then became head coach at St. Cloud Cathedral from 2009 to 2012. Coach Taylor's impressive football resume ultimately led to his induction into the Minnesota State Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

However, it is not just the X's and O's of coaching that we will remember about Coach Taylor. Coach Taylor will also—and maybe even more importantly—be remembered for the incredible impact he made on the lives of all the student athletes he touched.

Condolences to his wife, Kathy; his children, Steve and Kristi; as well as his many friends and loved ones. I thank you for sharing your husband and father with our community.

RESTORING AMERICANS' TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the fact that

we just experienced yet another tax day in America, I rise today to discuss a Federal agency that the American people have become extremely disenchanted with, the Internal Revenue Service.

Over recent years, Americans have watched information coming out detailing the inappropriate and unfortunate conduct by the IRS playing politics rather than implementing policy.

The American people should not fear that a government agency will make decisions based on partisan politics, which is why it is crucial Congress address this problem now and not in the future.

This is why I cosponsored H.R. 1798, which will prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning a tax status to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

I thank my colleague, Congressman RANDY NEUGEBAUER, and Senator TED CRUZ for their efforts in this initiative to restore some of the faith and trust the American people have lost in its institution of government.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, thousands of poor Americans started losing their SNAP, or food stamp, benefits.

All told, over the course of this year, as many as 1 million adults will be cut off from SNAP. That is because one of the harshest provisions in the 1996 welfare reform law says that adults working less than 20 hours a week or not enrolled in a job training program can only receive 3 months of SNAP in a 36-month period.

The problem is, however, that many areas of the country haven't fully recovered from the recession. There are no open jobs, and worker training slots are all full.

The economic recovery has been uneven across the country, and for many individuals—through no fault of their own—getting back to work has been difficult.

At the height of the recession, Governors across this country, both Democratic and Republican, asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow them to temporarily waive work requirements and provide SNAP benefits to unemployed, childless adults for longer periods of time.

But now some Governors are refusing to extend those work waivers even in areas of their States with high unemployment. For 1 million of the poorest Americans, to lose food assistance in the midst of this is unconscionable.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the poorest of the poor. These are childless adults whose income averages 29 percent of the poverty line, or about \$3,400 a year, a year. No one can live on that.

Many face multiple barriers to employment, including disability, limited education, and chronic homelessness. Their employment can be sporadic, often cycling in and out of low-wage jobs with unpredictable hours that do not lift them out of poverty.

What is most appalling is that about 60,000 of those who will be cut off from SNAP this year are veterans. That is right. These are the brave men and women who stood up to protect our country, and now we don't have the decency to help them put food on the table when they come home. We should be ashamed.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear about something. The 3-month limit on childless adults receiving SNAP is not a work requirement, despite what some of my Republican colleagues say. It is a time limit. There is no requirement that States offer work or job training to those who are about to lose their benefit. There is nothing here that incentivizes work. Rather, it penalizes those who are struggling the most.

Work requirements and other Federal assistance programs typically require people to look for work or accept any job or job training slot that is offered, but do not cut people off who are willing to work and are looking for a job simply because they cannot find one.

But that is not the case with SNAP. So individuals who have been searching for a job for months, who have applied to every job posting they have seen, and who can't get into a job training program because the wait list is too long are punished.

Study after study shows that the longer someone is unemployed, the harder it is to get hired. It is baffling to me that the Republicans' answer to them is: Sorry. You are out of luck.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that it takes someone who is unemployed about 6 months of looking to find a job.

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That is twice as long as the 3-month time limit. For the life of me, I can't understand how making someone hungrier helps them find a job faster. We should be making people's lives better, not harder.

This notion that some on the Republican side peddle that somehow SNAP is this overly generous program that people are just jumping to get into, it is ridiculous. It is false. The average SNAP benefit is \$1.40 per meal per day. That is meager. It is inadequate.

And this idea that SNAP is the root of our budget problems is outrageous. New data released from the Department of Treasury just last week shows that SNAP spending is falling. In the first half of the current fiscal year, SNAP spending was at its lowest level since 2010. Not only that, but SNAP caseloads are falling, too. That is due to the improving economy.

SNAP operated like it was supposed to during the recession. It was expanded to meet the needs of the mil-

lions who lost their jobs, of middle class families who never imagined they would need food assistance in the first place. And now, as our economy improves, fewer people need the assistance. But we are not there yet.

Cutting 1 million of the poorest Americans off from food assistance is wrong. Increasing hunger is wrong. And I would say to the Republican leadership of this House, the narrative that you have put forward about those in poverty does not reflect the reality. Rather than demonize the poor and diminish their struggle, we ought to come together to help, not hurt, people. We ought to end hunger now. This war on the poor has to stop.

IMPEACHMENT OF JOHN KOSKINEN

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the subject of justice.

As we look around the Capitol, there are effigies and paintings. Even in this Chamber, there are paintings of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, the visionaries of this Nation who envisioned a Nation and a government that was committed to liberty, tempered by law and justice. Their idea of justice was an equal application of the law to everyone, that there weren't two sets of laws—one law for the citizen and a different law for the bureaucrat or the elected official—but all laws were equally applied to every person.

I want to tell you the story of two Johns and how the law doesn't apply equally. The first John is a Mr. John Yates who, in 2007, was fishing for grouper in the Gulf of Mexico when a State conservation officer, who had Federal authority, approached his boat and asked to inspect his catch. Upon the inspection, he found that there were 72 grouper that were suspected to be under the minimum size. He ordered Mr. Yates to return to shore.

Now, Mr. Yates understood that this was not a serious crime, it was actually a civil action, and he could face a fine or he could lose his fishing license, a license issued by the government that he made his living with. But Mr. Yates made a mistake. He made a bad decision, because he ordered those suspect fish to be thrown back into the water. It was a mistake.

But after being punished for what he did wrong, catching small fish, 4 years later, in 2011, Mr. Yates was convicted of a Federal offense of destroying evidence under the Sarbanes-Oxley statutes. He went to jail. He also spent 3 years on a supervised release program for a Federal offense of destroying or tampering with evidence.

When the government wants to seek justice upon a citizen, there are over 4,500 criminal statutes and an endless