

6,000 participants in Miami-Dade County, 3,000 in St. Petersburg, and 2,000 in Jacksonville school districts.

The program's goal is to mentor minority boys beginning in elementary school, middle school, and high school, all the while guiding them along a carefully charted path to manhood and sending them to college.

Madam Speaker, in this season of youth violence, during which boys get entangled in the school-to-prison pipeline, we are proud of the project and the tens of thousands of boys it has helped to become successful, contributing men in society. For example, Barry Jenkins, director of the Oscar-winning film "Moonlight," is a 1998 graduate of the program.

I look forward to welcoming these young men here tomorrow and hope you will get a chance to meet them, also. If you do, give them a hug and tell them that you love them.

#### ALS AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, May is ALS Awareness Month. It is a time many lend their voices to the fight against ALS and help raise awareness about this devastating disease.

ALS is often referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease, after the baseball great was diagnosed with the progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord.

Recently, I had the honor of meeting with people from Pennsylvania to talk about ALS, including Michael Bond, who has ALS, and his wife and caretaker, Karen Bond, both of Edinboro, Pennsylvania; and Jayne Cawthorne of Centre County, Pennsylvania, who is a long-time advocate for the ALS Association. Jayne and her daughter have been visiting with me since I was first elected to Congress, and their advocacy continues to build hope while their association aggressively searches for new treatments and cures.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1361, which would ensure access to complex rehabilitation technology such as power wheelchairs and their components and accessories. When you have lost the ability to walk, move your hands, or hold your head up, these technologies are critical.

#### NATIONAL MARITIME DAY

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

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Maritime Day.

Since America's founding, our men and women who serve as mariners have dedicated themselves to protecting our

economy and our interests at home and abroad. Whether it be through ensuring the delivery of goods, supporting us during times of peace, or standing up during times of war, the maritime industry has held strong.

The Port of Los Angeles, which I am proud to represent, has made countless contributions not only to California but to every other congressional district.

As a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I work to ensure the safety and security of the Port of Los Angeles so that it can continue to serve as America's port. Along with the Port of Long Beach, the ports employ twice as many men and women as the Hollywood entertainment industry.

Today, I am proud to honor those men and women who serve and have served as U.S. merchant mariners. I ask that we continue to support the maritime industry today, and every day.

#### SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2288, the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017, a bill that addresses the Department of Veterans Affairs' broken appeals process.

As of April 1, 2017, the number of pending appeals for disability compensation with the VA has reached 470,000. That is more than a 20 percent increase since fiscal year 2015. At current funding levels and using its current operational structure, the Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that it will take at least 5 years to address the backlog of appeals claims.

That is unsatisfactory. We can do better. We must do better. Our veterans deserve better. They have risked their lives to protect the freedoms we hold so dear, and it is up to us to make sure they receive the benefits they have earned and deserve.

H.R. 2288 modernizes the appeals process to efficiently and effectively resolve backlogged claims and prevent this kind of backlog from happening in the future. This bipartisan piece of legislation takes a giant leap toward a more efficient Department of Veterans Affairs, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support it.

#### SABOTAGE X 2

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

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, sabotage.

A plot is afoot in Washington. It is time to sound the alarms. It is time to let the people know. It is time to ride like Paul Revere across our Nation and awaken Americans to this sinister scheme.

President Trump is sabotaging the Affordable Care Act. Trump has threat-

ened to cut subsidies to millions of Americans, creating more uncertainty today by stalling in court. He has refused to fund the high-risk corridors, causing insurance companies to flee States like Iowa and Kentucky. He has cut the public notices to keep those in need of healthcare in the dark. He has cut the signup period in half to prevent more Americans from signing up.

Is sabotage destroying the healthcare market worth it? Is robbing millions of Americans of healthcare coverage worth it? Is that the price Trump is willing to pay for repeal? To give tax cuts to billionaires?

Mr. Trump, ObamaCare works. If you break it, you own it. When you sabotage healthcare for millions of Americans, you are responsible. And the people ought to know.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

#### MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, if history has taught us anything over the years, it is that freedom is not free. It comes at a great price.

It is easy to take for granted the freedoms we enjoy, but this Military Appreciation Month I pray that we all reflect upon the sacrifices the men and women of our Armed Forces have made for our liberty and our security.

Specifically, I am reminded today of the 5,100 dedicated men and women serving at Dyess Air Force Base, home of the 7th Bomb Wing and the 317th Airlift Group, and the 40,000 veterans in my district in west Texas.

It is with them in mind, Madam Speaker, that I would like to express my gratitude for those who have served, my sorrow for those who did not make it back home, and my condolences to those who have lost someone dear in service to our great country. Let us never forget them. Let us always remind our children and grandchildren of the sacrifices of those who gave up their today so that we can have our tomorrow.

God bless our men and women in uniform. And God bless these United States of America.

#### WORLD AT A CROSSROADS

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, as I stand here, our world stands at a crossroads. As I stand here, 20 million stand at risk of starvation at the hands of what has the potential to become the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II: famine in South Sudan and impending famine in northeast Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen. Additional

funding is needed to avert the destabilization of entire regions and to support refugees fleeing into neighboring countries.

Earlier this year, a bipartisan group of Members proposed that the U.S. allocate \$1 billion in emergency funding for famine response. Thanks to those efforts, Congress pledged to provide \$990 million in emergency funding in fiscal year appropriations.

Foreign aid is an investment. It makes our country, and those overseas fighting for us, dramatically safer. With leadership comes responsibility. Providing aid is a moral imperative.

#### WHAT DO WE HAVE TO LOSE: NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to anchor this CBC Special Order. For the next 60 minutes, we have a chance to speak directly to the American people on issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, Congress, the constituents we represent, and all Americans.

Tonight, we will highlight the President's action to undermine our national security, including, but not limited to, abruptly firing FBI Director Comey in order to ease pressure on the Russian investigation just 1 day before sharing classified information with a Russian official.

Madam Speaker, many in this country believe Congress continues to have trouble accomplishing the basic requirements of its job. Up until a few weeks ago, we were still scrambling yet again to complete spending legislation to prevent a government shutdown.

If the only measure of national security success during the President's first 100 days were avoiding catastrophe, okay, President Trump has succeeded: no attacks on the U.S., no new wars, no nuclear Armageddon.

These are good things, and in the moment we can breathe a sigh of relief. However, these outcomes, arguably, owe more to the national security machine built by the President's predecessors than any decision of the 45th President.

President Trump's first major budget proposal will be released tomorrow. It is reported to include massive cuts to Medicaid and will call for drastically

and unprecedented changes to anti-poverty programs.

As for Medicaid, the State Federal programs that provide healthcare to low-income Americans, Trump's draconian budget plan would follow through on a bill passed by House Republicans to cut more than \$800 billion over 10 years.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that this would cut off Medicaid benefits for 10 million people over the next decade. That is unacceptable.

The dysfunctional relationship between Congress and the Trump administration has helped to bog down and complicate the fiscal 2017 budget process and has stymied the work of this Congress when it comes to passing legislation that will help our constituents.

A recent survey found that 48 percent of Americans now prefer increased government spending in areas like healthcare, veterans care, education, and infrastructure—things that the people of my district, the Virgin Islands, desperately need, with a 15 percent unemployment rate and 33 percent of our children living in poverty.

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It is time for Congress to get back to work for the people that have put us here.

I want to highlight three pieces of legislation that I have introduced that will help my constituents in the Virgin Islands in various ways.

With a special counsel now having been appointed to look into the distractions the White House has created, it is time that Congress focus on our job and proceed to hold hearings on these bills followed by a vote on the House floor, and, hopefully, these commonsense bills will be signed into law by the President.

Healthcare: President Trump and the Republican Congress are planning to cut more than \$800 billion out of Medicaid funding over 10 years while converting the program to a cap block grant to the States and territories and eliminating ACA's Medicaid expansion. These provisions are in the American Health Care Act, the House GOP's ObamaCare repeal bill.

As a Member representing the Virgin Islands, I believe we need to get back to doing the work of the people, and that is working to pass laws that better the lives of our constituents.

I introduced improving the treatment of the U.S. territories under the Federal healthcare program, which would eliminate existing inequities the territories face under Medicaid and Medicare. There are numerous bills that my other colleagues have introduced to assist their constituents and all Americans in areas of healthcare. We need to bring those bills to the floor and vote them up or vote them down.

Veterans: There are few places in the United States with higher per capita rates of military service than the

United States Virgin Islands. As a Member, I am committed to ensuring Virgin Islands veterans have full and equal access to health, housing, education, and employment benefits they have rightfully earned. Our constituents have deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq more than 30,000 times since September 11, and about 120,000 military veterans live in the territories, yet none are allowed to cast a ballot to choose their Commander in Chief.

We need to remember that nearly 4 million Americans call Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa home, a combined population greater than 22 States. We represent those Americans in the U.S. House who cannot vote for their interests on the House floor. Our constituents are denied representation in the U.S. Senate and are barred from the general election for President and Vice President. When the Presidential vote was tabulated in 2016, it was as if 4 million Americans we represent do not exist. There is a time, however, when our people are counted—when the country goes to war.

I have introduced H. Res. 91, which proposes an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding Presidential elections, voting rights for residents of all United States territories and commonwealths.

Education: We have to fix the education system. We have to give our young people better choices. We need to allow our children to be able to be educated in a place that is hospitable to learning. That does not occur right now in many places in the United States. The President's budget cut would remove support to schools for infrastructure, for afterschool programs, and for summer reading programs.

We cannot continue with this if we want to have national security. National security is the security of our young people to be educated and to grow safely. That is not happening in the Virgin Islands or anyplace in the United States at this time.

I recently introduced the United States Virgin Islands College Access Act of 2017, which will allow college students who are residents of the Virgin Islands to receive more reasonable tuition rates at participating 4-year institutions of higher education.

It is time for Congress to stop doing business as usual. With budget decisions impacting everything from national security to infrastructure investment, Congress needs to focus on doing its job and doing it with more than the next few months or current fiscal year in mind. Moving forward, we as Members of Congress need to make sure that we deal with our legislative and budgetary responsibilities with more thoughtfulness and foresight.

Congressman DWIGHT EVANS represents the wonderful city of Philadelphia and the people of Pennsylvania. He is a legislator of many years. Although he comes here as a freshman,