

how to best protect our homeland using detector technology.

There is also the Brookhaven Linac Isotope Producer, or BLIP, which has been recently upgraded to advance the field of medical science. This upgrade allows BLIP to better diagnose and treat illnesses, including heart disease and many forms of cancer, such as leukemia and melanoma.

With Congress' continued support, there is limitless potential for needed discovery and advancement.

I thank the Speaker for allowing me to discuss this amazing national treasure. I also thank Doon Gibbs, who is the lab director, for his outstanding leadership at this facility.

It is a privilege to stand here on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to speak on behalf of America's great scientists and their vital work.

Congratulations again to Brookhaven National Laboratory on 70 years of groundbreaking, innovative research.

And to everyone at home, Happy Valentine's Day.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JOE WILLIAMS

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a loving family man, a great friend, a veteran, a civil rights leader, and former Fresno City Council member, Joe Williams.

Joe passed away last week at the age of 79. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. He dedicated much of his life to public service.

No matter whether you were a good friend or you hardly knew Joe, he had a way of making everyone feel important and special.

In 1968, he started a 26-year career at the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission. After 2 years of serving as the director of the Fresno County Head Start, Joe was promoted to serve as the executive director for Fresno EOC. During his tenure at the Fresno EOC, he established 35 new programs, with a budget starting at \$1.8 million, growing it to \$37 million.

With the help of over 670 employees in the Fresno EOC, he was able to implement so many important programs, such as the Women, Infants, and Children program, otherwise known as WIC; opened the first rural health clinic in Fresno County; and started Meals on Wheels programs for seniors.

But he didn't stop there. Joe was a doer. He created a sanctuary program for homeless youth, which was established and later named in his honor upon Joe's retirement. Under his leadership, the Fresno EOC became a model for similar programs around the Nation, one of the truly outstanding leaders in terms of community action agencies in the country. Joe made that happen.

In 1977, he became the first African American elected to the Fresno City

Council. He served two terms and was always an advocate for what was best for the entire city. He said: You know, you've got to feel it in your gut; and if it's there, you do it.

He was a civil rights leader in our San Joaquin Valley and throughout the State and the Nation, encouraging others to do the right thing.

My thoughts and prayers are with Joe's wife, Laura; their children, Michael and his wife, Sonya, Winston, and Terri; his brother, George; his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

My colleagues, I ask you to join me in paying tribute to the life and times of Joe Williams. He will be remembered in a selfless way in which he lived his life, always looking to help those in the community who needed help.

As Emerson once said: "To have a friend is first to be a friend."

Thank you, Joe, for being my friend and being the friend of our community. I join his family in honoring his life and love and service to our country, and he will be greatly missed.

#### FLOODING CONDITIONS IN CALIFORNIA

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the flood conditions in California. It is either feast or famine. We either had the last 6 years of some of the driest conditions we have experienced in over 1,000 or, in the last 2 months, record rain and snow in the mountains and, thus, floods that we are experiencing.

This last weekend I joined on an official tour of Merced County with Sheriff Warnke. In Le Grand, this weekend we had 25 homes in my district that were evacuated.

I commend the collaboration between the Merced County officials, the California Office of Emergency Services, and FEMA for rightly declaring a state of emergency for the flooding that is happening and may continue with new storms coming.

My thoughts are with the people in Butte, and Sutter and Yuba Counties. The emergency spillway that could be compromised at Oroville Dam is something that we are all concerned about; 200,000 people, as we know, have been evacuated from their homes.

That is why I joined Congressman GARAMENDI and my colleagues in sending a letter to President Trump requesting, as the government has asked, a Major Disaster Declaration under the Stafford Act. A Major Disaster Declaration will provide greater collaboration among local, State, and Federal governments, and will provide immediate resources where they are most needed.

Additionally, we must invest in California's infrastructure needs. Its water infrastructure needs to fix a broken water system. The President has proposed a significant massive infrastructure program, \$1 trillion. That could be used not only in California, but throughout the entire country.

We need additional water storage in order to prevent devastating flood con-

ditions as we are having now, and also to store that water so we can have it during the dry conditions. So two things go hand in hand.

There are another series of storms expected later this week, and we still have about 2 months left of our winter season. Therefore, we need all hands on deck. We are using every tool available to reduce the potential flood and damage and accidents that are there, but we must invest to fix this broken water system.

The President's proposal will allow us to provide additional surface storage supply to not only protect against flooding, but also to store that water so that when we have the dry periods in California, we can use that water for our crops and for the people who need it the most.

□ 1030

#### HISTORIC BRISTOL BOROUGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Bristol Borough, Pennsylvania, a picturesque town in my district situated along the Delaware River midway between Philadelphia and New York. Since 1824, Bristol Borough has embraced the motto "Welcome Friend" after a sign greeted Marquis de Lafayette on his "Farewell Tour of America." Bristol Borough continues to welcome newcomers to an incredibly caring community of residents and leaders pushing the town into the future.

Bristol Borough's history closely parallels the economic, commercial, and industrial history of the United States. In the late 1960s, U.S. Steel Corporation closed their facilities just up the road, and thousands of employees lost their jobs. In turn, downtown Bristol Borough lost an incredible amount of traffic. But what the people did not lose was their passionate desire to improve their town, restoring its former glory with an eye to an even brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Bristol Borough are tough, resilient, and they have grit. Small-business owners in downtown Bristol are revitalizing their town, and they have been noticed. As a finalist in the nationwide Small Business Revolution, Bristol Borough shines a spotlight on the vital impact small businesses have on our economy, our communities, and our daily lives.

As a member of the House Committee on Small Business, I pledge my commitment to pursue policies that protect and foster these small businesses and that make Bucks County truly a great place to live.

#### OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, heroin and prescription opioid abuse are devastating communities across

our Nation. From Levittown to Lower Salford, no part of my district is left unaffected by this epidemic. Last year in Bucks County, opioid-related deaths rose by 50 percent. In Montgomery County, opioid overdoses claimed a staggering 240 lives.

Mr. Speaker, every fatality represents a family crushed by the overwhelming loss of a loved one. As lawmakers, we have the responsibility to act. Passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the 21st Century Cures Act were monumental first steps in countering the opioid crisis, but we must continue to press the issue from all sides, from the trafficking of narcotics across our border to preventing the overprescribing of painkillers.

Congress alone cannot solve this problem. We must be ready and willing to work with State and local leaders, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, and educators in our districts. We are all stakeholders in this challenge. Together, we can eradicate this epidemic, we can protect our families, and we can free our communities from this menace.

#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, it may be Valentine's Day, but I rise today to share a story of a Christmas miracle.

Now, this is little Gracie, and she was born on Christmas Day in 2015. Unfortunately, not too long after she was born, she was diagnosed with a respiratory virus. It is a very bad thing for little people because they have little lungs and little respiratory airways. Frankly, it can be extremely dangerous.

To make matters worse, she was snowed in at the hospital where she was born. She had to spend 5 days at the NICU before they could transport her to a children's hospital. When she finally did arrive at Seattle Children's Hospital, she had pneumonia, E. coli, and a collapsed lung. But, fortunately, little Gracie is a fighter, as was her medical team, and she made a complete and full recovery.

With coverage through Medicaid, her parents were able to focus on her care and her future. The financial stress of hospital bills that come with intensive care, a cardiac catheter, a life flight, and numerous medications was daunting, but it was not devastating.

Gracie's story is just one example of the difference Medicaid expansion through the ACA has made for millions of children throughout our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, when I am home, I hear these stories all day long about how the ACA has made a real difference in the lives of people. The ACA in my State expanded coverage to more than 750,000 people. In fact, this January, we hit record enrollment of 225,000 sign-ups. That is a 13 percent jump from last year.

The ACA is working for many people across America; but let's be honest: we have also heard the other stories from people who aren't seeing these gains. Instead, they are seeing higher premiums and increased medical costs in general, with little improvement in coverage. Those are legitimate concerns that Congress needs to address.

But whenever Congress makes major changes, such as Social Security or Medicare, or enacts big ideas, there will always be unexpected results in parts of the program that don't function as anticipated or designed. Our job is to follow up, see what works, and adapt accordingly going forward. Even the best laws are going to require some adjustment.

Let's do that. Let's do it the smart way, the American way, and work together to fix the parts of the ACA that need fixing while maintaining that which works. Repeal and replace is not the answer. It is not the answer. Working together to fix it is the answer.

As we continue—or begin—to work together, I hope we will remember Gracie and know that health care is not a miracle. Health care is the result of hardworking doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals and a financially viable healthcare system and our actions here to support that in Congress.

We all come here for lots of reasons: philosophy, values, and ideology. We come here to represent our districts and their major components. I have the privilege to represent Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the largest force projection base on the West Coast, and many thousands of State employees—I have the State capital—who work every day to elevate the human condition of their friends and neighbors. We come here to represent the 672,554 people of our districts.

Mostly, I hope, however, that we come here to represent the Gracies of our districts. What I believe deep in my soul is that, if we will keep Gracie and the Gracies of our district in our hearts and foremost in our minds, if we keep them as our touchstone and our North Star, then America is going to be all right. I plead with you to do just that.

#### CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SAVANNAH'S NAACP

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the NAACP's Savannah branch. In July of 1917, James Weldon Johnson, field secretary of the NAACP, established Georgia's first NAACP branch in Savannah with 68 original members.

Similar to other NAACP branches, the Savannah branch pursues political, educational, social, and economic equality of minority groups and citizens. For the last 100 years, Savannah's NAACP branch has fought to eradicate

racial hatred and discrimination in the community. Its first meeting of 2017 was held on January 22 at St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal Church to install new officers and leadership.

I am proud to recognize today the branch's new officials, including President Al Scott, Vice Presidents W. Richard Shinhoster, Lynette Hymes, Barbara Magwood, Secretary Linda Carter, and Treasurer Joe Lang. I am confident in this leadership's ability to continue to uphold the values of the NAACP and help Savannah serve as an example to the nearly 75 NAACP branches Georgia has today.

REMEMBERING STETSON BENNETT, JR.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a lifelong public servant, Mr. Stetson Bennett, Jr., of Jesup, Georgia, who passed away on Thursday, February 9, 2017, at 87 years old.

Mr. Bennett was born in 1929 to Reverend Stetson Bennett, Sr., and Irene Bennett in Wayne County. He graduated from Jesup High School in 1947, before attending Auburn University. Around this time, he also married his wife, Patsy Jones. They were married for more than 69 years.

Mr. Bennett first entered public service in 1949, as chief deputy clerk. By 1965, he was elected clerk of superior court and served nearly 50 years. Recognized by the Georgia House of Representatives as the longest serving constitutional officer in Georgia, Mr. Bennett has received a number of honors throughout his career.

His dedicated service earned him Clerk of the Year Award in 1985, the highest honor a clerk can receive. Fittingly, the award is now named in honor of Mr. Bennett. Perhaps his proudest achievement was when the citizens of Wayne County officially named the main courtroom the Stetson Bennett, Jr. Courtroom in honor of his years of service to the community he loved.

In addition, he served as the president of the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, was an active member of the Lions Club, and helped develop Wayne Memorial Hospital as a member of its board.

Mr. Bennett was always proud of where he came from, which was clear from how selflessly he dedicated his life to Wayne County. He truly will be missed.

PRAYERS FOR LEIGH RYAN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask for your thoughts and prayers for Mrs. Leigh Ryan, a Tybee Island mother of two who is battling an aggressive form of cancer.

Originally from Roberta, Georgia, Mrs. Ryan settled on Tybee Island 20 years ago to work as a nurse at Memorial University Medical Center. Since arriving on Tybee Island, giving back to the community has been a top priority for Mrs. Ryan, who is a member of Junior League and often works with the homeless in the area.