

older Americans will be faced with paying higher premiums under the bill's age tax.

We cannot let this bill become law. We cannot allow patients, families, seniors, and those who have diabetes and chronic illnesses like asthma, COPD, or obesity to be left to fend for themselves. That is not the America that we know. That is not the values that we share.

We don't believe that healthcare is a commodity only for those that can afford it. Those who can't afford healthcare will have to fend for themselves, simply because they can't afford it. We believe that we all have a responsibility for health as a common good, with a social responsibility to make sure that our neighbors and our communities are well, that our neighbors' kids are free from infections that can spread to other kids. That is why we have strong vaccination programs.

Health is, fundamentally, a human right. The rest of the world sees it that way, so why not America, the leaders of our globe. We must and we can do better.

To my Republican colleagues, I know that passing a bill is important politically because you campaigned on this for the past 8 years. I understand that you have a lot of pressures from donors. Just think about patients. Do the right thing. Put politics aside.

Let's heed the words of Senator McCAIN. Let's come back to regular order. Let's figure out what we can do together to fix and improve on the Affordable Care Act to bring down premiums and bring down the cost of healthcare and medicines and make sure that we expand coverage to more people and not take away coverage for millions of people.

Let's put people above partisanship. Let's put solutions above ideology. Let's do the right thing. Let's come together and help pragmatically improve healthcare for millions of Americans.

CONGRATULATING WAYNE MARSHFIELD ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. FASO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the commitment and dedication of Wayne Marshfield, who just recently retired after 50 years of hard work with the Delaware County Electric Cooperative.

Over the course of his career, Wayne has supported the Cooperative's central mission of providing reliable and affordable energy services to families throughout its entire service area.

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Wayne's leadership and penchant for innovation have significantly enhanced the Cooperative's operations in our up-state communities. For example, Wayne developed the service location system, which greatly improved his company's service mapping, allowing

us to greater respond to emergencies and needs of the community. In addition, he implemented the smart meter to modernize the area's outage alerts.

We thank Wayne Marshfield for his indispensable 50 years of service at the Delaware County Electric Cooperative, and also his 20 years-plus service as Hamden's town supervisor. Wayne has always gone above and beyond to ensure affordable and reliable power to our local homes and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I salute Wayne Marshfield.

NORTHERN COLUMBIA LIONS CLUB 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northern Columbia Lions Club, which will soon celebrate its 70th anniversary on September 30 of this year.

Based in Valatie, New York, this Lions Club International post has a long history of extending a helping hand to neighbors in need. Its members practice charitable leadership, living out the Lions Club motto: "Where there's a need, there's a Lion."

This year alone, the Northern Columbia Lions Club has hosted vision screening tests for preschoolers, held a successful eyeglass drive for people in underdeveloped countries, refurbished benches in Chatham's Callan Memorial Park, and awarded scholarships to local college-bound students.

I thank our past and present members of the Northern Columbia Lions Club for their 70 years of dedication to a better Columbia County and a better world.

KNEELING IN RECOGNITION OF THE GLORY OF OUR NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, last evening, I took to kneeling on this floor in recognition, first of all, of the glory of this Nation, the pride that I have in representing the Nation in far-away places as a Member of Congress, and visiting heads of states, and visiting with the people of other countries who have such an admiration for the purity of our freedom.

I also take great pride in Texas being a State that is home to any number of military bases and reservists and Active Duty and veterans. We interact all the time. Our military liaison in my office is a veteran of the Iraq and Afghan wars.

There is no lacking in sense of pride, and not one of us remembers missing the national anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance as children growing up in our daily activities as we went to school. But I also have come to understand what those symbols mean. They are not just cloth or music. They, in fact, represent ideals and values, and many people interpret them in different ways.

I abhor spitting or burning or destroying of the flag. I have not done

any of those. Colin Kaepernick's kneeling in the early months past was no disrespect of his love of this country, but a recognition that people were hurting and people were losing their lives, and we needed to reform systems of justice to be able to respond to the grieving mothers who lost children, in many instances—I would say all the instances—that we can recall of the recent 2 years, unnecessarily.

It did not mean that we did not have, again, the greatest respect for our men and women in blue. I will take no back-seat to my honoring them, fighting for them, working alongside them during Hurricane Harvey, thanking them for the first responders and enormous work they did, working alongside them as we rescued a group of individuals in a church who have fled for their lives during Hurricane Harvey.

We must understand each other as people, and it is unfortunate that the Commander in Chief has taken to a distraction that wants to peel away our unity and report in the news: They like it, don't they? He is really, working for his base.

I don't know anything about a base. I know about Americans. I see them all the time, and they don't look like me. They disagree with me. They have different opinions. I still respect that opinion, but I do believe that we can all come together.

That knee was in respect of Colin and the young men who have now successfully taken to their knees, and the owners. Yes, I know that what they have done does not feed people; does not work on your retirement; does not get us something better than the Graham-Cassidy bill, which will destroy and undermine healthcare for millions of Americans, those with preexisting diseases, those who suffer from the lack of income, and those who need good healthcare—the very promise that was made by the President and all of us as Members of Congress that there should be some structure.

There is no structure in the Graham-Cassidy bill. All it does is throw it over to the State and say: If you don't have the money, forget about it. Don't worry about them. Take the money and give tax cuts to the rich.

That is not the American way.

I rise today to say that I remain on bended knee in spirit with all of those young men. I look forward to working with the NFL and all the sports as we explain that these young men are vital parts of the community. Thank you to J.J. Watt and the Texans and all of those who have contributed.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN PUERTO RICO

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, now, what is the most important message?

My people are suffering—and my constituents—still in Texas. They are suffering in Florida. They are suffering now extraordinarily in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Your eyes should burn and your hearts should be struck by the absolute

humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico. As I listened to my colleagues this morning as I was coming to this floor already on these issues, they pierced my heart even more because Puerto Rico is under water. The disease is rising. People with medicine are losing it because they do not have refrigeration, yet the idle talk and idle hands of the administration are, in fact, not doing anything sufficient enough to save those lives.

I, too, have people in my district who are unhoused, but I am here because we are unified, and we must be able to speak about the whole of America. I have been to Puerto Rico on a number of issues. I know the leadership of the former Congressperson, and I believe that it is high time—if this is water that Hurricane Harvey was, imagine the disease of being hit by 155 miles per hour. It is now time to put a military czar in Puerto Rico.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Send the C-130s, send the ships, help these people be rescued. This is a disgrace. I am talking about foolishness. Be a leader and be the Commander in Chief and stop all of this.

When are we going to get the kind of leader that is deserving of the American people?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I am sick and tired of it. I want a President. I do not want the person that fools around while people are dying.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. ***

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

REMOVE TAX-EXEMPT STATUS OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS LEAGUES

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I just heard on this floor. Kneeling as a sign of respect?

I don't recall my Democratic colleagues kneeling when former President Obama would come to address this body. They stood as a sign of respect. That is what we do in this country, Republicans and Democrats, for our flag, for our anthem.

That is why I joined so many Americans in anger and disgust when I saw NFL players, multimillionaires, kneeling during the national anthem, and it is such an overgeneralized indictment. If people have a problem with police brutality or the criminal justice system, there are venues for discussion, even for protest that highlight and isolate those issues for an adult in a responsible discussion.

When people kneel during our national anthem, they don't simply indict the issue with which they take

some particular grievance. They indict our country, our servicemembers, our first responders, our Founding Fathers, and the principles that made this country great.

But, see, this freedom that we enjoy also includes the freedom of speech, the right of our citizens to express themselves even when we find that expression offensive. It is a fundamental constitutional right, yet nowhere in the Constitution does it say that hard-working Americans have to subsidize or create special carve-outs and exemptions for conduct that they find unpatriotic.

Unfortunately, today, the Tax Code gives special breaks to sports leagues. Some swamp creature of yesteryear cleverly defined sports leagues as tax-exempt trade organizations.

The public pays 70 percent of the cost of NFL stadiums. Tax-exempt sports leagues generate \$2 billion in revenue, yet the Tax Code gives them special treatment, gives them a special break that small businesses in my district don't get. That is unfair.

It is outrageous that we take money away from hardworking Americans to subsidize professional sports at all. The return on investment is negative. I have heard these arguments in my home State of Florida: Oh, these sports clubs create jobs and revenue and economic activity.

Look, every economic analysis showed that this is a negative return on investment, a loser for taxpayers, and corporate welfare at its worst.

The Internal Revenue Code must be amended to remove the tax-exempt status for professional sports leagues permanently. I am glad that the NFL voluntarily gave up their status, but we should make this change permanent and we should make it the law.

In the coming days and weeks, we will be discussing tax relief to lift up the middle class. I support whole-scale, bold, conservative tax reform; but we have an opportunity in this tax bill to send an even more profound message: In America, if you want to play sports, you are free to do so. You are also free to protest. You are welcome to do both, but you should do it on your own time and on your own dime.

DREAM ACT

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about three issues that are very important to my district and the Nation.

First, I want to talk about the immigration policy or the lack of an immigration policy that we have in this country; a, in essence, broken immigration system.

For years I have been saying that we need to fix it, and we need to do that in a bipartisan way because it is the only way we are going to be successful. I supported bipartisan efforts in 2013, the

legislation that came out of the Senate by a vote of 68–13. Prior to that, I supported President Bush's efforts and, more recently, President Obama's efforts; but, unfortunately, we have not been successful through these efforts.

That is why today I think we need to be focusing on at least one segment that would have been addressed if, in fact, we fix this broken immigration system. And that is those DREAMers, those young people covered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that was initiated by President Obama that is now going to expire.

These people came here at the average age of 6 years. Most of them don't know the country they came from. Most of them consider themselves, in essence, Americans. They are going to school. They are in our military service. They are serving in many different ways. They have jobs. They are part of families in which some are here legally and some are not. You are talking about breaking up families.

Yesterday I signed a discharge petition to bring to the House floor the bipartisan, bicameral Dream Act, which will permanently protect these DREAMers by offering them a path to earned citizenship, not amnesty.

I will continue to do everything in my power to bring the Dream Act to the House floor for a vote and to work then, after that, for comprehensive immigration reform, which is what we really need to do so that we don't keep up ending back here like a continued broken record.

I want our DREAMers to know that many of us in Washington and across the Nation stand with them. The overwhelming majority of Americans believe that we ought to fix this. And I hope, before the end of this year, in a bipartisan fashion, we will do just that.

CONGRATULATING SLOANE STEPHENS WINNING U.S. OPEN IN TENNIS

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, about a month ago, we had the United States tennis championship, and I would be remiss if I didn't congratulate Sloane Stephens on her winning the U.S. Open in tennis earlier.

□ 1100

Many of you may not realize, but she came from the San Joaquin Valley, from the area that I represent in California, and we are proud of her. She did, after all, start playing her tennis in Fresno, where she lived until she was 10 years old.

But her win makes many of us in America proud, as she showed the world a level of hard work, determination, and grit rarely seen on the tennis court. Ms. Stephens had to fight her way back to the court after a stress fracture and surgery in January that took her out of training and completely off of her feet and off of the tennis court.

And then she came back—and, wow, did she come back—to beat the world's best, including one of her heroines,