

CONGRATULATING ISRAEL ON ITS 68TH
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the democratic Jewish State of Israel as it marks its Independence Day.

Though the Jewish people have historical ties to Israel that date back millennia, in just 68 years of statehood, look at all that Israel has accomplished. Israel is a world leader in education, in technology, and in innovation. It is a vibrant and open democracy with a robust economy that thrives despite the constant threats that it faces daily.

The United States can have no greater friend than Israel not only because we share the same interests, but because we also share the same values and beliefs, such as democracy and the rule of law. That is why it is imperative that our two nations sign a new memorandum of understanding to ensure that Israel has the capability and the capacity to defend herself and her citizens from all threats and be a shining example of democracy for the entire region.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to work to strengthen the already-strong relationship between the U.S. and Israel. I congratulate the Jewish state and her citizens on its 68th Independence Day.

WAR ON DRUGS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is a major front on the war on drugs that is only now getting the attention it deserves. We will be discussing it later today on the floor dealing with opioid addiction.

Instead of arresting or citing over 600,000 people for marijuana last year, which had zero overdose deaths and which a majority of Americans think should be legal, we should redouble our efforts to fight the abuse of opioid prescription painkillers and the epidemic of opioid deaths.

Because of reckless marketing and lax oversight, there is an overdose death every 19 minutes; 78 people a day die, 20,000 last year. This is directly related to many heroin addicts. Deaths on heroin are increasing because the addict's drug of choice when their supply of opioids is interrupted shifts to heroin.

2.1 million suffer from substance abuse and 1,000 people a day are admitted to emergency rooms for opioid related causes. We have a challenge that needs to be addressed. There is plenty of blame to go around: the drug company's marketing practices, pill mills and unscrupulous doctors whose government regulators were asleep at the switch; and the DEA, which cannot get its priorities or its story straight.

I am hopeful that today's action on the floor will be the first step. As my

friend and colleague from Connecticut pointed out, today's legislation really doesn't speak meaningfully to what we are going to have to do: prevention and treatment, which ultimately can help disrupt this cycle of abuse.

There is one simple step that I think would make a profound difference. We are introducing legislation today to deal with disposal of prescription drugs. We are issuing approximately one prescription per adult in the United States, 260 million this year.

There are tens of millions of these pills floating around and left over. And what do people do? Many of them just flush them down the toilet or leave them in the medicine cabinets.

Well, flushing them into the sewer system is not a good idea because we are slowly medicating millions of Americans who are having traces of these drugs showing up in their system from drinking water. They are expensive to remove. Leaving it in the medicine cabinet is how many people find drugs to abuse. Teenagers steal unused medicines out of medicine cabinets in homes that they visit or from family members.

We are proposing a safe drug disposal tax credit, which would offer qualified entities such as retail pharmacies, narcotics treatment programs, and long-term care facilities a tax credit to be able to deal with disposal of these prescription drugs on site.

Locating safe drug disposal and take-back programs at pharmacies and other healthcare sites will increase access to this safe medicine disposal and will remove millions of these highly dangerous drugs from the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

By all means, let's have the debate today. Let's start moving forward. A look at the broader challenges of treatment and prevention is long overdue. Hopefully, the DEA gets its priorities straight in the future.

But, in the meantime, providing a tax credit for safe disposal is a small step, which should have bipartisan support and will make a difference in every community across America to end this epidemic of prescription overdose deaths.

CONGRATULATING BROCKWAY'S
GRACE PRESTON

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the efforts of Grace Preston, a sixth grader from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Grace visited Washington, D.C., last week to accept the Prudential Spirit of Community Award, a ceremony at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. Grace was one of only two students in Pennsylvania to be honored with this award, which recognizes outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Grace has raised more than \$4,000 in the past 3 years to improve the lives of animals in her community through the sale of homemade dog treats, cat toys, and flea and tick repellent.

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She became interested in helping animals after her family adopted a pet from a local shelter.

Through her efforts, Grace has raised enough money to enable the local Humane Society to purchase a storage shed, as well as other supplies, such as rabies gloves. She has also provided animal oxygen mask kits to a local fire department for pets that have been caught in fires; has helped pay for a shelter dog's surgery; and has collected animal food for the pets of needy families.

Grace's work is an example that students all across the Nation should look toward. I know she has made her school and her community proud.

LEADERSHIP FOR CLEAN WATER

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week was National Drinking Water Week. This designation is to highlight the importance of drinking water across our Nation and the need to reinvest in the infrastructure that brings tap water into our homes.

Quality water has been credited with vastly extending the life expectancy here in the United States by eliminating the sickness from diseases that are spread through drinking water, such as typhoid fever. While we have made great progress in improving water across our Nation, there is always more work to be done.

In Congress, since 1996, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund has helped to fund public water systems and infrastructure projects in order to meet public health goals and to comply with Federal regulations. Last year alone, Congress provided \$2.3 billion to the EPA for local drinking water and sewer construction projects through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Funds.

Good water is not only vital for good health, but it is also essential for our State's number one industry: agriculture. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania continues to provide substantial food, fiber, and energy for residents across our Nation. With this in mind, promoting and sustaining healthy waters and soil is essential.

As chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, with jurisdiction over Federal conservation programs that are administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service and forestry practices, we work to provide leadership and resources to promote the health of our watersheds, soils, and forests.

To help meet those needs, I was proud to work on the 2014 farm bill, which provides many positive tools for farmers and landowners. From on-farm operations to estuary management, the United States Department of Agriculture plays an important role in

managing and in improving both water and soil quality. The farm bill is the guiding authorization for the Department. Programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, or the CRP, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or the EQIP, and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, or the RCPP, are a few of the critical ones that directly impact soil and water quality in our country and certainly in Pennsylvania.

As we have seen so many times in Pennsylvania and around the country, once a watershed or water source is harmed, it often takes generations to recover. History shows us just how important clean water is. It also demonstrates how hard it is to fix a water source once it has been contaminated.

I remain committed in Washington and certainly in my home State of Pennsylvania to helping our professionals, volunteers, business community, nonprofits, such as Trout Unlimited and Watershed Associations, as well as academic and research institutions, such as Penn State, in their efforts to preserve our State's water and our country's water for future generations.

MR. SCOTT'S VISIT TO OREGON

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, when I travel around northwest Oregon, I often hear from parents who struggle to afford child care, which in Oregon can cost as much as a year of college tuition. I hear from people who can't find work because their skills don't match up with the jobs that are available in their areas, and I hear from students who are overwhelmed by the cost of their college educations.

These are not problems without solutions. As policymakers, we should be addressing the challenges our families face. It is possible to give every child the opportunity to succeed, to close the achievement gap, to make college accessible and affordable, to expand family-friendly workplace policies, and to make sure we have a 21st century workforce. In fact, we can't afford to let these problems continue to hold us back.

This week, I welcomed to Oregon Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. Together we saw and discussed some of the struggles our working families face. We had a whirlwind day that included substantive discussions about how to give children, young people, and working families the support they need to succeed. We talked about how to open the doors of opportunity that are closed for too many.

I invited Mr. SCOTT to Oregon because he has a remarkable record of standing up for working families. On the Education and the Workforce Committee, we worked together on the

Every Student Succeeds Act to strengthen our public schools, and on the Older Americans Act to support our growing population of older adults.

He has also been a leader for working families by his standing up to attacks on the National Labor Relations Board and by his protecting retirees through his support for the Department of Labor's rule to ban conflicts of interest in retirement advice. During his visit this week, I showed Mr. SCOTT the innovative and collaborative nature that sets Oregon apart.

Oregon is a leader in addressing barriers that are faced by working families. Last year our State legislature raised the State's minimum wage and passed legislation to provide workers with paid sick days to care for themselves or their families.

At our forum on early childhood development, we discussed how this country's workplace policies have not kept up with our changing workforce. Andrea Paluso from Family Forward Oregon told us that even the iconic image of the Cleaver family does not accurately reflect the diversity of American families.

In fact, Barbara Billingsley, the actress who played June Cleaver on "Leave It to Beaver," was in real life a single, working mom.

We heard from others about how food insecurity and hunger interfere with the ability of too many children to focus in school and about how early childhood education correlates to positive health outcomes and academic achievement later in life.

I am proud of Oregon for taking so many positive steps to protect working families, but these changes shouldn't be happening just for some. We should be having these conversations and discussions in Congress as well. Our economy will be stronger and our families will be healthier when we acknowledge that families need policies that work for them, not against them. We need equal pay for women, good wages, paid leave, and affordable child care to support families in Oregon and across the country.

Looking toward our future, I want students today to have the same opportunities I had. I worked my way through community college, college, and law school, and I graduated with a very manageable amount of student debt. Unfortunately, that opportunity is out of reach for too many of today's families.

Again, Oregon is a national leader. Oregon Promise, our State's free community college plan, will help put education within reach for thousands of students. Oregon's leaders have recognized that the future of our economy relies on an educated and innovative workforce to create and fill the jobs of the 21st century.

During our visit, I introduced Mr. SCOTT to Fernando, who participates in the Portland Community College's very successful Future Connect Program. This program connects low-in-

come, first-generation college students with financial aid resources, personalized academic advising, internships and job training, and an intensive summer orientation, all of which help them to succeed in college. This program is critical to Fernando, who is a DACA student, and to other first-generation college students. Fernando told us that Future Connect made a difference, it made him feel at home in college. Oregon knows it is not enough just to get students to college, but that it is important that they stay there and finish their degrees. Now Fernando is off to a 4-year university and is pursuing his plans to become a dentist.

I am incredibly proud of the State I represent. Congress can learn a lot from the Oregon spirit of innovation and collaboration. I was glad to show Mr. SCOTT the progress we have made in Oregon, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to remove the many obstacles that are holding back working families and that are keeping young people from achieving their full potential, because when we open the doors of opportunity to everyone, we all succeed.

A STRONGER AMERICA OR A PATH TO ECONOMIC DISASTER

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, in 2009 and 2010, when the other side of the aisle had complete control of Congress and the White House, the American people saw what liberals would pass when given free rein and a blank check.

With Dodd-Frank, Democrats deemed it necessary to punish small community banks with burdensome regulations they cannot afford to comply with. Dodd-Frank created a new, unaccountable bureaucracy called the CFPB, which is funded in a way that obscures its transparency and prevents Congress' direct oversight of the agency. The lack of accountability like that seen with the CFPB and the heavy hand of agencies like the EPA and the IRS have become hallmarks of this administration.

With the stimulus bill, Democrats gave handouts to their union and so-called green energy friends. Taxpayers were on the hook for loan guarantees to companies like Solyndra, which used its political connections in the White House to push through irresponsible loan approvals. When Solyndra went bankrupt, it was at the cost of the American people. Many other smaller boondoggles came out of the stimulus: silly studies on ducks, over \$1 million on road signs that promote the stimulus, and over \$3 million for a tunnel for turtles in Florida.

This leaves ObamaCare. Too many Americans have felt the negative consequences of what boils down to a government takeover of the healthcare industry. The President claimed this law would decrease premiums by \$2,500 per