

to working with them to address the effect this bill may have on them. The bill attempts to offset this effect by increasing funding authorization and ensures that we are not taking from one group just to pay another.

Thirdly, this legislation would clarify Congress' intent when we extended eligibility for housing assistance programs to the COFA migrants. This bill ensures that U.S. citizens, nationals, or lawful permanent residents are not displaced and are given priority when applying for housing benefits.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, this bill would commission independent research on the viability of the current compacts and make recommendations on policy alternatives moving forward. I do hope that this research will provide strategic guidance as we move toward renewal of the compacts in 2023 and ensure that we are administering these agreements in the best way.

I am so very pleased to count the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. TAKAI) as an original cosponsor of my bill.

As this Congress discusses solutions for the crisis in Puerto Rico, it is important that we also discuss challenges that the other territories face, especially the challenge of supporting the Compact of Free Association. While the challenges facing affected jurisdictions are nowhere near as serious as Puerto Rico, Mr. Speaker, doing nothing would only welcome economic and security challenges down the road.

I do look forward to this bill becoming law and it being a tremendous help to jurisdictions affected by the Compact impact.

INDEPENDENCE PLAZA HONORS AMERICA'S SPACE PROGRAM

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 1972, my dad was transferred from northwest Alabama to southeast Texas. I remember the first time I got off the Gulf Freeway, headed east down NASA Road 1, and saw the Johnson Space Center and the Nassau Bay resort hotel with an NBC studio on top. Right then, it hit me: my neighbors were astronauts, Moon walkers. My life was changed forever.

The next 9 years were rather dull. Three missions of Skylab and one handshake with the Russians on Apollo-Soyuz.

The excitement came back in 1981. The Space Shuttle *Columbia* flew for the first time. The space shuttle was the heart and soul of human spaceflight until July 21, 2011, when three words ended the program: "Houston, wheels stop."

Those words were heard in the dark, 4:57 a.m. Texas time. My home was dark for 4½ years. That darkness will end on January 23 when Space Center Houston opens Independence Plaza right by the Johnson Space Center. Independence Plaza will have the Space

Shuttle *Independence* atop the 747 transport carrier.

Our space shuttles flew 133 successful flights, with crews as small as two or as large as seven, with 55,000 pounds of payload. Our shuttles carried astronauts from 17 nations: Belgium, Canada, France, Israel, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, and America.

Our shuttle built the International Space Station, which has had a human being on board since November 2, 2000. Scott Kelly has been on board the ISS since March 27, 2015. Scott must love the view because he will come home after 1 year in orbit.

The Hubble Space Telescope would have been the biggest piece of space junk ever without the space shuttle. When it was launched in 1990, it was a telescope that needed glasses. Its vision was blurry. Five shuttle missions followed, fixed its vision, gave it decades of new life, and changed history.

But Independence Plaza will do more than remind us of the achievements of our space shuttle. This exhibit will ensure we never forget the two crews we lost on space shuttles. Dick, Michael, Judy, Ron, Ellison, Greg, and Christa touched the face of God when *Challenger* exploded after 73 seconds of flight on January 28, 1986. Eighteen years later, on February 1, 2003, we lost Rick, Willie, Michael, Kalpana, David, Laurel, and Ilan when *Columbia* returned mortally wounded and broke up over their home, my home State of Texas. Independence Plaza will ensure that these 14 heroes will always be revered, and a new, young generation of Americans will follow their lead and soar into the heavens.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FINAL STATE OF THE UNION MESSAGE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, one recalls the state of the Union that President Obama inherited upon taking office: overwhelming problems occasioned by the near collapse of the economy, 700,000 jobs lost before he was even in office half a month. It would take many months more to arrest the slide. There were fierce battles, arguments about whether we should spend money to try to help people and industries.

His work was complicated by the announcement early on by the Republican leader in the Senate that his number one goal was not to fix the economy or deal with health care or the environment or national security; it was to prevent President Obama from being reelected to a second term.

Time has shown that the money that was spent was critical, and most independent experts agree that we should have invested more heavily in things like rebuilding and renewing America.

Even so, our performance has been better than any of the other developed economies.

Those results were achieved with divisions and arguments that continue to be played out today on the national political stage as there are people seeking the Presidency later this year. But my hope is that, as the President addresses this Chamber tonight, there might be an opportunity to move past some of the divisions and controversy.

My hope is, as the President looks up in the gallery and sees the First Lady, that he might pause and acknowledge her important work in health and nutrition; that he might spend just 3 minutes on a topic that can bring people together; that he would admit that we as a government still pay too much to the wrong people to grow the wrong crops in the wrong places, that we would be far better off if we weren't subsidizing people to grow food that actually makes Americans sick.

I would hope that he would propose that the Federal Government help more farmers and ranchers with research and market access at home and abroad. Let's pay those farmers and ranchers to protect water quality and water quantity.

I would hope that he would propose that we subsidize more healthy food in our schools and for senior citizens and low-income people.

I would hope that he would acknowledge the revolution that is taking place in food and agricultural thought and policy in this country, as documented in the recent PBS special, "In Defense of Food," with Michael Pollan.

There is an exciting national movement promoting value-added agriculture, healthy food, animal welfare, and environmental protection that will strengthen rural and small town America and provide more satisfaction for the men and women who work in agriculture.

It would only take 3 minutes, but it would be an important milestone for this revolution of food and farm policy that cannot happen soon enough.

RECOGNIZING COACH FRANK BEAMER ON HIS RETIREMENT

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

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Frank Beamer on the occasion of his retirement as the head football coach at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University—more commonly known and fondly known as Virginia Tech—located in Blacksburg, Virginia, as Coach Beamer concludes his highly successful career. For almost three decades, Coach Beamer has been a tremendous leader in Virginia and a mentor to hundreds of student athletes.

In 29 seasons under Coach Beamer's leadership, Virginia Tech football has enjoyed unprecedented success, notching 237 wins, three Big East championships, four Atlantic Coast Conference

championships, and the opportunity to play for a national championship. His “Beamer Ball” style of play has led Virginia Tech to become one of the Nation’s most respected college football programs.

In 1999, Coach Beamer was named the consensus Associated Press College Football Coach of the Year.

Coach Beamer’s first postseason berth as head coach at Virginia Tech was a trip to the 1993 Independence Bowl game, which resulted in a victory for the Hokies. It was only fitting that Coach Beamer ended his coaching career with a 55–52 victory over the University of Tulsa in the 2015 Independence Bowl, capping off a school record 23 straight postseason bowl games.

Raised a short drive from Blacksburg, in Hillsville, Virginia, Coach Beamer graduated from Hillsville High School, where he earned 11 varsity letters as a three-sport athlete in football, basketball, and baseball. He went on to attend Virginia Tech as an undergraduate and started 3 years as a cornerback, playing on the Hokies’ 1966 and 1968 Liberty Bowl teams.

While attending Radford University to receive his master’s degree in guidance, he began his coaching career in 1969 as an assistant at southwest Virginia’s Radford High School.

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From there, he went on to work as a graduate assistant at Maryland for 1 year, followed by the Citadel for five seasons, where he was defensive coordinator for two of those.

In 1979, Coach Beamer joined Murray State University as defensive coordinator and was named head coach in 1981.

In 1987, he made his way back to his native southwest Virginia to take the reins at Virginia Tech. He has brought honor to southwest Virginia and Virginia Tech by always being the consummate Virginia gentleman and a darn good football coach to boot.

He has devoted his time and passion to the teams he has coached as well as the greater southwest Virginia community. In fact, in 2004, he was presented with a Humanitarian Award by the National Conference of Community and Justice for his contributions to fostering justice, equity, and community in the Roanoke Valley.

As evidenced by his incredible success, Coach Beamer has much to be proud of and can look back on an honest and accomplished career. His passion for coaching led him to achieve what many coaches only dream of.

He has positively shaped the futures and touched the lives of the Virginia boys and girls that he has dealt with—particularly, the boys on his football team—and has made us a better State. This is truly the great measure of a great coach.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to help commemorate the career of a remarkable man. After 29 years of dedicated

leadership to Virginia Tech and the greater community, I would like to thank Coach Beamer for his service. I wish him and his family all of the best in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO OTIS CLAY

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Otis Clay, an outstanding international artist who lived, worked, and was intimately involved in the North Lawndale community of Chicago, which I am proud to represent.

Otis Clay was born in Waxhaw, Mississippi, and ultimately made his way to the west side of Chicago, where he made his home.

Otis began his musical career as a gospel singer and, like many other artists, switched over to rhythm and blues and recorded his first hit in 1967, “That’s How it is When You’re in Love,” which reached number 34 on the national charts.

Otis performed and recorded in Europe, Japan, and Switzerland. Although Otis Clay reached national acclaim, he continued to live in the North Lawndale community, was a regular at local churches, festivals, and community events. He established his own recording studio, owned a local cleaners, and was known as a regular in the community.

I was fortunate to have Otis Clay attend and perform at many events that I sponsored over the years, and it was indeed an honor to be able to call him my personal friend.

Otis was involved with the Tobacco Road Project and was instrumental, along with Alderman Dorothy Tillman, in establishing the Harold Washington Cultural Center in the Third Ward on the south side of Chicago.

My neighborhood and our world community has lost a great artist and entertainer, but also a great human being. I extend condolences to his family. I know that, when the gates swing open, Otis Clay will come walking in.

E-FREE ACT

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to tell the story of Sabrina Fregoso of Diamond Springs, California. Sabrina is one of the tens of thousands of women harmed by the permanent sterilization device Essure.

In August of 2012, Sabrina welcomed her fourth child, at which time she discussed permanent sterilization with her physician. Her doctor recommended Essure and assured her that the procedure was safe.

Immediately following the Essure procedure, Sabrina began to notice a

consistent and substantial decline in her health, including losing control of her bowels, extensive weight gain, severe bloating, hair loss, and sores covering her body. Her lower back, hips, and leg joints became painful. She experienced numbness in her feet and sharp heel pain that made it difficult to walk.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise again as their voice to tell this Chamber that their stories are real, their pain is real, and their fight is real.

My bill, the E-Free Act, can halt this tragedy by removing this dangerous device from the market. I urge my colleagues to join in this fight because stories like Sabrina’s are too important to ignore.

KEMP FORUM: ANTIPOVERTY

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend brought together a group of innovators at the Kemp Forum on Expanding Opportunity in South Carolina. This important forum highlighted new and creative ideas to address the stubborn problem of poverty in America.

The Federal Government spends more than half a trillion dollars each and every year on antipoverty measures. That is a significant devotion of resources. Yet, while some progress has been made in the last 50 years, today there are still nearly 50 million Americans living in poverty.

Nobody would deny that the results fall far short from where they need to be. This is because, at the end of the day, success in the war on poverty is measured not at the program level, but on the individual level. Success isn’t about how many programs exist, but how many people can improve their lives by moving up and out of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, one of the fundamental principles of this great Nation is the idea of freedom of opportunity, the opportunity to find work, to support yourself, and to support your family.

By working with local community groups like YouthBuild and leaders like Bob Woodson, I have been able to see numerous success stories, like my guest for tonight’s State of the Union address, Lavell Brown.

This young man has successfully worked with community groups in North Chicago to grow as an individual and to get on a path to a sustainable career, and he is now giving back to others at YouthBuild Lake County.

This model of empowering the individual and helping them develop the skills needed to escape poverty is what we need to replicate millions of times over. If we can combine the focus on individuals with a relentless drive to innovate, I am confident that, in the next 50 years, our efforts to end poverty and provide greater opportunities will be a success.