

your pay, we are not going to give you the benefits which we promised you, and think that they were going to keep personnel on board with high morale and highly motivated to do the job, not only for us Members but for the American people. No employer would think that they can mistreat their employees and expect the highest performance out of them. And certainly no employer would think that if I treat my employees the way we have been treating Federal employees that we could recruit and retain the best and the brightest to serve our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the President to rescind his order. That is not to say that executives in all of these agencies should not look at making sure that we have the proper number of employees on board and are acting efficiently and effectively and working hard to accomplish the objectives that we as a Congress, on behalf of the American people, have given them. That is the issue.

I urge my Republican friends, in this House and in the Senate, to speak out against it. And I urge all Federal employees and their families to speak up in their communities across our country to remind their fellow Americans of the important work they do and why this hiring freeze would be so harmful to our country.

Giving one another respect in America is not political correctness. It is the way we ought to treat one another. And we ought to treat our public employees who work for us and our country with the same kind of respect that we would want for ourselves. Frankly, respect of one another was a victim in this last campaign, but it should not be and must not be the norm.

PROTECTING THE UNBORN AND DEFENDING LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that I care deeply about: protecting the unborn and defending life. This week, I reintroduced the Life at Conception Act.

I am honored to be the lead sponsor of the Life at Conception Act, which simply defines human life as beginning at the moment of conception. As a result, unborn babies are entitled to legal protection under the Constitution. We had a record number of original co-sponsors this past Congress, and I pray this bill will pass Congress swiftly.

I believe that we have a moral obligation to protect the unborn at every stage of development. It is something I have always been passionate about. I was president of my college's pro-life group, the Dartmouth Coalition for Life. I can still remember the conversations I had with my fellow students as I discussed the value of human life with them. It was a great feeling to know that I was opening eyes to the

value of all human life one student at a time.

Protecting life is one of the issues that compelled me to run for office. When I first asked for the opportunity to serve you as your representative in Congress, I promised I would be a strong defender of the unborn. I am proud to say I have delivered on that promise.

The Life at Conception Act is a crucial part of the long-term battle to protect the unborn. It started 44 years ago to the week, in 1973 in the Roe v. Wade decision when the Supreme Court asserted that, because the beginning of life is not legally defined by Congress, it is up for interpretation by the court. The Life at Conception Act simply fills that gap and defines that human life begins at the moment of conception.

Even Vice President Joe Biden, a Democrat, recently restated publicly his belief that human life begins at conception. There is bipartisan agreement on this issue. It is important for Congress to define human life because the unborn are the most helpless among us. They need us to have enough courage to step up and protect them.

My bill also sets a standard for promoting and encouraging a culture of life. If enacted, it would simply affirm what we all know in our hearts and minds to be true: that unborn babies deserve our protection.

Last year, the Life at Conception Act had 146 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives, including my two colleagues in West Virginia, DAVID MCKINLEY and EVAN JENKINS. I hope that more Representatives will join me in promoting respect and protection for all human life.

I continue to be guided by my faith and values. I look forward to working with my colleagues to defend the innocent and give voice to the voiceless. I welcome the marchers this week coming for the annual March for Life. I thank them for their participation in defending the unborn.

CONGRATULATING THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the New England Patriots on reaching their NFL record ninth Super Bowl. The very questionable suspension of Tom Brady early in the season could not stop New England or the determination and dedication to excellence that defines the New England Patriots.

Fans throughout New Hampshire and beyond are incredibly proud of their team and the unparalleled success of Tom Brady and Bill Belichick. But they would be the first to tell you that the success of the Patriots lies with not one individual but instead is built upon the core value of team before self. This year, the motto made famous by

New England, "Do Your Job," is as true as ever.

When the Patriots face the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI, I will be joined by everyone across New Hampshire and throughout New England in offering them good luck. Go Pats.

NO ONE IN AMERICA SHOULD GO HUNGRY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the importance of nutrition as it relates to agriculture policy in America. Proudly, I am the vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee for the 115th Congress and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee.

Agriculture policy is near and dear to my heart, as it is the number one industry in Pennsylvania. It brings nearly \$6.9 billion annually in cash receipts to the Commonwealth. Almost half a million jobs are tied to the industry, which positively impacts all Pennsylvanians.

Our farmers feed America. Farmers play a pivotal role in the nutrition of families in this country. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food insecurity has decreased across the Nation in recent years. However, USDA found that 12.7 percent of all households in the United States faced hunger in 2015. Mr. Speaker, no one in America should go hungry.

The Nutrition Subcommittee oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be referred to as food stamps. Over the past 2 years, under the leadership of Agriculture Committee Chairman MIKE CONAWAY, this subcommittee examined what is working with SNAP and what could be improved. More than 43 million Americans rely on SNAP to put food on the table for themselves and their families.

SNAP has grown from a pilot program that served just 500,000 people in 1964 to a program that served more than 47 million Americans at the height of the recession. SNAP is now the largest program under the Agriculture Committee's jurisdiction, accounting for almost 80 percent of farm bill spending, and is the largest Federal food program serving low-income families in the United States. SNAP is literally a lifeline for many of the least fortunate among us.

During the subcommittee's examination of SNAP, it hosted more than 16 hearings and had 60 witnesses testify. The goals of these hearings were to better understand SNAP and the population it serves, to review how SNAP utilizes cash and noncash benefits to serve that population, and to examine ways the program could be improved.

Four themes emerged from the hearings:

First, serving SNAP recipients through innovation and flexibility in

program delivery. The need for nutrition assistance cannot be addressed by just one program or just one group. It requires more collaboration between governments, charities, businesses, health systems, communities, individuals, and many others.

Second, climbing the economic ladder through work. Mr. Speaker, the number one leading causes of poverty are unemployment and underemployment. We must promote pathways to employment as the best way to help individuals climb the economic ladder out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

Third, maintaining program integrity. SNAP needs clear program goals and must be evaluated according to metrics aligned with those goals to generate program improvement. While we want to give States flexibility in administering SNAP, it should not jeopardize the overall integrity of the program.

Fourth, improving food access and promoting healthy food. This theme really gets at the heart of the issue: Americans in both urban and rural communities cannot improve their diets without adequate access to healthy food. Offering nutrition education is essential to help SNAP recipients develop healthy lifestyles and healthy eating habits. There is so much at stake when it comes to SNAP. Most SNAP recipients face more challenges than food insecurity. They also face housing, utility, transportation, and child care costs, among others.

Through the subcommittee's thorough investigation, we were able to fully review how to deliver SNAP to those who need it most. We also examined ways to keep the program viable for years to come. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office currently projects that SNAP will cost an average of \$69.75 billion per year over the next 10 years, making it the largest Federal food program serving low-income families in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I recently volunteered at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to help area veterans and their families to ensure they do not go hungry. When we help meet the nutritional needs of military families, it allows them to focus on other pressing issues. The same goes for all families in America.

I am committed to ensuring that SNAP continues to work for those who need it most, and to make certain that the program remains viable for decades to come. I look forward to getting to work on this in the 115th Congress.

HONORING JOHN ALBERT MCNEILL, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the life of John Albert McNeill, Sr.—a fine American.

John McNeill was born in Whiteville, North Carolina, in 1918. From the time he was born until he graduated from college, John helped his folks run their family pharmacy in Whiteville, which first opened in 1875, and is, to this day, Mr. Speaker, North Carolina's oldest family-owned pharmacy.

When McNeill graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1940 as a pharmacist, he had intentions to return home to Whiteville and work in the drugstore, but that didn't happen. The United States had joined the Allies in World War II, and McNeill found himself at the recruiting station trying to enlist. Much to his dismay, he quickly discovered that he wasn't tall enough to qualify for the Navy.

John McNeill was undeterred. Determined to serve his country, McNeill spent the next 2 months of his life stretching, and he added 2 inches to his height—just enough to qualify for the Navy. Having been accepted to the Navy, John completed his midshipman's training at Columbia University and gained his commission in early 1942.

During the war, McNeill commanded landing craft in the Pacific theater and served with distinction as he participated in hundreds of landings in the Solomon Islands while reinforcing Guadalcanal.

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After finishing his time in the Navy, John returned to Whiteville to help run the drugstore. The day after returning home, he opened the family store, walked across the street, and introduced himself to his future wife, Margaret Powell. They were married a year later and raised six children together. Around this time, McNeill got involved in Scouting—first in a Sea Scouting troop at Lake Waccamaw, and then later with the Boy Scouts of America as his children were growing up.

Mr. Speaker, John McNeill's devotion to the Boy Scouts was well known across North Carolina as he took his troops to places as far away as the Arctic Circle and the Yucatan Peninsula. A famous story he told involved his troops hiking across the State of North Carolina and stopping to have breakfast with the Governor one morning along the way. Mr. Speaker, under John's leadership, some 55 Boy Scouts in Whiteville, North Carolina, achieved the rank of Eagle Scout—Scouting's highest rank.

While John's legacy as a Scoutmaster is near legend, thousands in Columbus County will remember his hospitality, too. Every Fourth of July, at his pier—his dock—on Lake Waccamaw, John and his family gathered to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence, an event thousands have attended. All the while, John continued running his family's drugstore; and, for many years, he held the distinction of being North Carolina's oldest licensed pharmacist.

Sadly, John passed away in September, at the age of 98.

Mr. Speaker, John Albert McNeill, Sr., lived an extraordinary life, and the difference he made in the lives of countless others in his community will be remembered for years and generations to come.

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES
“JIMMY” MORIARTY—TEXAS
GREEN BERET

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 4, 2016, a military base in Jafr, Jordan, was attacked. A hail of violent gunfire suddenly rang out while three Americans were returning to base. They were ambushed. After the smoke cleared, three Green Berets from the 5th Special Forces Group were killed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. One of those heroic men was 27-year-old Staff Sergeant James “Jimmy” Moriarty.

To be clear, neither the family nor I is satisfied that we have received all of the facts about the deaths of those three Green Berets, but we do know the facts about Staff Sergeant Moriarty of the United States Army.

Staff Sergeant Moriarty was a Texas native—one of Houston's own. He was a proud Green Beret. He was scheduled to come home in 2 weeks to spend the holidays with his family. Jimmy was, unquestionably, one of the best. Growing up in Houston, he earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Texas. He spoke fluent Arabic—maybe with a Texas accent, Mr. Speaker. As part of the 5th Special Forces Group, he was 3 months into his third tour of duty in Jordan. Upon graduation from the University of Texas, Jimmy made the choice to serve his Nation in the United States Army. He was a volunteer. He was a proud member of the United States Army Special Forces. During his service to America, he earned the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the NCO Professional Development ribbon, and an Army Service Ribbon.

The brave men of the Green Berets are our Nation's warriors. They are sent to take on the toughest missions that our Nation faces. From the jungles of Vietnam to the desert sands of the Middle East, they are, as John Wayne once said, America's best. These men are the warriors our enemies fear. They respond to terrorists and other outlaws to keep America safe throughout the globe. Proudly wearing silver wings on their chests, they are, without question, America's finest warriors.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell, another Texan:

In times of uncertainty, there is a special breed of warrior ready to answer our Nation's call—a common man with an uncommon desire to succeed. Forged by adversity,