

colleagues to reduce and eliminate the scourge of addiction.

GOLD STAR FAMILIES

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, as Americans, we mourn with Gold Star families, but we cannot feel their pain. There is nothing anyone can say or do to really comfort families suffering the loss of a loved one. But there is a lot people can say or do to cause grieving families additional pain, as we have seen over this past week.

As Members of Congress, we are there for our constituents. They are our families. It is our obligation to speak up when they are hurt.

The loss of American servicemembers should not be politicized. Our fallen heroes should be honored.

Sergeant La David Johnson is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Jeremiah Johnson is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Bryan Black is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Dustin Wright is an American hero.

The 28 men and women who lost their lives in service to their country this year are all American heroes. Let us honor their sacrifices and comfort their families, as has been the tradition in this country until last week.

□ 1800

RECOGNIZING BAT WEEK

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bat Week, which is an annual, week-long event highlighting the important ecological and economic benefits of bats.

With more than 1,300 different species worldwide, bats are both diverse in appearance and how they keep ecosystems balanced. Bats play an essential role with insect control, pollination, and seed dispersal. One bat can eat 2,000 to 6,000 insects each night, including moths, beetles, flies, mosquitoes, and more.

Because of their incredible appetites, farmers can use fewer pesticides to control insects. This helps our Nation's farmers and saves billions of dollars each year.

Mr. Speaker, bats also play other roles outside of our ecosystems, including in medical research. Scientists studying vampire bats have created anticoagulant medication to help stroke victims.

These are just a small portion of the ways bats positively impact our daily lives, and I am pleased to see these wonderful creatures recognized during Bat Week.

I appreciate the great work being performed by private conservation organizations, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and many other State partners, such as the Pennsylvania Game Commission on Bat Week 2017.

HONORING BUFFALO POLICE OFFICER CRAIG LEHNER

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Buffalo Police Officer Craig Lehner, who lost his life in the line of duty this past week. On October 13, tragedy struck. Officer Lehner went missing while performing underwater recovery training in the Niagara River. For 5 days, State, local, Federal, and Canadian agencies heroically assisted in the search and recovery.

Officer Lehner lived a life of service to his country and to his community. A resident of south Buffalo, Lehner was a 9-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department, a 16-year National Guardsman who served in Iraq, and a member of the canine unit.

Those who knew Officer Lehner knew how much he loved his job and the people of Buffalo. Buffalo is the hardest working city in America, the city of good neighbors.

In the past several days, there has been an outpouring of support for Officer Lehner's family and the Buffalo Police Department. I want to extend thanks to the many brave first responders who worked around the clock in recovery efforts.

Officer Lehner, thank you for your service, and may you rest in peace.

TAX BREAK FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. MESSEY. Mr. Speaker, every year, middle class seniors are forced to pay billions in taxes on their Social Security benefits. This tax is fundamentally not fair and penalizes folks who have paid into the system their entire lives.

There is a better way. We should give these seniors a tax cut, let them keep more of their benefits, and create a better, fairer system for all Americans.

In 1984, when Congress passed this tax on seniors, it was designed to only impact high-income seniors, about 14 percent. But the tax was never adjusted for inflation, and today, fully half of seniors are paying this onerous tax. In fact, there are over 280,000 Hoosiers making less than \$75,000 per year who are subject to this tax.

I introduced the Social Security Tax Fairness Act to give these seniors the tax break they deserve. This bill cuts taxes for seniors, single and married seniors, and ends the marriage penalty on Social Security benefits, too.

Under this bill, a retired married couple with \$70,000 in income will see \$2,000 in tax cuts. It is time to deliver tax cuts for every American, and this legislation would ensure Hoosier seniors aren't left behind either.

NEED FOR MORE FEMA INSPECTORS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, citing from The New York Times, "Outside Rachel Roberts' house, a skeleton sits on a chair next to a driveway, a skeleton child on its lap, an empty cup in its hand, and a sign at its feet reads, 'Waiting on FEMA.'"

I want to acknowledge that FEMA workers from around the country have worked without ceasing, but we have got to do a better job. My constituents in Houston, Harris County, Texas, after Harvey, are waiting on those inspectors.

That is the only way, Mr. Speaker, that they can begin the repair of their homes. Many people are there without coverage and truly need to have their homes repaired.

I have given suggestions. I am sorry that we didn't stand up enough Federal FEMA inspectors. But what about college students, people who are unemployed, using a FEMA app, dividing the area in sectors, finishing one sector then going to another sector? This includes the State of Florida as well. People are on hold for hours at a time.

I have spoken to those who are now looking at it. I want them to know that I appreciate them taking my call and reviewing this, but reach out for help. We have got to have more inspectors. If we do not have inspectors, they will not be able to repair their homes. If they cannot repair their homes, they are living in dangerous conditions. If they are living in dangerous conditions, the quality of life deteriorates.

Help us in Texas. We need more FEMA inspectors. We need them now.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF JOHN HANCOCK

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, when you look at the heavens tonight, you may notice a new bright star. My fellow Texans from Sugar Land and Fort Bend County have seen that star for years. It is our John Hancock.

John enjoyed life with us for 89 years. John is a native Texan, Houston proud, born on February 13 of 1928. He is a Korean Army veteran, 33 years with Mobil Oil, an investment adviser.

John loved many things. He loved University of Texas football, Hook 'em Horns. He loved his Astros, our baseball team. He loved his hometown of Sugar Land. He loved going to church

at Sugar Land First United Methodist Church. He loved to bowl. He bowled 297 points when he turned 80. But most of all, he loved his amazing wife, Linda.

John and Linda are in Heaven together right now. Linda is there saying, “Roll Tide,” for her beloved Alabama Crimson Tide playing their football games. John is beside her saying, “Beat LA,” which is exactly what his beloved Astros will do in a few hours.

Thank you, John. May the peace of Christ be with you and Linda forever.

RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, on October 15, the world celebrated International Day of Rural Women and the invaluable global contribution of women farmers and small holders.

To do our part in expressing solidarity, I rise to introduce this resolution to commemorate this very important day. According to the United Nations, rural women make up over one-quarter of the globe’s total population and represent 43 percent of the agricultural workforce. They play a critical role in agricultural production, food security, and economic stability.

Women serve as the bedrock of society. They feed the world’s families. They feed our neighbors and our countrymen and -women. They are admirable role models for younger generations, and unfortunately, despite this, they still face many societal and economic limitations both here and abroad.

This resolution shines a light on women farmers and seeks to empower them to succeed as entrepreneurs. It calls on the people of the United States and the world to recognize their critical contributions and to recommit to reducing barriers and limitations that heretofore have stunted their full progress. Let us plant the seeds of hope. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

PLANS TO PREVENT FLOODING IN THE FUTURE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Harvey ravaged the coast of Texas, hammering it with 50 inches of rain, massive flooding, and massive damage.

After the rain stopped, the decision to release water from Addicks and Barker Reservoirs and Lake Conroe have left many questions in the Houston area. The release of this water caused even more flooding downstream.

Why did the Corps of Engineers open Barker and Addicks Reservoirs for 15 days? Why weren’t the communities of

Humble and Kingwood given proper notice of the historic release of floodwater from Lake Conroe by the San Jacinto River Authority? And there are more questions.

I have introduced the Texas Flood Accountability Act. This legislation requires the Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate the cause of the floods and what can be done for long-term plans to prevent flooding in the future. They must produce this plan within 90 days after enactment.

We must move from paying for disasters to preventing them. We need a plan, Mr. Speaker.

And that is just the way it is.

FOCUS TAX RELIEF ON MIDDLE CLASS

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the President and congressional Republicans claim they want to, “Put more money in the pockets of average Americans.” Well, the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center analyzed their plan, and they found out what it really does, put billionaires first. They found that 80 percent of the Republican tax cuts would go to the richest 1 percent.

But that is not all. Also, under their plan, 50 million Americans will see a tax increase. Many of them happen to be constituents of mine, middle class families and working families in Pennsylvania.

It is wrong to raise the taxes of my constituents to pay for tax cuts for billionaires. That is wrong, it is bad economics, and it will crush our economy. We need an economy that works for everyone. Let’s focus tax relief where it counts, and that is on the middle class.

BRIDES MARCH FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, close to 100 women in wedding gowns from all over our country came to Washington, D.C. They came here to give a face and a voice to victims of domestic violence.

I was also floored by the courage of my colleagues, other Members of Congress, whose loved ones had been victims and had even been killed because of domestic violence. Domestic violence is something that can impact anybody on any day, even on your wedding day.

The Brides March honors the memory and tragedy of Gladys Ricart, who, on September 26, 1999, lost her life on her wedding day at the hands of her abusive ex-boyfriend.

This march has now spread beyond New York, to Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Florida, Washington, D.C., and even other countries like the Domin-
ican Republic, Mexico, Brazil, and Spain.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, today I am Gladys Ricart. We are all Gladys Ricart. The Brides March and the advocacy of New York Latinas Against Domestic Violence is a thundering statement against domestic violence and a reminder that domestic violence remains a pressing issue in our communities and sometimes in our families.

Mr. Speaker, domestic violence and violence against women is unacceptable.

□ 1815

REJECT THE BUDGET

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

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, it has been 8 years. For 8 years, from the day Barack Obama was sworn in until the day he left office, I heard my Republican colleagues telling me that we weren’t paying enough attention to the national debt, that we were mortgaging our children’s future, and that we needed to do more to get our debt and deficit under control. Heck, to be honest with you, I agreed with what they were saying.

But now that they are in power—control the Presidency and both Chambers—what are they doing?

Totally ignoring the debt deficit is what they are doing.

Worst yet, actually, the budget of theirs that has just come out adds \$1.5 trillion to the deficit over the next 10 years. This is their stated strategy in the budget. This is \$1.5 trillion our children and grandchildren need to pay back. I just can’t believe it. The hypocrisy is beyond belief.

Apparently, my Republican colleagues are only fiscally conservative when the Democrats are in control.

Let’s reject this unconscionable budget and work across the aisle for tax reform that actually improves our children’s future.

BUDGET AND TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, an interesting week out ahead. As we begin this week, as we look at the budget for the United States of America, as we look and prepare to deal with the tax cut issue, we really ought to start that discussion with a clear understanding of what our goal is.

I often use this when I talk here on the floor because it is foundational. It is foundational to what I believe we should use to test the various pieces of legislation that come before us. This