

Mr. Speaker, serving one's country is a noble and selfless act. These men and women have answered the call of duty, and today we honor their dedication, service, and courage.

In 2016, there were nearly 1.3 million Active Duty military personnel. Nearly 200,000 of those Active Duty members are deployed overseas. From Japan to Germany, and from South Korea to Afghanistan, our American men and women serve with distinction.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, more than 50 airmen from the 193rd Special Operations Wing are scheduled to return home this week following an overseas deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all of our deployed troops to know that we are proud of their efforts and are grateful for their service.

THE BUDGET AND TAX REFORM

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, just a month after the U.S. national debt surpassed \$20 trillion for the very first time, today this House passed an irresponsible budget that will add a shocking additional \$1.5 trillion to that sum.

This additional debt threatens our future prosperity and constricts our ability to respond to the challenges we face today.

The cynical purpose of today's budget is to pave the way so partisan tax reform can be fast tracked through the Senate, but financing tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit those at the very top by ballooning our Nation's budget deficits is exactly the wrong approach.

We all agree our Tax Code is broken and needs reform, but true tax reform needs to be fiscally responsible.

Rather than crafting plans behind closed doors, I urge my colleagues to reach across the aisle. Together, we can pursue reform of our Tax Code that focuses on the middle class, promotes entrepreneurship, job creation, and private investment, and supports public investment in our infrastructure.

Let's bring this tax reform debate into the open and get this done for the American people.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, as well as all of the men, women, and families that have been affected by this devastating disease.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women. Research, early diagnosis, and modern treat-

ments are raising survival rates, but it remains the second leading cause of cancer mortality for women.

During the month of October, we reflect on the lives lost and the families affected by this cancer, including my own family and my own beautiful wife, Carol, who we just lost this last spring, but we also bring light to the actions that we can take to fight against it.

I encourage all women to talk to your doctor about breast cancer screenings for early detection.

I admire the unmatched courage of the survivors and those currently suffering from this disease.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is the 30th anniversary of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Domestic violence is a crime that impacts every race, gender, class, and sex.

In my home State, 33 percent of California women and 28 percent of California men will experience domestic violence. Nevertheless, since this month was recognized for the first time in 1987, much progress has been made.

I began my professional career as a prosecutor back in 1996, and I can tell you, back then it was tough to get a jury to understand and even listen to the circumstances behind domestic violence, and it was tough to convince jurors that domestic violence is not a private issue that should be kept in the bedroom, but instead, it is a righteous issue that needed to be brought out in our courtrooms.

Fortunately, there were police officers to make arrests, there were prosecutors to try the cases, and there were advocates to give the victims the confidence they need to come forward.

So this month we recognize those who support domestic violence victims, we vow to hold abusers accountable, and we strive to create and to update legislation that not only protects, but emboldens victims of domestic violence so that they can embrace living their lives.

LOCK HIM UP

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when Derrick Harper stood in front of a Pittsburgh judge a few months ago, it was clear the defendant was a special kind of evil person.

For years, Harper and his crew of deviants ran the city's most brutal and ruthless sex trafficking ring. The traffickers lined their pockets by forcing young women to have sex with countless men every day. Any woman who attempted to escape their custody was tortured and gang raped.

To degrade and dehumanize them, Harper shaved the women's heads with butcher knives and branded them with hot irons.

Harper was the ring leader of this massive trafficking organization, but it wasn't until four of his young victims bravely escaped and testified against him that justice was served.

His attempts to rob these women of their dignity had failed, and his reign of terror was finally over. Seeing the true depravity, the judge sentenced the defendant to 289 years in the penitentiary.

As a former judge, I applaud this judge. Criminals need to be locked up, not victims. America must track down and prosecute these slave traders and rescue the victims from this scourge.

And that is just the way it is.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1329. An ACT to increase, effective as of December 1, 2017, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

THE HURRICANE AND OPIOID CRISES

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to urgently have set up an appeal process on an expedited basis for my constituents and those across the disaster-impacted areas of a FEMA denial appeal system. Thousands of my constituents have been denied FEMA assistance.

Pictures just came to my phone last evening, and I am urging the FEMA Director and all who can do so, including the President, we are not a 10. We are in desperate need of help. People do not have their lives restored.

I also want to make mention of the fact that today there will be some statement made on this horrific opioid crisis, which we as Members of Congress have been dealing with for over a year. We understand that this may be called a public health service emergency versus a catastrophic emergency, using the Public Service Act or the Stafford Act. The Stafford Act funds are almost completely diminished because of wildfires and hurricanes.

The casualties of opioid abuse are 142 per day, which is like an airplane crash every single day. With this amazing and unbelievable budget that has been passed, the Halloween budget of 2017, there will be trillions of dollars cut away from the budget. It is imperative that the President call this an emergency and begin to use emergency funds to deal with the opioid crisis.

The only thing you can say today, Mr. Trump, is that you are committed to an emergency both for Hurricane disasters and others, but as well as the opioid crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD my letter to the President:

Mr. President, thank you for the invitation for Members of Congress to attend the unveiling of your emergency declaration on combatting the opioid epidemic.

This is indeed an epidemic that I agree must be addressed immediately. This problem has claimed many lives throughout our country, including my state of Texas and my home district of Houston.

It is imperative that we act. It is equally imperative that we act responsibly and intelligently.

We cannot merely make promises on which the American people are waiting for us to deliver, if we know that those promises will not come right away.

We must have a clear goal and long-term commitment to truly combatting this devastating problem in the opioid crisis.

Mr. President, where will this money come from, as this is a very costly endeavor?

New funding streams would be required, and thus, making such a declaration without forethought relative to significant funding will prove to be a futile effort.

There must be a strategy which we can realistically and effectively execute without causing harm to equally important and urgent areas.

Despite your previous promise to address the opioid crisis, at a Commission meeting last week, no real solution was developed.

Instead, the Commission suggested that funding be taken out of the Public Health Service Act or the Stafford Act, both of which are problematic.

First, I believe the nation's public health emergency fund is empty.

Second, the Stafford Act funds disaster relief for hurricanes and wildfires, which are under the jurisdiction of FEMA.

As a Member of Congress that recently watched the fatal devastation inflicted upon my city of Houston, I can tell you firsthand, that we are still trying to wrap our minds around the catastrophic loss and how to now rebuild.

America has experienced mass casualties due to recent hurricanes that occurred within the span of a month period, with approximate death tolls of 82 in Texas and Louisiana, 72 in Florida, 51 in Puerto Rico and countless disruptions and damages.

The loss of lives, businesses and properties is astronomical as we continue to assess the damage in TX, LA, FL, VI and P.R.

Therefore, I must caution the administration, to responsibly bear these facts in mind, as it attempts to combat the opioid epidemic, which is undoubtedly a very important issue.

THE 71ST RESCUE SQUADRON IS
RECOGNIZED FOR ITS RESCUE
EFFORTS

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 71st

Rescue Squadron of the United States Air Force, which is stationed at Moody Air Force Base in the first District of Georgia.

They responded as part of the 23rd Wing effort by mobilizing their personnel and equipment in order to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

The 71st Rescue Squadron successfully evacuated 308 flood victims and 38 family pets. They repositioned 15 rescue crafts and teams to access difficult areas, saving 1,100 lives.

In addition, they moved 83 tons of cargo and delivered 23,000 gallons of fuel, which was used to conduct helicopter search and rescues.

Because of their dedication to this country, this group received the That Others May Live Squadron of the Year Award for the Air Force.

Thank you, 71st Rescue Squadron, for your extensive efforts to help the citizens of this country.

HANNAH AHLERS WAS THE
“COOL” MOM

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

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, I plan to speak on this floor about each victim who lost their life during the terrible shooting on October 1 in Las Vegas. My goal is to honor their lives and to ensure that they will never be forgotten.

Today I rise to remember Hannah Ahlers, a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend, whose life was taken far too soon.

Hannah lived in Beaumont, California, and had traveled to Las Vegas with her husband, Brian, and three other couples to attend the Route 91 Harvest music festival.

Friends and family have described Hannah as a beautiful person inside and out, who was full of joy, and always went out of her way to help her friends and family.

Her commitment to her friends, family, and community was felt by everyone. She could light up the room at any moment she walked in. Her father-in-law described her as a young Mary Tyler Moore.

She was also an amazing and devoted mother to her three children, Briannah, Brice, and Hailey. Her kids' friends thought she was the cool mom, and they loved to be around her. She lived her life to the fullest, and enjoyed both the simple pleasures and outdoor thrills, like the skydiving community she was a part of.

I would like to extend my deepest condolences to Hannah's friends and family. Please know that the city of Las Vegas in Nevada and the whole country grieve with you. This is a tragedy that should have never happened.

OFFICER CRAIG LEHNER LIVED A
LIFE OF HEROISM

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

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Craig Lehner, a Buffalo police officer who lived a life of heroism and who tragically died during a recent training exercise on the Niagara River.

Officer Lehner was a 9-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department, serving on the underwater recovery team, and also serving as a K-9 officer. His partner, a 4-year-old German Shepherd named Shield, served alongside him.

Officer Lehner served our country for 16 years as an Army National Guard military police officer. Having served in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay, he was a well-decorated staff sergeant, awarded more than a dozen medals for his bravery and military achievements.

Officer Lehner made the ultimate sacrifice, and we will be forever grateful for his service. He will be remembered for his bravery and keeping Americans safe both abroad and in western New York.

I offer condolences to his mother, Kathleen, and all of his surviving family during this very difficult time.

HONORING BERTHA WATSON
HENRY

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and esteemed career of Broward County Administrator Bertha Watson Henry.

This week, Bertha is being honored at the International City and County Management Association's annual conference in San Antonio as the recipient of the Mark E. Keane Memorial Award for Excellence. I could not think of a more deserving recipient for this prestigious award.

Under Henry's leadership, Broward County successfully navigated the 2008 recession with stable finances and a strong recovery. She has helped Broward maintain a triple A bond rating since 2014, something only three other Florida counties have accomplished.

She has led construction of a new 714,000-square-foot county courthouse, a 40,000-square-foot animal adoption center, and she renegotiated financial agreements to protect Broward's interest in the fourth largest National Hockey League venue in the U.S.

Administrator Henry's recognition at ICMA is also historic, as Bertha is the first-ever African-American woman to receive the Keane Award for Excellence. Most importantly, this achievement is a reflection of Bertha's commitment to her neighbors, the 1.9 million Floridians who called Broward County home.