

their charitable giving.” But most people would not be able to get the tax break because they probably stop itemizing their deductions, so you would actually lose all of that.

So I don’t know, Mr. JEFFRIES. I think we are going to have a lot of work to do here to make sure that the American people understand exactly what this proposal is and to really get the word out.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Well, I appreciate you going through that important list. I think it can be distilled, you know, quite simply.

The winners of the Republican tax plan are the billionaire boys club; the losers are the American people, everyday Americans, all premised, again, on, and you are going to hear this over and over again, dynamic scoring—sounds great—trickle-down economics.

You know, I figured out that trickle-down economics essentially means, for the middle class, you may get a trickle, but you are guaranteed to stay down, because there is no evidence—no evidence from the Reagan experiment, no evidence from the Bush experiment, no evidence from the Brownback experiment in Kansas, no evidence—that if you cut taxes for the wealthy or the well off, for special interest corporations, whether you do it directly or through passthrough entities, that when you cut those taxes, it results in strong, unprecedented economic growth. In fact, our history tells us precisely the opposite.

Bill Clinton raised the top tax rate on high-income earners from 35 percent to 39.6 percent. Did we suffer from a recession as a result of increasing taxes on millionaires and billionaires so that they would pay their fair share? No, quite the opposite—unprecedented economic growth, 20 million-plus jobs created during 8 years of Bill Clinton.

Then George W. Bush comes into town, and we actually had a balanced budget at that time. What does he do? Deficits don’t matter according to the Bush administration. We are going to stimulate tremendous economic growth by cutting taxes on millionaires and billionaires because of trickle-down economics, supply-side economics, dynamic scoring, lower the tax rate from 39.6 on millionaires and billionaires to 35.

What happened? We lost more than 500,000 jobs in 8 years of the Bush Presidency.

Barack Obama comes into town and we had all of these doom-and-gloom projections from my good friends on the other side in terms of what was going to happen. He campaigns on millionaires and billionaires paying their fair share, raises the top tax rate from 35 percent to 39.6 percent. Twelve million-plus private sector jobs were created during 8 years of the Obama Presidency.

That is why I say that the Republican tax plan is nothing more than a Ponzi scheme based on a failed, fraudulent, phony theory of trickle-down economics that has no basis in reality.

I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Washington for yielding and being so generous and thoughtful in her discussion.

Ms. JAYAPAL. I thank the gentleman from New York for his thoughts.

Once again, I would just draw your attention back to who the real big winner is here in this Republican tax plan. It is Mr. Moneybags.

So if you have got money in bags, millions of dollars, if you are a large corporation, if you are a billionaire, then you are going to benefit from this plan—yes, you will. And you know who is going to pay for that is middle class working families across the country who are going to see their taxes go up, who are going to see their services cut, who are going to ultimately be a part of the plan that has three parts.

The number one part for the Republican plan is transfer trillions of dollars of wealth from middle class America to the wealthiest in the country who don’t need it; number two, explode the deficit, because there is no way to pay for this unless you cut a bunch of stuff; and then, number three, cut more. Use the exploding deficit as an opportunity to cut spending even more: raid Social Security; raid Medicare; raid Medicaid.

This is all part of the budget that was passed last week by Republicans. Let me say, there were 20 Republicans who voted against that budget, and I congratulate them for their courage in voting against that budget. It was a close vote. If we had just gotten a couple more, we would have been able to defeat that budget, and we would have been able to at least require a more thoughtful process for how we move forward on tax reform, because part of what that budget vote did is to allow this process to move forward with less democracy, with less vetting, and with less knowledge for the American people.

Once again, I would say that the only reason to do this without a real debate, to rewrite the American economy without a real debate, is if you want to hide who is going to benefit from it. We know who is going to benefit. It is right here. Mr. Moneybags is going to benefit. Working people are going to suffer.

So I know that we Democrats are absolutely committed to making sure that working families across this country, the vulnerable, the low-income, the folks who are struggling every day, who are just making it, who feel like this economy is not working for them because it is controlled by corporations, by lobbyists, by folks who are here not working for the American people but working for their own special interests, we know that Americans want that to stop. Unfortunately, this plan does not do that.

So Democrats are going to fight every step of the way. The Congressional Progressive Caucus is going to fight every step of the way. We have

our own People’s Budget. We have a real proposal for how to invest in infrastructure, in jobs, in education, in healthcare to make sure that Americans across the country, whether you are in a red State or a blue State, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, whether you are in rural America or urban America—I actually believe we all want the same things, which is we want to be able to put food on the table; we want to be able to put a roof over our head; we want to be able to go to a job and feel dignity about that job; we want to be able to send our kids to college or to higher education so they can get the skills and training they need and not be mired in student debt—across the country, \$1.4 trillion of student debt that we have, even larger than credit card debt—and we want to be able to retire with dignity.

So, ultimately, my friends, what we are going to have to do as Democrats—and I hope that there are Republicans across the aisle who want the same things and who know that this is a bad deal for middle class families, for working families, for folks who are just struggling to make it, who want to have that better deal, better jobs, better future, we Democrats are going to fight for that.

I hope that we have colleagues on the other side of the aisle who recognize that their districts in blue States, red States, urban, and rural will suffer if this plan goes through.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The Chair would remind Members to direct all remarks to the Chair, and to formally yield and reclaim time when under recognition.

SENATE NEEDS TO TAKE UP HOUSE BILLS

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to recognize several distinguished Members of the House for the next hour.

When our constituents show up on the first Tuesday in November to exercise their right of self-governance, they carry with them the dreams of a better Republic.

In 2016, the American people commissioned us with a task. They asked us to fight for jobs. They asked us to fight to fix healthcare. They asked us to roll back regulations. They asked us to secure the free world. They asked us to secure our own borders.

The House of Representatives heard them. We have been busy developing and passing legislation that meaningfully improves the lives of Americans. I commend the Speaker and his leadership in moving these bills through the House.

Unfortunately, much of the House's important work is stalled in the U.S. Senate. It is time the Senate pass important legislation and restore trust in our Republic, because before this week, the House had sent 308 bills to the Senate that are still stalled in that Chamber. This is more than any of the previous four Presidential administrations had stalled at this same time in their first year.

For the record, the House of Representatives in the 115th Congress has also passed more total bills than Houses in any of the last four Presidential administrations at this point. We are at 394 total bills passed.

The dreams of this great Republic cannot be realized by the House alone. The Senate must hear the people and come together around the often bipartisan measures we have been sending to them.

As a way of reminding the Senate, I would like to spend the next hour recognizing Members to discuss some of the important bills passed by the House of Representatives that now sit motionless in the U.S. Senate.

I am thankful for my colleagues who are joining me this evening to talk about the House's successful legislative efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) to talk about the No Sanctuary for Criminals Act, H.R. 3003.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for organizing this Special Order and recognizing me to address it.

I would like to say at the start of this that the folks that had the Special Order ahead of us had not read the bill that they were expounding upon, and it would be impossible for them to have done so. So I want to remind the body of that, Mr. Speaker, and then address the No Sanctuary Cities Act.

It is this: that we saw what happened in San Francisco when the murderer of Kate Steinle had been deported five times. He was a seven-time felon, five-time deportee. He still came back, and he came to San Francisco because he knew that it is a sanctuary city, and if he got crossways with the law for whatever it might be, sleeping on the street or shoplifting or any of the additional felonies that were brought against him, they were not going to notify immigration officials. They were going to turn him back loose on the streets of San Francisco. If he was

taken care of as an indigent, they would turn him loose on the streets of San Francisco.

So Kate Steinle now lies in her grave, her family grieves for her loss, and America felt that pain.

San Francisco is a sanctuary city, and now the entire State of California has declared themselves a sanctuary State.

I think, Mr. Speaker, about the hole in the wall. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, they had a spot in the canyon there where you had to ride through a notch to get in there, and they posted a guard there. All the bad guys that wanted to get along with the other bad guys in the West went in that place, and if law enforcement came, then they would line up against them and block them from coming in to enforce the law.

That is essentially what we have got going on in city after city all over America: sanctuary cities operating under the erroneous idea that because their cities are so full of illegals, that if they would ever allow Federal immigration enforcement officials to work and cooperate with local law enforcement, those folks might not be in America.

Well, I met with some people today at the Remembrance Project. These are the families who had their family members killed by illegal aliens who are in America. Many of these illegal aliens who killed Americans and killed other illegal aliens and killed people who are here and lawfully present in America, many of them had criminal records. Many of them had been interdicted by law enforcement, but the local jurisdictions decided it wasn't politically correct to cooperate with Federal law.

Well, the Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land, and it is an enumerated power that Congress establish an immigration policy. We do that, and we direct that those laws be enforced. The executive branch's job is to do that.

All throughout law enforcement, it has been seamless throughout all of my growing up years. I grew up in a law enforcement family. There was no separation. There was no segregation between city police and county law enforcement officers, the sheriff's department, and highway patrol and DCI and FBI. When there was a crime that was committed, everybody worked together seamlessly.

How is it that these cities and now the State of California have carved themselves out an exception to what has been a timeless, time-honored, established cooperation between all levels of law enforcement?

So the No Sanctuary for Criminals Act, which was my bill, is now sitting on MITCH MCCONNELL's desk with the scores of other bills that the gentleman from Colorado has addressed, and it is one that says there will be no sanctuary cities any longer and that we will be cutting off funds going to these cities until they get the message.

□ 1830

I think it is about time that the Justice Department moved on all of the jurisdiction that they actually have, but we need to help them here in Congress. And it is about time that this bill, along with Sarah's Law and Kate's Law, be moved off of MITCH MCCONNELL's desk to the floor of the United States Senate.

That is just a small piece of the broad picture we are addressing here tonight, Mr. Speaker. We need some action over in the Senate. If they would get rid of that filibuster rule, we would see more action than we are seeing today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I encourage him to continue this effort. I am going to stand with him on this. I thank him for all he is doing.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa for his thoughts.

Mr. Speaker, when we learned that Planned Parenthood was selling the tissue of unborn children, America was outraged. Since then, the House has redoubled its effort to pass legislation to protect the unborn.

H.R. 7 and H.R. 36 are two important pro-life measures that have passed the House.

H.R. 36, which would prevent the killing of unborn children who are developed enough to feel pain, passed the House by 237 votes. This legislation has been sitting in the Senate for 31 days.

H.R. 7, which prohibits taxpayer funding for abortion, passed the House by 238 votes. This legislation has been sitting in the Senate for 283 days.

I would like to welcome my friend and colleague from Georgia, Representative JODY HICE, to talk about these two important bills and protecting unborn children. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely appreciate the gentleman's great leadership in this, and I am grateful to be able to speak on this issue of life.

There have been, as mentioned a few moments ago, some 300, plus or minus, bills sent to the Senate that we have labored here in the House and worked through, negotiated, duked it out, so to speak, gotten ideas on the table, worked it out, sent it over to the Senate, only to see them sit there and do nothing.

Right in the midst of all of that, at the heart of it all, are a couple of very important bills dealing with the issue of life, which is important to all of us. I firmly believe, and I know my colleagues do as well, that all human life at every stage of development is worthy of protection. I am deeply honored and proud of the fact that this House has passed a couple of extremely important bills in that regard.

As the gentleman from Colorado just mentioned, H.R. 7, No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion, by our friend from New Jersey, CHRIS SMITH, and H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, by TRENT FRANKS of Arizona,

are fantastic bills. One basically says that the American taxpayer should not be footing the bill to end the life of unborn children. It has been sitting for over 200 days in the Senate without even a debate.

The other says that, after 20 weeks, when an unborn child is capable of feeling pain, we are not going to abort that child in the midst of a period of time where pain is absolutely scientifically proven to be felt. Again, that bill is sitting across the way in the Senate Chamber, and they have not done anything about it whatsoever.

These are important bills. These bills affect lives. Every day that the Senate does nothing, lives are being lost.

The question is: Where is the Senate?

We all sit here and we wait and we wait and we wait. The time has come that the Senate has to take ownership of what the American people elected not only us, but the American people elected them to do, and that is the job, the task, the platform that we all ran on, and at the heart of that is the fight, the battle for life.

I am also proud of the fact that the House, in our appropriations package, defunded Planned Parenthood. This is a promise that we made the American people after the gruesome discovery of how Planned Parenthood was selling baby body parts. Again, we just recognize that life is a gift from God and it is precious and it is to be protected. It is an inalienable right that we as Members of Congress have the responsibility to defend those inalienable rights. Obviously, without the right to life, there, likewise, is no right to liberty, and certainly no right to the pursuit of happiness.

Again, the question is: Where is the Senate on these issues?

It is time that we join together. Again, I thank my friend for having this Special Order and calling on the Senate to deal with this 60-vote threshold that has become an enormous barrier, causing all of us to be dysfunctional in that which the American people sent us here to do.

Our conservative principles, as well as our whole Nation, rests upon us advancing these things that the American people sent us here to do, and at the heart of that is to defend life. I just join in calling on the Senate to deal with this 60-vote rule and move forward on the agenda that we are here to do.

Again, I just thank the gentleman for his kindness in allowing me to speak on this issue, which is important not only to me, but to all of us; and for his leadership on joining us in having a united voice, calling our colleagues down the hallway here to do the job that they were called on to do.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for his passionate defense of life.

Mr. Speaker, Americans should be able to go about their daily lives without the fear of nuclear or radiological attack.

Representative DAN DONOVAN's Securing the Cities Act helps equip our cities to deal with these dangerous weapons, providing training and detection resources.

On January 31, the House agreed by voice vote to this commonsense legislation. For some reason, the Senate has failed in the last 276 days to move this bill.

I am proud to have the bill's sponsor, as well as my friend and colleague, DAN DONOVAN, here to share more about this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York, Mr. DONOVAN.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Colorado for yielding to me on such an important issue not only to my district, not only to my city, not only to my State, but to our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to discuss a vital program within the Department of Homeland Security, the Securing the Cities program.

The Domestic Nuclear Detection Office's Securing the Cities program enhances the ability of States and localities to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high-consequence events using nuclear and radiological materials in high-risk urban areas through the provisions of training, equipment, and other resources.

Securing the Cities began as a pilot program in 2006 in the New York City region, including surrounding jurisdictions of New Jersey and Connecticut. Since that time, it has expanded to Los Angeles; Chicago; Washington, D.C.; and Houston. Once the program is fully implemented, it is estimated that it will protect nearly 100 million people nationwide, Americans.

Hailing from New York City and representing Staten Island and Brooklyn, I have seen firsthand the positive impact of the Securing the Cities program. Since 2007, our region has purchased more than 13,000 radiation detectors and trained nearly 20,000 personnel.

I had the opportunity to observe an exercise in Brooklyn last year and witnessed New York City Police Department personnel using Securing the Cities-procured equipment to locate and identify hidden radiological sources in a baseball stadium. During the exercise, I spoke with the participating officers and received a demonstration of the different types of equipment they deployed.

This program is making a difference in New York City, and I support its continued expansion. That is why I introduced H.R. 655, the Securing the Cities Act of 2017. This bill authorizes the Securing the Cities program, underscoring our commitment to protecting our major cities from catastrophic terrorist attacks.

As we, unfortunately, saw earlier this week, our major cities, including my hometown of New York City, in particular, remain targets for terrorist groups. We have to do everything we

can to ensure the Department of Homeland Security and our State and local partners have the tools they need to address the threats that we face. The Securing the Cities program is one of those tools.

I am pleased that the House quickly passed my legislation earlier this year on January 31. It is now time for the Senate to act. Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to move swiftly to approve H.R. 655 to authorize the Securing the Cities program and ensure its continued expansion.

In April 2010, President Obama stated: "The single biggest threat to U.S. security, both short term, medium term, and long term, would be the possibility of a terrorist organization obtaining a nuclear weapon."

Since that time, the FBI has disrupted attempts by smugglers in Eastern Europe to sell nuclear materials to extremist groups and criminal organizations. The threat has not abated.

I am thankful for the work of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office to provide support and guidance to New York City and other urban areas to meet the threats we face.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to quickly take action to pass the Securing the Cities Act of 2017. Again, I thank my colleague for organizing this Special Order.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, a fellow prosecutor and a passionate advocate for these issues, for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 2015, 32-year-old Kate Steinle was gunned down by an illegal immigrant who had been deported five times already.

Kate's Law, introduced by Chairman BOB GOODLATTE, would enhance the penalties on illegal immigrant felons who are deported and then returned unlawfully to the United States.

This legislation passed the House with 257 votes, a bipartisan coalition of Members who simply want to keep violent felons out of the United States. This bill has been stuck in the Senate for 127 days.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague, Representative ANDY BIGGS, to talk about H.R. 3004, Kate's Law, and the importance of securing our Nation from violent illegal felons.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Colorado, Mr. BUCK, for yielding to me. I am grateful for his leadership as a conservative. It has been my honor to serve with him this past year. I appreciate him sharing some time with me tonight as I share several important stories.

Mr. Speaker, these are stories of real people, not just some people who are distant to us. These are people that we know, people just like this.

Mr. Speaker, one early January morning in 2015, a young man named Grant Ronnebeck began the graveyard shift at a QuikTrip convenience store in my district. After his parents divorce, Grant took the initiative to find a job working at this convenience store

in Mesa, Arizona, to help his family pay the bills. He was only 21 years old. He had his entire life ahead of him.

Just before 4 a.m., an angry customer walked in, demanded a pack of cigarettes, and dumped a handful of change on the store counter. Grant started to count the money, but he saw the customer pull a gun out and point it directly at his head.

Grant tried to immediately hand over the cigarettes in a desperate attempt to save his life, but it was too late. The customer shot Grant in the face in cold blood, took the cigarettes, and casually walked out of the store.

Grant's father describes him as being his buddy from the minute he was born and a person that brightened everybody. He did not leave the store alive that night.

The customer's name was Apolinar Altamirano. He was an illegal alien with a long criminal record, including violent crimes. He was held in Federal custody, but then released while he awaited deportation proceedings. Our government let Grant down when they allowed Grant's killer to walk out of custody and onto our streets.

Altamirano should have remained in custody until he was deported, but he was set free, and Grant was killed due to the government's failure to hold this violent criminal in custody until deported.

Sadly, Grant's story is not unique. Many Americans are aware of another tragic incident, the case of Kate Steinle. Kate was 32 years old. She was walking along a San Francisco pier when an illegal alien shot and killed her. This illegal alien had just been released from prison again. He should have been held until deportation, but he, in fact, had been deported many times previously.

□ 1845

Even then, he was set free, only to kill Kate Steinle.

In 2014, Mesa, Arizona, Police Officer Brandon Mendoza was killed in a wrong-way crash by an illegal alien who was driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

And in January 2016, Sarah Root was murdered by an illegal alien who was drunk and drag racing in Omaha, Nebraska.

In each of these cases, Grant and Brandon, I am privileged to know their parents, Steve Ronnebeck and Mary Ann Mendoza. These are fierce advocates who tirelessly work to make sure these types of tragedies never happen to another family. I am grateful for their efforts, and I believe that we are making significant headway to stop these types of catch and release programs that allow criminals to remain on our streets.

In June of this year, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3003, the No Sanctuary for Criminals Act, and H.R. 3004, Kate's Law, tandemly. These bills would end the policies that contributed to the tragic deaths of Grant, Kate, Brandon, and Sarah.

I was pleased to coauthor the first bill, which included my legislation, Grant's Law. Grant's Law is named in memory of Grant Ronnebeck.

All Americans can agree that someone who is criminally violent should not be released back on to the streets. Yet, for years, the Obama administration's policies failed to protect Americans by allowing criminally violent illegal aliens to roam our streets and neighborhoods.

These types of tragedies are preventable when the Federal Government enacts and enforces the No Sanctuary for Criminals Act and Kate's Law. Congress has begun to take meaningful action to bring these tragedies to an end, starting with the two bills we passed in June.

Chairman BOB GOODLATTE showed leadership and commitment to ensure these important bills received swift consideration. These two bills, if enacted and enforced, would protect innocent Americans to prevent future tragedies like those of Grant, Kate, Brandon, and Sarah.

When the bills passed out of the House, I hoped these bills would receive a swift vote in the Senate. That has not happened. I am still hoping for this vote to take place. I call upon the leadership of the Senate to put these bills up for a floor vote.

We owe it to our constituents to put arcane tradition aside and to pass policies that will protect them. Yet, even in a Republican-controlled Senate, we cannot receive an up-or-down vote on these important immigration enforcement bills.

Why is this?

Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe the answer lies in the fatally flawed 60-vote rule. It is more commonly known as the filibuster, but the Senate's tradition is preventing consideration of nearly all legislation passed from the House.

For example, look at our current situation. Since January, the House has passed over 300 bills, including the two immigration and enforcement bills I have just discussed. These bills will most likely languish until the end of the term, in large part, due to the filibuster rule.

So what can be done about this irresponsible inaction? Well, the Senate can change the rule. Indeed, the Senate must change the rule.

Many people do not realize that the 60-vote requirement is not even in the United States Constitution. It dates back to 1917, when the Senate agreed that debate could be cut off with a two-thirds majority vote. Decades later, when deciding a two-thirds vote was found to be too difficult to achieve, the Senate reduced the number of required votes to three-fifths, or 60 of the current 100 Senators.

The filibuster is a tradition, barely a century old, less than half the age of the U.S. Constitution.

There is a place for rules and traditions, but not when they obstruct the

will of American people. Is it honorable for the United States Senate to have a gentleman's agreement to keep bills from being voted on, or to dilute our representation in the United States Senate?

Americans would rather that Congress pass just and reasonable laws than to preserve extraconstitutional, institutional traditions. Americans want our borders secure and our immigration laws to be enforced.

Congress is running out of time to keep its promises to the American people. We promised to ensure that what happened to Kate, Grant, Brandon, and Sarah would not happen again. The House has done its duty. It is time for the Senate to do its duty.

There are no excuses to allow these bills to die in the Senate. I encourage my friends in the Senate to eliminate the 60-vote rule and to consider the two immigration enforcement bills that the House passed in June. We must not allow inaction to be the enemy of our sworn responsibilities as representatives of the American people.

Again, I thank my friend from Colorado. I appreciate the opportunity to say what has been on my mind for some time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Arizona for his insight, and I appreciate his comments here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, in 2010, President Obama and Congress passed the Dodd-Frank legislation that attempted to reform Wall Street and end the too-big-to-fail problem. But instead of fixing the financial industry, Dodd-Frank was mainly served to excessively regulate local community banks, making it harder for individuals on Main Street to gain access to credit.

The Financial CHOICE Act, sponsored by Chairman JEB HENSARLING from the Financial Services Committee, replaced Dodd-Frank with a system that holds Wall Street accountable, while also making credit more accessible for Main Street America. The bill passed the House with 233 votes. It has been stuck in the Senate for 148 days.

I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY), my friend and colleague, who sits on the Financial Services Committee, to talk about H.R. 10, the Financial CHOICE Act.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Colorado, Mr. BUCK, for leading this Special Order effort and for recognizing me to talk about this issue and the general problem in the Senate today of having legislation considered, debated, and passed in a way that we can go to conference committee.

As the gentleman mentioned, the Senate has already failed to act, and is currently failing to act, as we stand here, on over 270 House-passed bills. One of those bills is a really important one, very important to the committee on which I serve.

I am proud to be on the Financial Services Committee. The tradition of

that position was held by my predecessor, SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, who served on that committee for 14 years. Ably led by Chairman JEB HENSARLING from Texas, we work in a bipartisan fashion, as much as we possibly can, to bring relief to the American people, give consumers choices in banking products, and the ability to get a small loan or get a mortgage for their house. We are doing very important work there.

So, as was mentioned, on June 8 of 2017, this year, here, the U.S. House of Representatives, where I now stand, passed H.R. 10, the Financial CHOICE Act, by a vote of 233–186. I was very proud to vote for that legislation, as I know were a lot of my colleagues.

The Financial CHOICE Act, if you are not familiar with the bill, after the financial crisis in 2007, Democrats held all the Chambers in the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, and they passed sweeping legislation that fundamentally changed the way our economy works for the worse; much more interference in your lives in banking, and the ability to make loans and consider requests for bank loans were done.

Basically, Dodd-Frank is to the financial services industry what ObamaCare is to the healthcare industry. It is a government-knows-better, one-size-fits-all, federally mandated set of laws that have hurt the very people they claim they want to help. It hurts the same people they want to help. So we are repealing most of that, and we are going to empower consumers, give you the choices back.

So we have passed this bill. Let me just give you one example of something in the bill, to be specific. There was something that was designated in the Dodd-Frank bill called too big to fail. You may remember that term, “too big to fail.”

That is a situation where Washington bureaucrats had decided that certain banks—the theory is that they are so essential to the global economy that failure would be catastrophic. So it takes the ability to fail out of the banks’ system, which then makes them act more risky. Big does not necessarily refer to the size of the company, just what the government decides is essential, too big to fail.

So the first bank that was too big to fail was Bear Stearns. In March of 2008, the Federal Reserve lent \$30 billion to JPMorgan Chase to buy the failing investment bank. Bear was a small bank, but very well-known, and there was a worry that it would destroy confidence in other banks. So your tax dollars were used to, essentially, bail out banks.

So this bill repeals the authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council to designate firms as systematically important institutions. It prohibits the use of Exchange Stabilization Funds to bail out banks. Most Americans I talk to don’t think their taxpayer dollars should be used to bail out banks, so this bill would stop that.

So we passed that bill. We sent it to the Senate. We didn’t think the Senate would pass the exact same bill, word for word, that the House passed. We thought they would consider our bill, take the parts they like, maybe change some parts, maybe add some parts, or move some parts, pass a bill in the Senate, and then we would go to a conference committee to reconcile the differences.

One of the biggest travesties I have seen around here of the political process, Mr. Speaker, is the failure to have conference committees in the Congress any longer. The House passes all these bills, over 300 over there; 270 are waiting for the Senate to do anything on. Anything. And we wait for the Senate to act so we can have a conference committee and reconcile the differences.

It is important to understand that no one in the House is demanding they get their way on every bill, every provision, all the time. We simply want to have a product sent to the Senate, have the Senate do their job, do their due diligence, pass legislation in whatever form they can get out of the Senate, and have a chance to go to conference committee, reconcile the differences.

There is some give-and-take there. They won’t get everything they want. We may not get everything we want. You can reconcile those differences, and it has to go back and pass again.

Over the past 3 years, my third year in Congress now, I have taken to reminding folks things they learned in fifth grade, in fifth grade school, about how I am just a bill sitting on Capitol Hill, and how it is supposed to go to one Chamber; then it is supposed to go to the other, and they appoint a conference committee to reconcile the differences.

Instead, as the previous speaker, Congressman BIGGS from Arizona, mentioned, the filibuster is abused. You have 48 Democrats in the Senate who filibuster everything. Everything. And for some reason, my colleagues on the majority side of the aisle, the Republicans, don’t put the bills on the floor to make the American people see them filibuster, and obstruct, and shut down, avoid conference committees, avoid passing anything in the Senate that would require action, and, therefore, just stop anything from happening. It is a travesty of the political process.

Neither Republican nor Democrats should stand for such an abusive system in the Senate. So I think we should put the bills over there and make them act. We have actually started passing pieces of the CHOICE Act, one small bill at a time, in order to get other stuff over to the Senate, in the hope that they will just do something, act on something.

But we shouldn’t have to do that, frankly, Mr. Speaker, because the Senate can simply pass any bill they want, or any Senate bills they want, and then we can consider it in the House as well. We have led by passing the CHOICE Act bill, which is the right thing to do.

You know, as disappointing as it was to see the U.S. Senate fail to pass anything on healthcare, maybe the one silver lining was the American people could finally see what happens if three Republicans join with 48 Democrats to vote against the bill. We did not have the votes to pass anything on healthcare, and the whole healthcare reform plan died at that moment.

We are sitting here today with a failing healthcare system that is going to continue to fail. ObamaCare is going to continue to fail. It is not getting any better. It is getting worse.

Look, our bill wasn’t perfect, Mr. Speaker, but at least we did something in the House to address the problem. I am not saying this bill is perfect, the CHOICE Act for financial services, but we are doing something to address the problem that consumers are demanding, where they can have more choice and more access to funds to buy a home or start a small business. We are doing something about it, and the Senate is doing nothing. They don’t pass anything.

In fact, we have passed all 12 appropriations bills in this Chamber. All 12 are sitting over there in the Senate, waiting for someone to act.

I think the first thing they should do is bring up the military funding bill. We are in November already. In December, next month, funding runs out. We have passed our appropriations bills. The Senate is doing nothing on appropriations bills.

They should bring that military bill to the floor of the Senate, right now, and have a vote. It passed this Chamber with a strong, bipartisan majority. Funding the military is not a partisan issue. There are votes, I believe, in the Senate and the House to fund the military.

But if the 48 Democrat Senators want to filibuster, abuse their power, abuse this filibuster tradition, which was mentioned is not in the Constitution, it is simply a courtesy extended to the minority party; if they want to continue to abuse that power, the American people should see them, ruthlessly, politically, try to shut down the military, and then try to blame the President or blame the House when they won’t pass anything.

They should pass a military appropriations bill that helps fund our troops. We will reconcile the differences and send it to the President’s desk. That, ladies and gentlemen, is how the process is supposed to work. That is what kept our democratic republican form of government, constitutional form of government, with democratic elections, the rule of law, a republican constitution; that is what has kept our country, to this point, functional and working well, having that bipartisan, bicameral process.

What is currently happening is really a travesty to this process, where it is being abused by the Senate. They have all these bills over there. It is high time for them to take action, pass

something, pass the best product they can on this issue, and let's go to conference committee and reconcile the differences.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to act as quickly as possible on the CHOICE Act, on whatever provisions they want to. We are trying to repeal the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Another part of that, the fiduciary rule, has really hurt consumers. These are other parts of the CHOICE Act that need action. The American people need and expect relief.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from West Virginia for his services on the Financial Services Committee, a demanding committee and a committee that he has certainly shown his brilliance on. So we appreciate his work very much.

Mr. Speaker, with rising premiums and sky-high deductibles, Americans are hurting under ObamaCare. Republicans talk a lot about increasing competition in the healthcare market, and this next bill actually makes that talk a reality.

H.R. 372, the Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act restores Federal antitrust laws to the health insurance industry, ensuring that the market for health insurance remains competitive and affordable for Americans.

On March 22, the House passed this legislation in an overwhelmingly bipartisan fashion, and 416 Members voted for it. It is 226 days later, and the Senate can still not move that legislation through its Chamber.

I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR), to say a few words about this bill that he sponsored.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) for taking the opportunity to highlight some of the good work the House has accomplished this year. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to build on these accomplishments so that Congress as a whole can keep their promises to the American people.

As Congress continues to face the preeminent task of repairing our Nation's healthcare system, first and foremost, we must establish the proper foundation for a competitive and consumer-driven health insurance marketplace. The Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act of 2017 will restore the application of Federal antitrust and competition laws to the health insurance industry.

Ending the special interest exemption is the first step to broader healthcare reform. Popular cost-reducing reform priorities, such as selling insurance across State lines and developing diverse consumer-driven plans, are predicated on the robust competitive markets this bill will ensure.

The McCarran-Ferguson Act of 1945 exempted the insurance industry from the Sherman Act and the Clayton Act, acts that have the purpose of ensuring

fair competition. This broad exemption was intended to assist the newly developing business of insurance so that those companies could set sustainable premiums by permitting data sharing between insurance companies.

However, after 70 years, it is apparent that the broad-stroked exemption created by Congress in the 1940s was not wise. Over the decades, and expeditiously since the passage of ObamaCare in 2009, the health insurance market has devolved into one of the least transparent and most anticompetitive industries in the United States.

It is clear that the continued exemption of the health insurance industry from the full application of the Federal antitrust laws has had an unfair impact on consumers. It shows up as artificially higher premiums, unfair insurance restrictions, harmful policy exclusions, and simply no diversity of choice.

These antiquated exemptions are no longer necessary. There is no reason in law, policy, or logic for the health insurance industry to have special exemptions that are different from all other businesses in the United States.

Repeal of the specific section of the McCarran-Ferguson Act, which applies only to health insurance, has strong bipartisan support. A form of this legislation passed the Democratic-controlled House during the 111th Congress by a vote of 406–19 and passed the Republican-led House in the 112th Congress by a voice vote.

Similar legislation has been introduced by multiple Democratic Members of the House, and the text of my bill has been included in the Republican Study Committee's healthcare reform bill for the last four Congresses in a row.

In March of this year, this pro-market reform received its biggest show of support yet, passing by an overwhelming majority of 416–7. Now, when 416 Members of the House agree, it sends a strong call to action in the Senate.

As a dentist, I know how important robust competition is to dynamic and effective health insurance. It should protect the patient as well as the healthcare provider. It should uniformly apply associated checks and balances that incentivize competition and prevent monopolies. Today, in the healthcare market, those equally applied antitrust protections just simply don't exist.

I don't have a crystal ball that will tell you what the future holds for healthcare or what it will look like. I don't think anybody knows. But I can tell you that history is an important guide. The 70-year antitrust exemption for health insurance has strangled competition and resulted in a consolidated, anticompetitive, and nontransparent scheme controlled by seven megacorporations. That is not what we want for our future.

Instead, let's liberate the market by removing this antitrust exemption.

Imagine what could exist when we put the patient first and demand that health insurance companies compete for their business. This market should be patient-centric, patient-focused, and provide a variety of affordable, quality options that empower patient involvement and accountability.

The passage of the Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act into law is an important first step toward increasing competition in the health insurance market and will assist in setting the foundation for real competitive and patient-centered healthcare reform.

I thank my friends in the House for their strong support, and at the same time, promises were made in the Senate to get a vote on the Senate floor. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to build upon the good work of this Chamber and do their part to restore competition in the health insurance industry.

There is an old saying: Trust is a series of promises kept.

Keep the promise. We are watching.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Arizona, especially with his healthcare background. I know he has said on many occasions that he is a dentist impersonating a Congressman. Right now I feel the same way as a prosecutor impersonating a Congressman, and I appreciate his friendship and great insight.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now invite my friend and colleague, Representative TED POE, to speak about the Email Privacy Act. This legislation clears up a loophole in the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, or ECPA, that allows the government, after a certain amount of time, to search someone's email if it is held on a third-party server.

The ECPA was passed in 1986. For the past 30 years, our technology has drastically advanced, but our electronic communications policy has been stuck in the 1980s. The Email Privacy Act allows the law to catch up with the tech. This bill simply requires the government to have a warrant if they are going to search your email.

This legislation passed on voice vote. After 269 days, the bill still sits in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), to speak about this important legislation.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BUCK) for yielding and for doing this Special Order.

Most Members of Congress agree, I believe, that the Constitution should be followed. There are certain rights in the Constitution that are very, very important to all of us. One of those is the right of privacy, enumerated specifically in the Fourth Amendment.

The Fourth Amendment is unique to America. Other countries don't have the Fourth Amendment. We have it in the United States to protect the privacy of Americans.

Let me give you a little history. As Congressman BUCK pointed out, back in 1986, which was an eternity ago when you start talking about the digital age, Congress passed legislation to protect the emails that people had on their server for 6 months. The idea was that people wouldn't keep their emails. They would delete them, and 6 months was a good enough time to protect those emails from the spies in our government—I will use that phrase, that is my phrase—and that is the current law. But here is what has happened over that 30 years.

Many Americans stored their emails after that 6-month period. They store them in the cloud, for example. Americans store their schedules in the cloud. They store photographs in the cloud.

When Americans store those items that are over 6 months old in the cloud, they are not protected against the search by our government of that email, of those photographs, of that schedule. In fact, searches can take place without the knowledge of the person whose email is being searched, without the approval of that individual, and the government never notifies that individual that that email stored in the cloud was searched because, under current law, the American citizen is only protected for emails stored on their server up to 6 months.

So after about 4 years of working on this legislation with my friend ZOE LOFGREN from California, bipartisan, we presented to Congress H.R. 387, the Email Privacy Act. As Congressman BUCK said, on February 7, to be exact, of this year, that passed by voice vote on this floor, and we sent it down the hallway to the siesta Senate to take a vote over there, and they have yet to vote on it.

So what does that legislation do? It protects the right of privacy of Americans. It requires government to follow the Constitution.

I was a former criminal court judge in Texas for 22 years. Like Mr. BUCK, I was also a prosecutor in the DA's office in Houston.

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution—remembering that this is unique to America—protects Americans, their persons, their houses, their papers, and their personal effects from the intrusion of government unless government has probable cause and government gets a search warrant. That is the law. That is the Fourth Amendment.

If government has a probable cause, go get a warrant from a judge. I signed hundreds of warrants from law enforcement as a judge.

A simple example: the government can't search our mail, snail mail as it is now called. When you put a letter in the mailbox and the postmaster picks it up and sends it across the fruitied plain and it lands in somebody else's mailbox, government cannot generally go into that letter and seize it for any purpose unless they have a warrant to do so.

There are some exceptions, but government can seize your emails after 6 months if they are stored in the cloud, as I already mentioned, without a warrant. So this legislation basically requires government to follow the Constitution.

We have heard about the widespread abuse—that is my opinion—of the NSA over the last several years, the government agencies that felt like they had a blank check to search and seize Americans' information without their knowledge, without their approval, and without a warrant. This legislation goes to prevent that and simply requires that information stored in the cloud—emails, photographs, schedules, or whatever—the government can go get it, but the government has got to get a search warrant to seize that information.

That is what this legislation does. It protects the Fourth Amendment. It protects Americans. It is simple legislation. It passed the House on voice vote, yet the Senate refuses to protect Americans from unlawful searches without the knowledge of Americans. We need to pass the legislation that ZOE LOFGREN and I have sponsored that has passed the House to protect that basic right.

Mr. Speaker, I think our Senators would all vote "yes" for the legislation. They believe in the Constitution like the rest of us. They believe in the Fourth Amendment like the rest of us.

So let's get a vote. Another piece of legislation the House has passed. We have done our job. We want the Senate to follow up and pass this good legislation to make it the law of the land so Americans are more secure in their papers and their effects and their homes.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1915

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his hard work and persistence on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, this year, the House completed all 12 appropriations bills. It is the first time in decades that that has happened. I am proud that our Chamber worked hard to return to a regular appropriations process, and I can tell you that there were many late nights spent looking through amendment after amendment both in the Rules Committee hearing room and on the House floor. We thoughtfully considered these bills and offered them for votes on the House floor.

But the Senate hasn't approved any of these 12 bills. Not one. Republicans, month by month, crisis to crisis, were appropriating of the Obama administration era. But now Republicans are in charge, and without Senate action, we are staring down the barrel of another omnibus or continuing resolution. This isn't fair to the American public.

The Founders gave to Congress the power of the purse so that 435 men and women in this Chamber and 100 men and women in the Senate Chamber can

spend weeks at a time thoughtfully discerning how to spend taxpayer dollars. That is our job. The House has finished its work for this year, and now we beg the Senate to finish theirs.

The House has done good work. We have listened to our constituents, worked with our stakeholders, and met each other in the middle on many bills. Now we are left just talking about these great bills because they are all stuck in the Senate.

I want to take a minute in closing to remind the Senate why we are here and why the voters offered the Republican Party control of both Chambers and the House.

We are here because Americans want fewer regulations. We are here because Americans want lower healthcare premiums and costs. We are here because Americans want a stronger stance against the world's bullies. We are here because Americans want a respect for the rule of law. We are here because Americans want our veterans to have the best care. We are here because Americans want better access to credit. They want to protect unborn life. We are here because Americans expect us to improve their lives, to work on meaningful legislation that limits government, that stewards taxpayer dollars effectively, and that guards family values.

Americans should know that the House of Representatives has heard them. We have passed bills to address these concerns. Now we turn to the Senate and ask them to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota). All Members are reminded to avoid engaging in personalities toward Members of the Senate.

TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here this evening on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and talk about a timely issue that is an issue that is most important to most of the American people, and that is the issue of the economy, globalization, automation, and all of the issues that are coming down on many communities across the United States.

I want to take this opportunity to spend the next 30 minutes walking through for the American people a little bit about what has happened and talk very clearly about the differences in approach on how we deal with these issues, how the Republican Party is trying to deal with these issues, and how those of us on the Democratic side want to deal with these issues.

I don't want to get into a discussion at all, Mr. Speaker, about who hates whom, and who is bad and who is good,