

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, since 2013 I have flown the pride flag outside my D.C. office in solidarity with the LGBT community. According to the House historian, I was the first to do so, a fact that I am very proud of.

Yesterday, outside my office in Washington, D.C., a man took that flag out of its holder, threw it on the ground, and stomped on it. He called the flag disgusting and immoral.

This flag is a symbol of pride for the LGBT community—an international symbol of love, understanding, equality, and hope.

The shadows of intolerance have grown longer in recent days: bomb threats called into Jewish community centers, desecrations of Jewish cemeteries, hate crimes against minorities and the transgender community, horrifically racist statements from a Member of this body.

To all our brothers and sisters who endure through these hateful acts, we stand with you, and we will continue to fight for your rights and your equality.

LISTENING TO EVERYBODY'S VOICE

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, you can learn a lot when you listen. During times like these, when political infighting makes it difficult to hear everyone's voice, we need to try even harder.

Today I would like to encourage all of my constituents in the Illinois 12th District to visit bost.house.gov/yourstory to share your personal perspective on the Affordable Care Act. Again, that is bost.house.gov/yourstory.

If the law has helped you and your family receive care you needed, I want to hear about it. If the law has put you in a situation where you don't have insurance or have higher premiums, I want to hear about that, too.

It is important that we deal with this healthcare issue and reform it so that it works for all people. And for the people of southern Illinois, I want to hear your story.

HEALTH CARE IS COMPLICATED

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, President Trump has made some implausible statements recently, but one that certainly takes the cake on the issue of health care is when he said that nobody knew that health care could be so complicated.

Well, for President Trump and those who are attacking the Affordable Care Act, I would like to talk about one little boy who challenges this claim.

This week, of course, we know from the nonpartisan CBO just how dev-

astating the Trump-Ryan repeal would be for millions of Americans, including Rhett Krawitt, a 9-year-old boy who lives in my district.

Rhett battled and won a tough fight with leukemia. He spoke to a townhall in my district on Monday, where he said: "Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, my parents don't have to worry about losing coverage because I have a preexisting condition. My family knows exactly how much money our health care will cost. I can stay on my parents' plan and get medical insurance when I go to college and medical school."

And he added one more thing. He said: "I may only be 9 years old, but I have known for a long time that health care is complicated."

Mr. Trump, if only you had spoken to this 9-year-old before trying to gut health care for millions of Americans.

Let's not go backward on health care in this country.

REMEMBERING CAPTAIN ANDREW BECKER AND FIRST LIEUTENANT FREDERICK "DREW" DELLECKER

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

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my condolences to the families of the three Air Force officers who were killed in a plane crash earlier this week in New Mexico. Two of these officers had strong ties to the Sixth Congressional District in Florida, and particularly Volusia County.

Captain Andrew Becker graduated from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach in 2007. He was a great student, a real world beater. He did what many graduates of Riddle do. He served our country with honor and distinction, and we are thankful for his service to this country. We send our condolences to his wife.

First Lieutenant Drew Dellecker graduated from the Air Force Academy in 2013 after growing up in Volusia County. This special guy dedicated his life to serving our country and defending our freedoms. The Volusia County community is saddened by his loss; and his parents, Bill and Karen, are in our thoughts and prayers.

May God bless these fine young men, and may God bless their memory in the United States of America.

IRISH LESSONS

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I join with millions around the globe to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The United States of America would not be the country we are today without the enormous contributions of millions of Irish immigrants and their descendants.

From serving in every war our country has ever faced and leading our country at every level of government, Irish Americans have done it all. Today, more than 33 million Irish Americans claim Irish ancestry.

Tragically, our country didn't always welcome the Irish. During the late 19th and 20th centuries, Irish arriving on our shores were met with contempt, disdain, and with signs that read, "Irish need not apply." But they persisted, and our country is all the better for it.

So, today, St. Patrick's Day, I thank you and say thank you to all the Irish men and women who helped shape the great country we are today.

Thank you, and happy St. Patrick's Day.

PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE 115TH CONGRESS

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on House Administration, I call up House Resolution 173 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 173

Resolved,

SECTION 1. COMMITTEE EXPENSES FOR THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress, there shall be paid out of the applicable accounts of the House of Representatives, in accordance with this primary expense resolution, not more than the amount specified in subsection (b) for the expenses (including the expenses of all staff salaries) of each committee named in such subsection.

(b) COMMITTEES AND AMOUNTS.—The committees and amounts referred to in subsection (a) are: Committee on Agriculture, \$11,437,517; Committee on Armed Services, \$16,188,340; Committee on the Budget, \$10,380,424; Committee on Education and the Workforce, \$14,454,212; Committee on Energy and Commerce, \$20,531,442; Committee on Ethics, \$6,681,326; Committee on Financial Services, \$16,580,450; Committee on Foreign Affairs, \$15,673,986; Committee on Homeland Security, \$15,007,846; Committee on House Administration, \$10,343,130; Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, \$12,100,000; Committee on the Judiciary, \$15,350,572; Committee on Natural Resources, \$13,758,344; Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, \$18,259,682; Committee on Rules, \$6,460,562; Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, \$10,969,956; Committee on Small Business, \$6,287,037; Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, \$17,416,000; Committee on Veterans' Affairs, \$7,958,062; and Committee on Ways and Means, \$17,940,692.

SEC. 2. FIRST SESSION LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount provided for in section 1 for each committee named in subsection (b), not more than the amount specified in such subsection shall be available for expenses incurred during the period beginning at noon on January 3, 2017, and ending immediately before noon on January 3, 2018.

(b) COMMITTEES AND AMOUNTS.—The committees and amounts referred to in subsection (a) are: Committee on Agriculture,

\$5,699,668; Committee on Armed Services, \$8,094,170; Committee on the Budget, \$5,190,212; Committee on Education and the Workforce, \$7,146,429; Committee on Energy and Commerce, \$10,265,721; Committee on Ethics, \$3,340,663; Committee on Financial Services, \$8,290,225; Committee on Foreign Affairs, \$7,836,993; Committee on Homeland Security, \$7,503,923; Committee on House Administration, \$5,021,565; Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, \$6,050,000; Committee on the Judiciary, \$7,625,286; Committee on Natural Resources, \$6,879,172; Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, \$9,129,841; Committee on Rules, \$3,230,281; Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, \$5,484,978; Committee on Small Business, \$3,037,400; Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, \$8,655,500; Committee on Veterans' Affairs, \$3,979,031; and Committee on Ways and Means, \$8,954,346.

SEC. 3. SECOND SESSION LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount provided for in section 1 for each committee named in subsection (b), not more than the amount specified in such subsection shall be available for expenses incurred during the period beginning at noon on January 3, 2018, and ending immediately before noon on January 3, 2019.

(b) COMMITTEES AND AMOUNTS.—The committees and amounts referred to in subsection (a) are: Committee on Agriculture, \$5,737,849; Committee on Armed Services, \$8,094,170; Committee on the Budget, \$5,190,212; Committee on Education and the Workforce, \$7,307,783; Committee on Energy and Commerce, \$10,265,721; Committee on Ethics, \$3,340,663; Committee on Financial Services, \$8,290,225; Committee on Foreign Affairs, \$7,836,993; Committee on Homeland Security, \$7,503,923; Committee on House Administration, \$5,321,565; Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, \$6,050,000; Committee on the Judiciary, \$7,725,286; Committee on Natural Resources, \$6,879,172; Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, \$9,129,841; Committee on Rules, \$3,230,281; Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, \$5,484,978; Committee on Small Business, \$3,249,637; Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, \$8,760,500; Committee on Veterans' Affairs, \$3,979,031; and Committee on Ways and Means, \$8,986,346.

(c) REVIEW OF USE OF FUNDS IN FIRST SESSION.—

(1) REVIEW.—None of the amounts provided for in section 1 for a committee named in subsection (b) may be available for expenses of the committee after March 15, 2018, unless the chair or ranking minority member of the committee appears and presents testimony at a hearing of the Committee on House Administration held prior to such date to review the committee's use of the amounts provided for in section 1 during the first session of the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress and to determine whether the amount specified in subsection (b) with respect to the committee should be updated on the basis of the review.

(2) WAIVER.—The Committee on House Administration may waive the application of paragraph (1) to any or all of the committees named in subsection (b).

SEC. 4. VOUCHERS.

Payments under this resolution shall be made on vouchers authorized by the committee involved, signed by the chairman of such committee, and approved in the manner directed by the Committee on House Administration.

SEC. 5. REGULATIONS.

Amounts made available under this resolution shall be expended in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration.

SEC. 6. RESERVE FUND FOR UNANTICIPATED EXPENSES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a reserve fund for unanticipated expenses of committees for the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress.

(b) AMOUNT.—The reserve fund under this section shall have a balance of \$2,500,000, of which—

(1) \$1,250,000 shall be available for unanticipated expenses incurred during the period beginning at noon on January 3, 2017, and ending immediately before noon on January 3, 2018; and

(2) \$1,250,000 shall be available for unanticipated expenses incurred during the period beginning at noon on January 3, 2018, and ending immediately before noon on January 3, 2019.

(c) ALLOCATION TO COMMITTEES.—Amounts in the reserve fund under this section shall be paid to a committee pursuant to an allocation approved by the Committee on House Administration.

SEC. 7. ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY.

The Committee on House Administration shall have authority to make adjustments in amounts under section 1, if necessary to comply with an order of the President issued under section 251A or 254 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 or to conform to any change in appropriations for the purposes of such section 1.

Mr. HARPER (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Mississippi is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY), the ranking member of the Committee on House Administration, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Resolution 173.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 173, a resolution which authorizes House Committee budget levels for the 115th Congress.

Each Congress, the House looks to the Committee on House Administration to carry out the responsibility of determining the amount needed to fund standing House committees for this year and next.

Our committee began this process by holding a hearing to receive input from the chairmen and ranking members of the various standing committees.

I thank each of them and their staffs for providing us and our colleagues with the information needed to help our committee determine the appropriate funding levels.

I also want to extend my sincere thanks for the collaborative manner in which the chairmen and ranking members worked together to create a budget request that is really targeted to meet their legislative and important oversight responsibilities.

My colleagues and I took the priorities laid out in the hearing we held into account; and together, our committee passed, by unanimous voice vote, the bipartisan funding resolution that is before us today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution before us.

The credit for this bipartisan legislation goes to my colleague and friend, the gentleman from Mississippi. I want to thank Chairman HARPER for his bipartisan cooperation in developing this agreeable legislation. All committees should follow our lead.

I also want to thank our staffs, the Democratic and the Republican sides, for putting together the bill that we have on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation we are considering now.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to express my appreciation to the ranking member of the committee, Mr. BRADY. The cooperation that we have had, I think, is a good model to follow. I thank him for that support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO HIRE AND RETAIN PHYSICIANS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARPER). Pursuant to House Resolution 198 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1367.

Will the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) kindly take the chair.

□ 0915

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1367) to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire