

This week, we turn the page to a new Congress. There is no reason that commonsense measures like universal background checks, making gun trafficking a Federal crime, and reinstating the ban on military-style assault weapons should fall victim to partisan gridlock.

Together, we have the opportunity to save lives and make our communities safer. This is a priority for me and my constituents, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make progress on reducing gun violence and building a safer future for all our children.

SUPPORTING OUR NATION'S VETERANS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as the 115th Congress kicks off this week, I remain committed to supporting our Nation's veterans. We made some good progress last year, but there is still much more work to be done.

While our military spends over 6 months preparing soldiers for assignment, we only spend 5 days preparing them to reintegrate to civilian life. I will be making it a priority to ensure veterans have a robust transition and support system for returning home.

We also must bring greater accountability and transparency to the VA. If a VA employee fails to do their duty to care for our Nation's heroes, they should be swiftly terminated. We need to turn around the culture of mediocrity at the agency. I look forward to working with Chairman ROE and my colleagues on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs this year to stand up for our men and women in uniform.

COOL SCIENCE TOPICS

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to continue a series of 1-minute speeches on cool science topics. Today I recognize the work of scientists working in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica to develop geological metal maps. Researchers developed a three-dimensional electronic mapping system that is being used to detect large precious metal deposits in the United States.

With funding from NSF, researchers mapped out the Nokomis deposit in northern Minnesota, which is estimated to contain 10 billion pounds of copper, 3.1 billion pounds of nickel, 4 million ounces of platinum, 9 million ounces of palladium, and 2 million ounces of gold. The value of these metal deposits will more than pay for the science investment to develop this technology.

Congress should support research that furthers the understanding of our

incredible universe, including the ground beneath our feet.

HONORING THE LIFE OF A. WARREN KULP

(Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of A. Warren Kulp, Jr., better known as Sonny, who passed away on New Year's Eve in West Palm Beach at the age of 81.

Sonny's life was the American Dream personified. After graduating from Hilltown High School in Pennsylvania in 1953, he worked as a self-employed dairy farmer for most of his life. He also earned his real estate license and worked as the head of the real estate department for 8 years in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. After moving to Florida with his wife, Judy, he worked at the Palm Beach Kennel Club until his retirement in 2007.

Outside of work, Sonny pursued many different interests. He was a loyal, lifelong Republican and served as an officer and committee chairman for the Pennridge Republican Club in Pennsylvania. He was a consummate grassroots advocate and always could be relied upon for sound advice on both politics and sports.

Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with Judy and the Kulp family and the entire community as they mourn his passing today. He will be greatly missed.

REPEALING THE ACA IS UNACCEPTABLE

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the majority's efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and make America sick again.

It is atrocious that Republicans intend to repeal ObamaCare without any plan for replacement. It is barbaric to take health care away from 30 million Americans. It is cruel and disgraceful to go back to the dark times when there were annual and lifetime limits on care for all Americans. It is gutless to repeal the law that protected breast cancer survivors like me and up to 129 million Americans with preexisting conditions. It is fraudulent to tell the American people that we can keep popular provisions like that one without any mechanism to share risk to keep health care affordable.

It is greedy to give insurance and drug companies billions of dollars in tax breaks but cut funding for Medicaid expansion. It is heartless to take away free preventive services like cancer screenings from 55 million Americans, particularly seniors and people with disabilities in Medicare. It is inde-

fensible to roll back the \$23.5 billion in prescription drug savings realized by seniors on Medicare in the donut hole.

It is past time—long past time—that my Republican colleagues understand from A to Z that repeal is unacceptable and a disaster waiting to happen.

LET'S GET TO WORK ON OBAMACARE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, the American people gave my party control of the entire Congress and the White House because of the promise-breaking, job-killing bill known as ObamaCare, the craziest thing in the whole world, according to President Bill Clinton. On November 8, we were ordered to repeal ObamaCare, and that is just what we are going to do.

Farmers on the other side are telling Americans they will lose their health insurance like that. That will only happen if we follow their example and pass a bill that becomes law before we have the time to read it. House Republicans will take time to listen to doctors, nurses, hospitals, patients, the American people to give them the health care they deserve at a lower cost, higher quality with the doctor of their choice. We have our orders. It is time to go to work.

PROTECTING THE ACA

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of life or death for the people back home. In the San Diego region, repeal of the ACA would mean nearly 300,000 people could lose access to health care.

I heard from one constituent just this week who was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease where the rheumatoid arthritis is not just attacking her joints, but her organs as well. She needs a double lung transplant to stay alive. Her 7-year-old son, she writes me, tells her, "Mommy, I'm scared. I hope you get your new balloons soon." She lives with the anxiety and the fear of how the repeal of the ACA may affect her treatment every day because of her preexisting condition.

I implore my Republican colleagues to remember the people that this decision will impact. The effect of this repeal has much more important consequences than politics. Let's not be responsible for any child who sees a mother suffer or even lose her life without the treatment she needs.

OUR NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL SUPPORT ISRAEL

(Mrs. WAGNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to express my extreme disappointment in the Obama administration's betrayal of Israel. The administration's destructive decision to undercut Israel has given leverage to anti-Israel boycotters and anti-Semites across the world.

This act screamed of personal vengeance and hostility, directly harmed American interests, and undermined peace in the Middle East. It was a cowardly and foolish parting shot for an administration that flagrantly ignores serious global challenges—Syria, Aleppo, ISIS, Iran, China, Russia, and the list goes on.

By abstaining from the vote to censure Israel, President Obama vetoed the U.S.-Israel alliance and violated the faith of the American people. I look forward to a new day, to a new administration that will support Israel and refuse to abandon our allies on the world stage.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. McEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, it has been my observation that often in this body there are people who would suggest to us that their actions are motivated and guided by an adherence to the Judeo-Christian ethic.

Mr. Speaker, in Jesus' first sermon, He said, among other things, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news to the poor." We have done that with the enactment of the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. Speaker, the notion of taking away the Affordable Care Act by repealing it, I would suggest to this body, is antithetical to those Judeo-Christian values. More than 20 million Americans of all socioeconomic backgrounds have benefited from this act.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that reason will prevail and that while we may tweak the Affordable Care Act, it will not be repealed.

□ 1230

TWO-STATE SOLUTION IN ISRAEL

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, we are going to be taking up a resolution that is designed to reflect our discontent with the resolution of the United Nations. I am totally in favor of expressing our discontent. I think we ought to cut our funds to the U.N. until such time as Resolution 2334 is repealed.

But the resolution today, at four different places, refers to our push in the United States for a two-state solution in Israel. Look, Hebron is in what was the promised land. David ruled from there for the first 7 years he was King

over Israel. Hebron is part of the two-state solution going to the Palestinians. How did the Palestinians deserve the land that was given as the promised land 1,600 years before Muhammad even existed?

I can't vote for the resolution when we are advocating what Joel 3 says will bring judgment down upon our Nation for trying to partition Israel—can't do it.

WE MUST NOT MAKE AMERICA SICK AGAIN

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

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to read a letter from my constituent, Mrs. Karen O'Hern, of Alexandria, Virginia:

"Congressman BEYER,

"We are a family of four. The company my husband worked for went bankrupt in 2009 after the 2008 financial meltdown—losing income, retirement savings, and health care.

"He now owns a small business and we now get our healthcare insurance through healthcare.gov.

"We need you to defend the ACA. We depend on the availability of this insurance option.

"My son had surgery on December 30 at Fairfax Hospital to remove a brain tumor. His prognosis is good. I cannot imagine how we would manage financially without this health insurance.

"Please be strong on this matter and represent the needs of your constituents.

"I need my Affordable Care Act health insurance.

"Regards, Karen O'Hern."

Mr. Speaker, millions like Karen O'Hern will lose their coverage if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. We must not make America sick again.

WEST VIRGINIANS WANT THEIR VOICE TO BE HEARD

(Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we are about to vote on the REINS Act, which will hold our agencies accountable to the people of America. I am a proud cosponsor of this regulation, this legislation. If a regulation has a high economic cost, then the people, through Congress, have to approve it before it goes into effect.

The REINS Act is one of several bills we will be considering this week to stop business as usual in Washington. We will be saying "no" to the over-regulations of the last 8 years, "no" to the radical anti-coal agenda that has closed coal mines and cost my State of West Virginia thousands of jobs, "no" to a Federal Government that won't even come to West Virginia to hear how their regulations affect us.

West Virginians have had enough. They want change. They want their voice to be heard. They want to work hard and put food on their table.

I am here to stand up for West Virginians: families, miners, and small businesses. I urge my colleagues to support the REINS Act.

OFFERING A 28TH AMENDMENT

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, we came together this morning to read the United States Constitution and its 27 amendments. I offer a 28th amendment, an amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's disastrous decision in Citizens United:

Section 1. To advance democratic self-government and political equality, and to protect the integrity of government and the electoral process, Congress and the States may regulate and set reasonable limits on the raising and spending of money by candidates and others to influence elections.

Section 2. Congress and the States shall have power to implement and enforce this article by appropriate legislation, and may distinguish between natural persons and corporations or other artificial entities created by law, including by prohibiting such entities from spending money to influence our elections.

Section 3. Nothing in this article shall be construed to grant Congress or the States the power to abridge freedom of the press.

Mr. Speaker, Citizens United let unlimited money flood into our elections and compromise our democracy. I ask all of my colleagues in this 115th Congress to join our effort to overturn it.

REPEALING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WILL BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Affordable Care Act. It is a promise to the American people that we must keep. It guarantees access to affordable, high-quality health care as a right for all Americans. Backing out of this commitment is irresponsible, inexcusable, and reprehensible.

As a Member from a congressional district that houses some of the largest hospitals in the country, health is a crucial issue for my constituents. Under the ACA, millions of Americans now have access to affordable health care through individual marketplaces and Medicaid expansion. Children in New York can remain on their parents' plan through the age of 29. An insurance company cannot discriminate against patients with preexisting conditions.

Repeal will be detrimental to our healthcare systems and medical research community. Without a plan to