

for the drawdown of troops in Vietnam and, to the delight of many, he suspended the military draft.

But for us in Wisconsin, Mel Laird was our Congressman, a young man who was elected at 30 years old and served from 1953 to 1969 until he went to the Secretary of Defense position.

When I was running for Congress in the late spring, my phone rang, and on the other end this guy says: Hello, Mel Laird here. Could I speak with SEAN DUFFY?

Well, Mel Laird is larger than life in Wisconsin, a guy from Marshfield. I nearly dropped the phone to think that the great Mel Laird would give me a call. He knew everyone and every issue in Wisconsin at the ripe old age of 90.

He passed away yesterday. With a heavy heart, we mourn his passing. I would just like to say, he was a man that President Ford said was the can-do conservative from Wisconsin. He was a patriot more than a partisan, so much so that he was the mentor of Colin Powell. And to the friends he had on both sides of the aisle, they would be tickled to know that Hillary Clinton once interned for him. In true Wisconsin fashion, when I won the seat that he had formerly held, he sent me a Wisconsin block of cheddar cheese.

So, today, with a heavy heart, I want to extend my condolences to the family of Mel Laird, thank him and his family for his service, and may his soul rest in peace.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF TOM WEISNER

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

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of Tom Weisner, the mayor of Aurora, Illinois. He served as the mayor for a decade, and for many years before that as a dedicated public servant and a friend to our district and our community.

Before he entered public service, Tom and his wife, Marilyn, served as Peace Corps volunteers. Since then, Tom has served the city with passion, commitment, competence, and dedication. Public service is more than just a job to him; it is a calling. He cares for others in his community like an extended family, and Aurora is a better place because of it.

Whether it is the safety of rail cars passing through the city or concerns about gun violence, Tom speaks from the heart about issues that matter to our community and to our country. He does this because, to him, our community is his family.

Unfortunately, in the face of his longstanding battle with cancer, Mayor Tom Weisner stepped down at the end of last month. We will all miss his leadership and dedication to our community and wish him well.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NORTHWEST ADVANCED RENEWABLES ALLIANCE

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Northwest Advanced Renewables Alliance for their efforts to use the world's first renewable jet fuel made from timber harvest residuals on a commercial flight from Seattle to Washington, D.C., this last Monday, November 14.

NARA is a diverse coalition consisting of Washington State University, University of Washington, Alaska Airlines, Boeing, Weyerhaeuser, the U.S. Forest Service, and many other partners. Their goal was to create a sustainable aviation biofuel, increase bioenergy literacy, and advance rural economic development.

This achievement of fueling a cross-country flight entirely on wood products is a great testament to the cooperation, innovation, and hard work of the NARA members. Moreover, it demonstrates the forward-thinking commitment to an all-of-the-above energy strategy that the Pacific Northwest is renowned for. Again, congratulations to NARA and their members on this amazing achievement.

AMERICAN FOOD FOR AMERICAN SCHOOLS

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, is there anybody among us here who does not believe our children ought to have nutritious, safe food in the schools, in the school nutrition program? I think we all do. However, you may not know that back home in your school districts that your school is using your taxpayer money to buy food grown in China or someplace else in the world. Is it safe? Maybe yes. Maybe no. You don't know.

We are going to introduce a bill here, and I would seek the support of all the Members here. We call it American Food for American Schools. Why not? Why not American food in the school nutrition programs, the lunch programs? In our own area in Sacramento, California, the school district there decided they ought to buy Chinese peaches, yet the biggest peach-growing place in all the United States is the Sacramento region.

Let's do that. Let's make sure that our students have nutritious, safe, American-grown food. So American Food for American Schools. Seek your attention to this; seek your support on this. I am quite sure the American public and parents and students would say: yeah, right on.

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate hospitals in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District for being recognized by the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health. This year, 32 hospitals in Pennsylvania reached top quartile performance status in quality, outcomes, patient satisfaction, and financial strength compared to all acute care hospitals in the nation.

Now, I am proud to represent seven of these outstanding health facilities, including Kane Community Hospital, Lock Haven Hospital, Corry Memorial Hospital, Penn Highlands DuBois, Warren General Hospital, and UPMC Northwest.

In light of these and the many other tremendous accomplishments that have been achieved in rural health care this year, I am honored to join with key stakeholders across the United States to celebrate National Rural Health Day.

It is no secret that healthcare providers in underserved areas play a vital role in maintaining and safeguarding the health of millions of Americans. Due to my previous experience as a healthcare provider, I have nothing but the deepest respect and admiration for those who work to enhance the quality of healthcare services in rural communities.

Congratulations again to the rural healthcare providers in Pennsylvania for their tremendous work. Thank you for your service.

I STAND WITH THE STANDING ROCK SIOUX

(Mr. RUIZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to stand with the Standing Rock Sioux in peace and prayer to halt the desecration of their sacred sites and clean water source.

This month, an independent review concluded that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' original assessment of the pipeline underestimated the risk of a spill exposing tribal lands to grave risk.

Just this week, the Corps announced they will delay an easement for construction of the pipeline on Corps land under and around Lake Oahe until they conduct further environmental reviews with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Further study and a possible reroute of the pipeline is a welcomed idea.

But construction continues, and there has been no final decision that could conclusively halt the pipeline and protect tribal sacred sites. This could be devastating.

The government must take action to uphold our Federal trust responsibility to protect tribal treaties, land, and resources. They must meaningfully consult with the Standing Rock Sioux and all tribes before developing on or near

tribal land. They must rescind their permit that was issued without full understanding of potential risk and must stop construction.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, Saturday is National Adoption Day. It is an annual celebration of the thousands of new adoptions that take place every year. It is also an opportunity to raise awareness of the thousands of children who are still in foster care in need of permanent homes.

Since National Adoption Day was started 16 years ago, several children advocacy groups, including the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, have worked with foster care agencies and courts in all 50 States to finalize more than 40,000 adoptions to take place on that day. This is amazing work that helps bring wonderful additions to selfless, committed families. It is great to see so many children finding new beginnings through adoption, but it is also important to remember those who are still in need of permanent homes.

There are more than 100,000 children who are waiting for an adoptive family in foster care, and, on average, they wait nearly 3 years to be adopted. Every child deserves to grow up in a loving family and a safe and open-hearted home.

Mr. Speaker, adoption is a joyous occasion for thousands of children and families, and National Adoption Day is a reminder of how to create more of these powerful life-changing experiences.

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TIME TO LOOK AHEAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a pleasure to be in this somewhat hallowed Hall.

The election is behind us. It is time to look ahead. But as everyone who studies history knows, those who fail to learn from history are destined to repeat it. And so we go.

We continue too often to repeat the mistakes of the past, but it looks like the American people wanted a change—quite a change—and I know there are calls that we get rid of the electoral college, but when one looks at the map of the United States district-by-district within the States that voted for the different parties, candidates, one sees very clearly that you have the big cities that were voting Democrat and the 90 percent or so of the rest of the

country voted Republican. It really is amazing to see just how distinctive that has become.

South Texas is not highly populated, but is blue. Otherwise, most of the country that voted Democrat is just large cities, many of which are failing, many of which have become sanctuary cities, many of which have high crime rates. So I was a bit encouraged to continue to hear statements made by President-elect Trump.

There is an article today—with regard to the government, that is—from The Washington Examiner by Paul Bedard: “\$42 billion in Obama regulations are on Trump's chopping block. Nearly 50 massive and costly regulations that cost Americans and businesses 53 million more hours filing paperwork and that have already put a \$42 billion hit on the U.S. economy are being teed up for President-elect Trump to cut in his first weeks in office.”

And you go through and you look and top on the list are Head Start performance standards. Really, education was doing pretty well in my home State. Back before President Carter created the Department of Education, between 70 and 75 percent of all employees in the education system in Texas were teachers; but when you create this big bureaucracy called the Department of Education, it means for every cubicle we put here in Washington, D.C., just down the street here at the Department of Education, every State has to hire additional people to work in cubicles. But some States are more generous than others. Some have very nice offices.

But then, for every bureaucrat you put in a State capital office that is going to respond to the bureaucrats in the Department of Education here, you have to have additional clerical help, administrative help in each individual school district. That is people that could be helping our children. That is people that could be making students brighter than any other students.

But what are they doing?

They are filling out mountains of paperwork to send to the State capital so they can fill out mountains of paperwork and send it to the Department of Education.

To see that just one item within the Department of Education could cut \$42 billion in Obama regulations is incredible. At a time when we have skyrocketed over the last 7-plus years from \$11 billion in debt to \$20 billion in debt, it is just incredible. Incredible. Yet, there is so much we are costing America.

I am excited about the coming year because the kind of things that are listed here is just government overregulation; government bureaucrats from here overregulating. I know most people are proud when they set new all-time records, which this administration did in new regulations for the years with regard to pages of regulations. I think it seems like the Bush

administration may have hit 74,000 pages or so one year, but that didn't create a problem for the Obama administration. They have blown right past 74,000 pages of regulations.

How is anyone in business in the United States supposed to stay in business if they have to go through 74,000 pages of new regulations in addition to the old regulations that may still be in effect?

It is incredible. Like the Heritage Foundation has pointed out, more persons are committing three or four Federal crimes every day because we don't know what all the regulations are.

I am very encouraged as we go into the new year that one of the things we want to accomplish—and Chairman GOODLATTE in the Judiciary Committee has it on his list of things to get done—is really address the overcriminalization that has occurred over all these years. You slap a prison sentence on some vague crime or on some vague statute that says it is a crime if you violate any of the laws or regulations, and then bureaucrats sit around and dream up things that annoy them, and all of a sudden somebody can be going to prison for things none of us knew were crimes.

One guy did know that a substance he was sending through the mail, since he was a scientist, required ground only. So he checked the box “ground only.” He didn't know that some bureaucrat had passed or created a regulation that said not only do you check the box, you have to put a little ticker with an airplane with a red line through it. And if you don't do that, you get arrested, drug to Alaska, where he was sending it—he didn't even live there, didn't have friends—and held up there for 18 months or so, I think. It is incredible. We have got to do right by the American people.

I have been blessed to be able to travel all over the country in the past year or so. And everywhere I go, it just seems like the economy is ready to take off. If we can just get this massive, oppressive bureaucracy in Washington off of the neck of the economy, people will start having jobs again.

I know some people are worried about the wall or fence, but as you see people out of work—some of them being paid, apparently, to riot or picket, the things they do. I remember one picketer out here on The Mall back during the shutdown said he was getting \$15 an hour from Democratic sources to picket out there at the World War II Monument. Some of them get paid. Maybe that is all the work they can find.

Well, how great would it be to take that picket sign out of their hand and say: My friend, we have productive work for you. You can help your country, you can help yourself by cutting down on potential terrorism coming across other southern border, by cutting down on people coming into the country illegally and getting welfare, food stamps, all these benefits that