

high school and college students are enrolled in CTE programs across the Nation.

Last Congress, I was proud to introduce the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. This bill, which passed the House by a vote of 405–5, aimed to close the skills gap by modernizing the Federal investment in CTE programs and connecting educators with industry stakeholders.

I look forward to reintroducing similar legislation this Congress and I remain committed to working with the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my CTE Caucus co-chair and good friend, to improve our Nation's career and technical education system.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), my friend and co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, to recognize February as Career and Technical Education Month.

In Rhode Island and across the country right now, employers are struggling to find workers with the skills that they need to fill jobs in STEM, in manufacturing, in IT, and so many other skilled trades. Hundreds of thousands of high-skilled, high-paying jobs are open right now, going unfilled, and this number is growing.

To close the skills gap, we must better align education and industry to make sure that what we are teaching in classrooms is better meeting the needs of real-world companies right now. We must increase work-based learning and build education pathways to help students become career and college-ready.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support investment in CTE in the 115th Congress, including by reauthorizing the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to adapt our workforce to the 21st century economy.

Mr. Speaker, this act passed with strong, bipartisan support in the last Congress, and I hope we can quickly bring it up again to pass it with strong bipartisan support in this Congress as well.

I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF NICK LITTLEFIELD

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening with a heavy heart to

honor the memory of Nick Littlefield, a dear friend and dedicated public servant who passed away last week.

Few in our country could match Nick's career. From the stages of Broadway to classrooms at Harvard Law School, to courtrooms in New York City, and eventually to the Halls of this Capitol as an aide to my late uncle, Senator Ted Kennedy, Nick did it all.

Always guided by the simple principle that our laws should help protect our citizens, his fingerprints can be found on landmark legislation such as the Children's Health Insurance Program, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, and the 1996 minimum wage increase.

Every day that he arrived at his Senate office, he brought a contagious enthusiasm for his work and extraordinary empathy for the people he served. Even while battling the multiple system atrophy that ultimately cost him his life, he considered himself "not entirely unlucky" to have this disease because it allowed him to "truly sympathize" with those who had disabilities.

Nothing was ever more important to him than his family. In this difficult time, my thoughts and prayers are with Nick's incredible wife, Jenny, as well as his stepchildren Frank, Tom, and Kate.

NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACH RECOGNITION WEEK

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to join my colleague, Congressman MARKWAYNE MULLIN today in introducing a resolution designating the week of February 13 as National Health and Wellness Coach Recognition Week.

Lifestyle-related chronic diseases are causing a health crisis in this country. Chronic diseases are the leading cause of preventable deaths and disabilities, and they cost the U.S. economy more than \$1 trillion per year.

This crisis is so severe that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has deemed chronic disease to be "the public health challenge of the 21st century."

We can reduce lifestyle-related chronic disease and end this crisis, but that means improving and sustaining health-related behaviors. That is where the health coaches come in. They step in to fill the gap between healthcare provider recommendations and sustainable lifestyle changes. By helping to improve individual health and wellness, health coaches get to the root of this Nation's health crisis.

I want to give my deepest thanks to the health and wellness coaches who are making the people of this Nation healthier. We should all support them in their efforts.

HONORING THE RICHMOND FREE PRESS

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

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Richmond Free Press, an independent, Black-owned weekly newspaper that recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

The newspaper was founded by Raymond H. Boone, a former Howard University associate professor and reporter who tirelessly served as editor and publisher until his death in June of 2014.

The Richmond Free Press serves as a voice for all people and, since its inception, has altered the media landscape of Richmond, the former Capital of the Confederacy. The paper has positively impacted the community through its news stories and its editorials.

Through the leadership of Mrs. Jean Patterson Boone, advertising director and wife of the late founder, Raymond Boone, this is an award-winning publication. Not only has the Richmond Free Press been a source of information for 25 years, but it has been a pillar in our community.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that this recognition come during Black History Month, for the Richmond Free Press does not only chronicle history, it has made history for the last 25 years.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Black History Month. It is especially meaningful to me this year as I am so proud to have the honor to represent the great people of Florida's Fifth Congressional District.

Now, more than ever, it is incumbent upon all of us to work to ensure we are protecting our beacons of democracy within our government institutions, from maintaining a vigilant and responsive Department of Justice, to a robust Department of Health and Human Services, to ensuring that our Department of Education is advancing public education and protecting our Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

One African-American who left a lasting legacy in education in Florida is John G. Riley, who was born a slave in 1857 and who died as a millionaire in 1954. Riley was a schoolteacher in Wakulla County, near Tallahassee, and later became the principal of Lincoln Academy in Tallahassee, Florida, serving the community as an educator for 49 years.

Riley was also the first African-American in Tallahassee to own property at the turn of the century. Today, we can all visit the John G. Riley Museum for African American History and Culture to learn more about his contributions to the fabric of African-American history.

In Jacksonville, we celebrate Mary Littlejohn Singleton, who became the first Black woman elected to the City Council in Jacksonville, Florida, and then elevated herself to be elected to the Florida Legislature, the first one since the Reconstruction era. Singleton paved the way for other Black women to follow in her footsteps in the Florida Legislature, like former Congresswoman Carrie Meek, and our colleague, FREDERICA WILSON, who serves now with us today.

It is stories like John G. Riley's and Singleton's and countless others that remind me to work and lead us ahead in the future. We must think differently and act differently to affect change by working together to help our fellow men and women.

I am committed to standing with the Congressional Black Caucus and to keep the fight for equality for all Americans.

CELEBRATING THE 60TH BIRTHDAY OF OVERSEER ELVIS L. BOWMAN

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 60th birthday of my good friend, overseer Elvis L. Bowman, the senior pastor of the Greater Mt. Tabor Christian Center in my hometown of Fort Worth, Texas.

Pastor Bowman was born February 23, 1957, and became a lifelong member of Greater Mt. Tabor Christian Center and their congregation; and the church was founded by his father, E.L. Bowman.

Pastor Bowman graduated from the University of Texas in Arlington with a bachelor's degree in business and a minor in music. He has since used his education to serve the congregation in so many wonderful ways.

An accomplished musician, Pastor Bowman served as a staff musician under his father before being appointed minister of music in 1974. He then served as the Church business manager before he was appointed pastor in 2002. He was later elevated to full gospel district overseer of Tarrant County in 2008.

Pastor Bowman, I wish you happy birthday, my friend, on your 60th birthday. I wish you nothing but health and happiness. Please enjoy your special day.

LEGISLATION TO DEREGULATE GUN SILENCERS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on a warm Sunday morning, yesterday, six men in a blue truck and six men in a black truck began shooting along Griggs Road. Women and children fled. Families fled in fear of their lives. Because of the gunshot noise, police were

able to come, and those who were hovering and sheltering could dial 911 on their cell phones.

So today I want to join with the law enforcement coalition who are working with former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and Mark Kelly, who are standing up against legislation that would deregulate and allow civilians to buy silencers.

It indicates that the gun lobby applauds introduction of the Hearing Protection Act. A quote in an article says many gun owners and sportsmen suffer severe hearing loss after years of shooting. Yet, the tool necessary to reduce such loss is onerously neglected and taxed.

What about the law enforcement officers who will suffer at the hands of those who want to do us harm with silencers on their guns? What will happen to those who will be murdered in the streets? What about them and their families?

This is a legislation misdirected. This is a legislation that is unfortunate. I join with my fellow Americans and law enforcement officers, first responders, in standing up against a nonsensical and misdirected initiative.

Let's stand with those who are to protect us and let's protect our families and not support this legislation.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, W. E. B. Du Bois is quoted as saying: "The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression." And the cost of liberty has come at a steep price for members of the Black community. But despite this immense challenge the Black community has faced, our resiliency is what we celebrate every month during Black History Month.

Every February, we get together to talk about it, highlight it, and share with school children, friends, and family the accomplishments of the men and women who changed the course of American history. We thank these pioneers for expanding what we believed possible and use them as an inspiration for the fight that remains.

There have been so many African-American pioneers in every field, including medicine. Dr. James McCune Smith was the first African American to earn a medical degree and practice

medicine in the U.S.; Dr. Daniel Hale Williams owned the first Black-owned hospital and is credited with the first successful heart surgery performed by an African American; Dr. Charles Drew—many have heard of him—renowned for his research during World War II which allowed for us to better understand blood plasma and its storage for transfusions. More recently, Dr. Regina Benjamin became the first Black woman elected to the American Medical Association Board of Trustees and was appointed the 18th surgeon general by President Barack Obama in 2009.

Each of these medical pioneers broke barriers for the betterment of the community, and each worked to use tools of their profession to improve the health of each patient they treat and also for future generations.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shared similar responsibilities, but on a much, much wider scale, Mr. Speaker. The agency, as you know, of HHS is tasked with enhancing and protecting the health of all American citizens. However, the recent appointment of Dr. Tom Price as HHS Secretary threatens to roll back the progress pioneered by Black medical professions and the progress made under President Barack Obama.

Dr. Price, as many of you know and as has been documented and seen on television on the cable news shows, was very hostile, extremely hostile, and openly hostile to the Affordable Care Act during the time that he was in Congress, despite the law ultimately extending health insurance for close to 20 million Americans who didn't have it before. That is what is so amazing that a doctor would take that view.

Because of the ACA, 2.3 million African Americans between the ages of 18 and 64 gained coverage, and the uninsured rate, among African Americans, fell by nearly 7 percent. In the district that I represent, 47,000 more residents now have coverage thanks to the ACA. And for the district that I represent, that is pretty significant.

People hear a lot about the Texas miracle and about all the jobs and the economic growth in the State of Texas. Despite living in Dallas-Fort Worth—one of the most vibrant economies in the entire world, quite frankly—it had the highest uninsured rate out of any congressional district in the country. It is a shame that, with that type of prosperity, we would have such a large group of people—over 1 million people collectively when you include people outside of the district that I represent—in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex who don't have insurance. It is really a shame. We cannot let the progress forged by African-American trailblazers be undermined by a Secretary of Health and Human Services who does not see how expanding healthcare access can help better health outcomes for African Americans.

Similarly, in an area of history where we saw historic tenures of both