

Organizations like the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida are stepping up to the challenge and informing communities in Florida and across our Nation about these issues, advocating for better public policies and working every day to improve the lives of individuals afflicted with this difficult disease through research and education. Epilepsy can affect anyone, children and adults alike, and it is crucial to inform communities on how to respond in an emergency.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my south Florida community to join and celebrate this wonderful organization at the annual Unmasking Epilepsy Masquerade on October 13 in the Coral Gables Museum, located in my congressional district.

Thank you to the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida for all that it continues to do.

□ 1015

Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Susan Dean, who will be retiring from this esteemed institution at the end of October, after 19 years of invaluable service to so many women Members who have made their marks in the Halls of Congress.

Susan has been in charge of the magnificent Lindy Claiborne Boggs Congressional Women's Reading Room with professionalism, efficiency, and care, while keeping the historical room so immaculately preserved.

From changes in leadership, to the enactment of landmark legislation, to the inauguration of the Capitol Visitor Center, to the unveiling of a myriad of statues and portraits and innumerable nights where votes have run past midnight, much has transpired during Susan's tenure in the House.

Since I met Susan in 1997, I have heard her recount the magnificence of the Lindy Boggs suite, and it truly never ceases to amaze me. Susan has provided a great service to our constituents by graciously offering them a personalized tour of this hidden gem.

The people's House will suffer a great loss with Susan's departure, and she will be deeply missed by her many friends here in this Chamber.

Please join me in wishing Susan Dean all the best as she enjoys her first few months of retirement traveling across our country visiting family and friends.

Godspeed, Susan Dean, mi amiga.

REPUBLICAN CRUSADE AGAINST THE IRS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, currently, in the House Judiciary Committee, there is an unusual spectacle unfolding. Now, a number of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have made it a crusade to war against the IRS. They have cut staff, budgets,

refused to help it collect money that is due and owed. They have made it easier for cheats to avoid their obligations. But this assault on the IRS Commissioner takes that war to a new low.

I would invite anybody listening to this presentation right now to go to the internal channel in the House, number 42, or go to cspan.org to be able to watch it yourself. Walk down to Room 2237 Rayburn and watch this play out.

I have had a chance to get to know John Koskinen, the IRS Commissioner, over the course of this last year, and I have come to respect and admire him. I would suggest to anybody trying to put this in context, trying to understand the give-and-take, google Mr. Koskinen, and then google some of his fiercest critics who are going to be on display at the Judiciary Committee today.

Which of his critics would you imagine to be entrusted with being the chair of the board of trustees for their prestigious university, should they have attended one? Mr. Koskinen was.

Which of them would have been successful in business as a turnaround artist in some of the most difficult and challenging commercial transactions? Mr. Koskinen was. And then walk away from material and business success to volunteer for some of the most challenging jobs in Government? Mr. Koskinen did.

Which of these members of the Judiciary Committee that are attacking Mr. Koskinen would have been picked by a President of their own party to take some of the most challenging and difficult and important tasks? Mr. Koskinen was. The Y2K czar, when we were concerned about what would happen in the year 2000 and the integrity of computer systems; Mr. Koskinen was administrator for the District of Columbia when that city was turned around.

Which of them would have been asked by a President of the other party to step in and handle a major systemic challenge? The IRS Commissioner, a Democrat, was asked by the Bush administration to step in and right the ship of Freddie Mac during the near meltdown of the global economy.

And he came back, volunteering for one of the most difficult tasks in government, to deal with an IRS that has been underfunded, understaffed, while Congress makes its job almost impossible by making the Tax Code more complex each and every year. John Koskinen did.

Google the people who are attacking him and see if any of them have accomplishments that are remotely equal to what this distinguished American did and has done and continues to do.

This is a shameful display. This gentleman is being attacked for things that predated his tenure, not high crimes and misdemeanors and corruption, but because they don't like what went on there, and they are trying to find somebody to blame other than themselves.

Look at what is going on in the Judiciary Committee. Google these people; evaluate for yourselves.

The American people deserve better than what is going on now, and certainly, Mr. Koskinen does.

CONGRATULATING CLEARWATER POLICE OFFICER JONATHAN WALSER

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man who has served our country and his community as a U.S. Marine, a sheriff's deputy, and as a police detective.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my very dear friend and American patriot, a man of deep and abiding Christian faith, Mr. Jonathan Walser, on his retirement from the Clearwater Florida Police Department.

After serving his country in the United States Marine Corps for 6 years, Officer Walser opted to continue serving his community by joining the Pasco County Sheriff's Department in 1994 as a detention deputy. Two years later, Walser joined the Clearwater Police Department and began a career that has made an incredible impact on our entire Clearwater community.

Early on, Officer Walser demonstrated remarkable commitment and leadership, earning a highly successful rating at the conclusion of his new-hire probationary period.

Officer Walser would serve in several specialty assignments during his career. He served as a field training officer and a member of the emergency response team.

He also served for more than a decade on the Clearwater Police Department honor guard team. As an honor guard member, Officer Walser has represented the department at hundreds of funerals and memorial services and, in particular, has honored the families of fallen officers, a duty most personal to him.

Officer Walser served as a community police officer on Clearwater's Wood Valley Community policing team in 2001 and 2002.

In June 2002, Officer Walser was assigned to serve on the traffic enforcement team motorcycle unit, a role in which he focused on traffic safety, intoxicated driving, and crash investigations. Jonathan most compassionately used his department motorcycle as a tool to connect with the community, frequently posing for photos with kids sitting on the motorcycle.

In August 2011, Officer Walser transferred to the criminal investigations division burglary unit to serve as a detective. During his time as a detective, he was continually lauded for his superior investigative abilities and report-writing skills, in addition to his passion for being actively engaged in the community and volunteering at local events.

In 2015, Officer Walser returned to the traffic enforcement team motorcycle unit, where he served until his recent retirement.

Officer Walser also serves as an active board member with the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 10. He has served as the president of Lodge 10 for an incredible 12 years, and has been selected 11 times as the FOP Lodge 10 Member of the Year.

Officer Walser is not only highly respected by FOP members, but also by his fellow Clearwater Police Department colleagues, City of Clearwater leadership, and a broad base of community leaders. Because of his exceptional service, Officer Walser has received the Chief's Unit Citation for his service with the honor guard team and the burglary unit.

When asked about Officer Walser, Clearwater Police Chief Dan Slaughter said:

Officer Walser proves that you don't need to be a supervisor to be a remarkable leader. I have never met a person more dedicated to the officers, their families, and the entire community.

I couldn't agree more with Chief Slaughter.

Mr. Speaker, John Walser is a dear friend of mine. He is a dear friend of so many in the Clearwater community, a constant source of faith-based counsel, a compassionate leader, a man who deeply loves his family, deeply loves his community, and deeply loves the God in whom he daily puts his trust.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking a remarkable person, Officer Jonathan Walser, for his years of service to our country and to our community in Florida. We wish him the very best in his retirement.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Hispanic Caucus, I rise today to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, the rich history, the culture, and the traditions of the Latino communities throughout our Nation and the world.

The United States of America is a nation of immigrants past and present, and the stories of the Latino communities who live in California's San Joaquin Valley are similar to the millions of stories of other immigrant families who have come to our country striving for the American Dream. They have come to our country from around the world.

Working together, we can ensure that policies that benefit our economy and keep families together, like the expanded DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and DAPA, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans, as well as comprehensive immigration reform, are enacted. This is important to fix a broken immigration system in America today.

These policies would move our country forward and provide a path to earned citizenship—not amnesty, but earned citizenship—so that individuals who only know the United States as their home can achieve the American Dream, the American Dream which is still a shining light around the world for people that are oppressed. Let us never forget what the American Dream embodies not just in our country, but for people around the world.

Please join me in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and the values, the dedications, and the rich diversity of immigrant families, of which my family was one and the majority of families in our country at some time or another were the proud immigrants from some other part of the world, that make this United States the greatest country in the world today.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to join in celebrating the 25th anniversary of Armenia. Twenty-five years ago today, Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union and, once again, the Republic of Armenia was established.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit Armenia for the first time, and it truly felt like coming home. Why? Well, because it felt so much like the San Joaquin Valley that I proudly represent, where so many Armenians have settled for generations since their diaspora and as a result of the Armenian genocide.

Like so many other ethnic groups throughout the world, the people of Armenia are friendly. They are warm and proud of their traditions, culture, and religion.

I had the opportunity as a young person to grow up with so many of our good friends and neighbors—the Kezerians, the Abrahamians, the Koligians—whose Armenian heritage I learned as a young person and has added so much not only to the community of the San Joaquin Valley, but to our Nation as a whole.

It is an honor to recognize Armenia's 25th anniversary and the Armenian people in the San Joaquin Valley and the communities throughout the Nation and the world.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think I would be remiss in this recognition if I did not take this opportunity to urge Congress and the President of the United States to go on record as recognizing the Armenian genocide and the devastating violence committed against the Armenian people over 100 years ago, the first genocide recorded and recognized by historians in the 20th century.

□ 1030

Of course, we know from that genocide came the later followed by the Holocaust, and sadly generations have suffered. I want to thank my colleagues for joining in recognizing Armenia's 25th anniversary.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

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

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend, Delegate John Overington, and the West Virginia State Legislature for passing the balanced budget amendment resolution in March.

West Virginia has joined 27 other States in calling for a constitutional convention under Article V to force the Federal Government to add a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution for one simple reason: the Federal Government has a spending problem. America has run up a debt of over \$19 trillion, largely to fund past and present expenditures using money that should belong to future American generations.

West Virginia families and businesses have to operate on balanced budgets, and I believe the Federal Government should also have to operate within its means. America cannot afford to continue spending like it has been. That is why I cosponsored H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I encourage my colleagues in the House and Senate to cosponsor this important joint resolution.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO CORPORAL HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy birthday to a true American hero, Corporal Hershel "Woody" Williams.

Woody is one of the last two surviving United States Marine Corps Medal of Honor recipients of World War II and the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Born on October 2, 1923, Woody Williams grew up on a dairy farm in Fairmont, West Virginia. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve in Charleston, West Virginia, on May 26, 1943.

Woody completed 2 years of service and was trained to use both tanks and flamethrowers. Williams, a corporal, landed in Iwo Jima in 1945. American tanks were trying to open a lane for the infantry when they encountered a network of reinforced Japanese concrete pillboxes, buried mines, and black volcanic sands.

Corporal Williams went forward with his 70-pound flamethrower in an attempt to reduce the devastating machine gun fire from the fortified enemy positions. Covered by only four riflemen, he continued this arduous task for 4 hours under heavy enemy small-arms fire.

He resupplied and returned to the front lines time and again to wipe out one enemy pillbox after another. On one of these returns, to the point of the spear of the battle, a wisp of smoke alerted him to an air vent of a Japanese bunker. He approached this heavily fortified position close enough to put the nozzle of his flamethrower