

be provided to whomever the government requires, and that, obviously and appropriately, will include those in the LGBT community.

Mr. Speaker, if the Russell amendment is discriminatory, then so is the First Amendment, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If allowing a religious entity to employ persons who share its beliefs is discriminatory, then so are all these other Congresses. It is inaccurate to portray the Russell amendment as anything other than a narrowly drawn effort to protect religious freedom.

NEW ENGLAND COMPOUNDING CENTER TRAGEDY

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

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a public health atrocity that is being ignored by the current administration and the current administration's continued failure to ensure justice for American citizens.

As many Members in this body will recall, in 2012, the New England Compounding Center manufactured and distributed nonsterilized injections to clinics and hospitals around the Nation. After receiving those injections, more than 750 people nationwide developed fungal meningitis. To date, 76 people have died as a result.

As you can see by the illustration to my left, this is a nationwide issue. The epicenter, however, of the outbreak was in Michigan's Eighth District, which I proudly represent. More than 200 people became sick, and 15 people died after receiving the tainted injection from a clinic in our district.

Because of the reckless disregard for the health and safety of the recipients of these drugs, the Department of Justice secured 131 convictions against 14 individuals, including 25 counts of second degree murder against the two main defendants for the deaths occurring in seven States.

Although this outbreak happened almost 4 years ago, the consequences are still very real today. Just the other week I was approached by a gentleman whose wife had died as a result of a lethal injection she received. It was, of course, heart-wrenching to hear the agony he went through and continues to deal with after losing his best friend and wife to this terrible tragedy.

Whether it is someone who has lost a loved one or a victim now living with chronic pain and sickness or a family member caring for an ill victim, this is a national tragedy, and the people need to be heard.

Not only have the day-to-day lives of these victims been irretrievably altered, they have also been financially ruined. Just to give you an idea, copays on some of the drugs for the treatments required for this illness are

up to \$5,000 per month, and despite multiple bipartisan requests from Members of both this body and the Senate, the Department of Health and Human Services has rejected all requests to waive rights to collect on Medicare liens they have placed on the settlement issued last year. That means that victims will get very little from their compensation funds. In fact, to this date, they have received not a dime.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but now the Obama administration, through the Office of Management and Budget, has blocked the ability of victims to get compensation from the Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program, otherwise known as the AEAP for short. The AEAP was created utilizing funds from the Federal crime victims fund, a fund specifically set aside to compensate victims of crimes. The fund gets its resources from not taxpayer dollars, but through a special assessment on convicted criminals. They get it through criminal fines, penalties, and forfeited bail bonds.

Without any explanation, a bureaucrat at the Office of Management and Budget has blocked the decision of a Senate-confirmed Assistant Attorney General to compensate victims of this act which the Department of Justice has recognized as criminal.

These are innocent Americans whose lives have been destroyed by criminals who will never meet them, will never feel their pain, hear the pain in their voices, will never see the irreversible damage they have caused. But, Mr. Speaker, I see it, and the 17 other colleagues of mine who have signed this bipartisan letter to the Office of Management and Budget see it, too.

Justice must be served. If the Attorney General won't speak up to advocate for justice, as secured by the hard-working Assistant Attorneys General on this case, and the administration won't reverse its decision, then the citizens of this country and the victims and their families deserve to know why they have been denied justice.

As a former prosecutor myself for my local community, I understand full well that victims of crimes need an advocate to stand up for them. Nothing—and I mean nothing—will reverse the harm that has been caused by this act. But at the very least, we must ensure justice for the people, and we must hold those responsible accountable for their actions. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 54 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all to whom the authority of government is given. Help them to attend to the immediate needs and concerns of the moment, all the while enlightened by the majesty of Your creation and Your eternal Spirit.

The season of graduation for millions of American youth is upon us. May our appreciation as a Nation of the value of education among those who are our future be incentive enough to guarantee its importance in our public policy considerations.

May all that is done within the people's House this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ZELDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to have held an essay competition for elementary school students throughout the Second Congressional District of South Carolina. The "Smiling Faces, Beautiful Places" essay competition received

over 125 submissions where the students described their favorite moment in South Carolina history.

Helen Miller, a third grade student at Brennen Elementary School in Columbia, wrote a winning essay on the Revolutionary Battle of Charleston that took place in 1780. Jack Hinchey, a third grade student at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, wrote his winning essay on the pirate Blackbeard.

I appreciate all of the other schools that submitted essays to the "Smiling Faces, Beautiful Places" essay competition: Pontiac Elementary, Chapin Elementary, Gilbert Elementary, Forts Pond, Timmerman, Lake Carolina, Midway, and Round Top Elementary.

I am inspired to represent so many remarkable young people and dedicated educators in the Second Congressional District, and I was humbled to receive so many submissions.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HOUSING CRISIS

(Ms. MOORE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, despite the ongoing economic recovery that has seen the longest streak of private sector job growth in history, since the 2008 crash, the uneven recovery in housing markets has absolutely crushed the poor and working class and has left homeowners in poor areas underwater and has squeezed renters with a lack of units and high rents.

Shamefully, the GOP-controlled House has been an absentee landlord on this issue, and now we find out that the Republican nominee for President wanted the crash because it would be a good thing for rich guys like him to make more money. Maybe that is why the now-failed Trump Mortgage pushed subprime loans.

The American people deserve a Congress and a President who will keep them in their houses and in their homes.

SOCIAL SECURITY MAIL ACT

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Social Security has made no bones about how important it is for Americans to safeguard their Social Security numbers. Beneficiaries are warned time and again to protect their cards in order to avoid identity theft.

But commonsense safety measures should also be taken by Social Security. Unfortunately, the inspector general's recent report found that this agency is failing Americans in a very dangerous way. How so?

The Social Security Administration is including your Social Security num-

ber on the documents it mails. That means any lost or stolen letter from Social Security endangers the security of a beneficiary's identity.

This bad practice needs to stop now, and as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, I am working to fix it. In fact, this week I will introduce the Social Security MAIL Act. It is a commonsense solution to a problem that shouldn't exist. Let's get it done.

HOW THE WORLD'S LEADING SUPERPOWER SHOULD CONDUCT ITS BUSINESS

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what it is, but something is wrong with us. It makes me sick to my stomach to see a Presidential campaign that is an embarrassment to most thinking Americans.

I can't imagine any parent with good sense who would say to his or her child: Why don't you look at the Presidential election. Look and learn as to how to debate. Learn how to disagree with someone and remain on a high level.

This is disgusting and it is embarrassing. I just hope the American public is not okay with this. This is not the way the world's leading superpower should conduct its business.

The whole world is watching us, and we are watching TV, looking at the worst kinds of things that could be said by human beings from the United States of America. I certainly hope that the American people are not happy with what is going on.

NO MORE EXCUSES FROM TSA

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

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, why does it seem like no one at an airport security checkpoint has been delegated with that awesome, yet shockingly absent, power of common sense? Why is the 80-year-old granny in a wheelchair being harassed? Why is the U.S. military servicemember in uniform with a military ID on military orders having his or her toothpaste confiscated?

As the management and resource allocation issues rise that are plaguing the bureaucracy at the TSA, red flags are going up with the peak travel season nearly upon us. Some airline passengers report wait times of as long as 2 or 3 hours to get through security.

Long lines will only get longer if the TSA doesn't pursue a course correction, that of coordinating with airport authorities and airlines to ensure that staffing levels match peak travel times.

If you have four lanes being occupied and if you have a long wait, maybe you should occupy some more of the avail-

able security lanes. Allow law enforcement to do its law enforcement duties to free up more screeners to screen.

Airlines can do their part by knocking off the madness with the hidden baggage fees. The trick might help fill seats on planes, but it is resulting in more people taking their baggage through security.

By the way, the TSA doesn't have a funding issue. Last year this Congress gave it more than it asked for. No one wants to hear the TSA's excuses.

CELEBRATING GENE CONNOLLY

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate Gene Connolly, the principal of Concord High School—my alma mater—in Concord, New Hampshire, who will be retiring from his position at the end of this school year.

Over the past 14 years, Principal Connolly has served at the helm of Concord High School, helping to lead the school to multiple State championships and new academic heights. If it weren't for his diagnosis of ALS in July of 2014, there is no doubt that Principal Connolly would continue to serve the students of Concord High.

I had the privilege of meeting with Principal Connolly just last week in D.C. when he came to Congress to advocate for legislation to support ALS patients. It is a testament to his unparalleled leadership and courage that, even in the face of extreme adversity, Principal Connolly is spending his time in advocating for legislation that will benefit ALS patients in the future. He has changed the lives of generations of Concord students.

While we are all sad that Principal Connolly's tenure will come to a close this summer, there is no doubt that his leadership, his courage, and his spirit will continue to inspire future generations of students at Concord High and beyond.

BERTA SOLER

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise that President Obama has agreed to arm Communist Vietnam and that he continues to extend diplomatic niceties and concessions to authoritarian regimes that show no intention of changing their brutal tactics.

These overtures to the Castros in Cuba have resulted in a prominent human rights defender, Berta Soler—right here in this poster—the leader of the peaceful prodemocracy group, the Ladies in White—Las Damas de Blanco—and 27 others being arrested this week and facing charges of resistance