

don't have these individuals to help sexual assault victims. They are trained to deal with victims exclusively.

I have talked and met with Megan's parents, Cindi and Mike, who still live in Austin, and we have talked and met with a lot of Members of Congress on what we can do about this. We have filed H.R. 7292, a bipartisan bill. Issues regarding victims of crime are bipartisan.

The Megan Rondini and Leah Griffin Sexual Assault Victims Protection Act provides for a task force and a multitude of other things so we can get this problem solved and have hospitals get it together so we treat sexual assault victims the way they should be treated.

I am not going to go into all the details, but it is great, and bipartisan. It is cosponsored by Congresswoman JAYAPAL. We have many Members on both sides working on this issue to bring it to the House floor under suspension of the rules or unanimous consent to get this legislation passed.

□ 1215

It is my understanding, as of high noon today, that this legislation is not going to come to the floor of this Congress. It is my hope and desire that it comes next year when I am not here but other people take up the mantle to protect people like Megan Rondini and Leah Griffin.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of lobbyists in Washington, D.C. I understand there are 5,000 lobbying groups. That is 10 for every Member of Congress up here, advocating on all kinds of things.

Victims of crimes do not have high-dollar lobbyists. We are their voice. We are their only voice, Mr. Speaker. We ought to start acting like it and bring legislation to the floor on a bipartisan basis and not find excuses not to do it, because we are it. People like Megan Rondini are protected by the same Constitution that protects defendants of crime.

It is important that we help those people and their families make sure that they don't continue to be victims of crime after the crime is committed. The system should not continue to make them victims of crime, whether it is the hospital, whether it is the sheriff's department or the university.

I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, the University of Alabama has made some changes. Texas A&M has made changes due to the 12th Woman group and a group of victims at Texas A&M that are talking to Members of Congress, too.

I hope that Congress will see this legislation as a priority and pass it, because it is the right thing to do, even if we have to wait until next year.

And that is just the way it is, Mr. Speaker.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as I have reminded my colleagues many times, there is not a congressional district in America that is hunger free. Hunger in America defies stereotypes. Many families that grapple with food insecurity are working but still don't make enough money to buy sufficient food after all the bills are paid.

That is why, on the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving, I participated in the ninth annual Monte's March, a 43-mile walk to raise awareness about hunger in our community and to raise money for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

The leader was Monte Belmonte, a well-known radio personality and a committed activist on behalf of those who are vulnerable. I was so proud to join him again this year to walk the 43 miles. I am even more proud that he raised nearly \$300,000. This translates into nearly 3 million meals for people struggling with food insecurity.

Mr. Speaker, I was so impressed by the incredible generosity of our community. It was inspiring.

While food banks, food pantries, and charitable organizations are vital in our efforts to combat hunger, they cannot do it alone. We need a strong commitment by our government to do its part.

Indeed, I would argue that we have fallen short of doing what is needed. Those who I had the pleasure of marching alongside during Monte's March understand that, and they understand what it means to be part of a community. Today, I would like to thank them for their work.

First and foremost, to Monte Belmonte and all the people at WRSI, The River—Mark Lattanzi, Joan Holliday, Kaliis Smith, Kelly Sykes, Betsy Cortis, Matt Peterson, and Steve Trumpy—thank you so very much. You are all wonderful.

I would like to thank Andrew Morehouse, the executive director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, and everyone at the food bank for all the incredible work that they do.

I would like to thank Sean Barry from Four Seasons Liquor in Hadley, who was Monte's right-hand man for 2 days.

I would like to thank all the elected officials who joined part of the march, including Congressman JOE KENNEDY; State Representative Aaron Vega; State Senator-elect Jo Comerford; and State Representatives-elect Natalie Blais, Mindy Domb, Dan Carey, and Lindsay Sabadosa. And, of course, I would like to thank Northwestern District Attorney David Sullivan.

I would like to thank Easthampton Mayor Nicole LaChapelle, Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz, and Chicopee Mayor Richard Kos, who have always been key partners in the fight to end hunger.

I want to thank Tim Garvin of the United Way of Central Massachusetts;

Ronn Johnson, CEO of the Martin Luther King Jr. Family Services in Springfield; Ruben Reyes, operations manager at Lorraine's Soup Kitchen in Chicopee; and Jasmin Colon, Kate's Kitchen in Holyoke. Each of them has done so much to help those who are struggling with hunger.

A special thank you to the sheriff's departments in Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties, as well as the Deerfield Police, who provided escorts for us during all 43 miles. We are so grateful for all they do to keep us safe every day.

Thank you to the Expandable Brass Band, the drum corps from Franklin County Technical School, and performers from Double Edge Theatre in Ashfield for keeping us jazzed up during the entire march.

I want to thank everyone who gave us space to rest and good food along the way: The Bistro at Gateway City Arts in Holyoke, Sierra Grille, BridgeSide Grille, Berkshire Brewing Company, Ben Clark of Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Tea Guys, Stone Soup Cafe, and the Hope & Olive and Magpie in Greenfield.

Thank you to the schoolchildren who greeted us and raised funds to support our cause, including Nurse Meg and her team of marchers from Conway Grammar School, Steph Barry and Erving Elementary, and Mr. Brooks and Smith Voc-Tech for their help with the carts we used to march.

I want to, of course, thank my son, Patrick, who marched with me the entire second day.

Finally, to our VIP marchers—Chia Collins; Steve the Hippie; Rick and Georgiann Kristek; Andrea Ayvazian; Marina Goldman; Leigh Rae; Kristen Elechko and her baby, Elizabeth Dunaway; Marianne Mahoney; Michelle Spaziani; Amy Proietti; Nefali Duran; Margot Wise; and Terry Wise—we simply could not have done this without you. Thank you, thank you, thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

Mr. Speaker, I was glad to be part of this, but I close by expressing my deep concern about the future. With so many people in need of assistance, any cuts to SNAP would be devastating for families across this country.

This next Congress needs to stand firm against any more cuts to SNAP. We ought to stand firm against any structural changes to the program and any more burdensome requirements. We must protect this program and other programs that provide people nutrition.

Food ought to be a fundamental right for everybody in this country. We live in the richest country in the history of the world. Nobody should be hungry.

In the spirit of all those who took part in Monte's March, we in this Congress can and will do better. We must end hunger now.

HELPING CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The Chair recognizes the

gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the House's work that aims to improve outcomes for children with complex medical conditions.

As a physician, I have delivered more than 10,000 babies and seen firsthand many of these complex and complicated conditions, often when babies are born prematurely.

Today, there are 33 million children dependent upon Medicaid in our country. Two million of these cases are considered medically complex. It is imperative that we take a compassionate look at the way in which this care is being provided to some of our most vulnerable patients.

I am proud of the legislation the House recently passed to address the way that care is provided for these children. Last week, we passed the IMPROVE Act with overwhelming bipartisan support. This legislation included the Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act that aims to put our Nation's sickest kids and their families first by improving their care.

These children and their families already face many challenges. Thus, our healthcare system has to work with them by making access to care more manageable and easier to navigate.

Too often, these children are forced to see multiple doctors, sometimes requiring them to go across State lines for treatment. This can be costly, time consuming, and confusing. This bill reduces the burden on families by no longer making them jump through hoops for their children's coverage.

The ACE Act also ensures that each child gets the coverage they need by helping hospitals coordinate across State lines and provides additional resources to families to help them navigate the healthcare system. This coordination will likely reduce emergency visits and inpatient hospitalizations and, ultimately, lower the overall cost of care for these children, while at the same time provide for better outcomes.

In Kansas, 41 percent of children with special healthcare needs are covered by Medicaid. I appreciate the opportunity to make Medicaid a more caring, comprehensive, and efficient system for each and every child with a serious, long-term illness.

IMPORTANCE OF INTERNET ACCESS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, as I have traveled across Kansas, I have heard how a strong Internet connection can impact communities, boost local economies, and create jobs.

Access to the Internet allows small businesses to sell their products across the country and the world. It enables students to access additional learning tools and gives doctors the ability to treat patients in the most remote parts of the district.

Far too often, I am reminded of the complications my district has to get connected. I rise today to highlight the

recent steps taken to advance broadband deployment in rural America.

Last week, the Federal Communications Commission unanimously voted to provide additional funding to carriers utilizing the Universal Service Fund high-cost program. The high-cost program helps providers deploy broadband infrastructure in extremely rural and hard-to-reach places where the cost to connect is just too high.

I am also excited that the United States Department of Agriculture is working to expand broadband access to our ag producers.

I was grateful to join Secretary Perdue as he announced details of a new broadband pilot program last week at the Department of Agriculture. The program, called ReConnect, targets funding in the forms of grants and loans to areas currently lacking a reliable Internet connection.

Farmers and ranchers need a broadband connection to monitor their operations and increase efficiencies on their farms, which ultimately drives down the cost of doing business.

Connectivity is such a vital part of everyday life, and its importance continues to grow. People's access should not be affected by where they choose to live.

I want that thank Secretary Perdue, Chairman Pai, and President Trump for making broadband deployment a priority.

THANKING NEVADA'S FOURTH DISTRICT

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

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today, I stand before the House to thank the people of Nevada's Fourth Congressional District. It has been the honor of my life to serve as a Member of Congress and represent my constituents in the 115th Congress. I have worked tirelessly on their behalf every single day to make Nevada a great place to live and raise a family.

As many of my colleagues know, I was not born in this country. I don't come from a wealthy or politically connected family. My family emigrated from Mexico when I was 8 years old. My parents, a housekeeper and a former farm worker, came to America because they knew that, if they worked hard and sacrificed, in America, they could achieve the American Dream.

Less than 30 years later, thanks to the wonderful opportunities that only this country has to offer, their son is standing before you as a Representative of the United States of America. That is the American Dream.

There are still so many people who have hopes and aspirations of achieving that American Dream. Unfortunately, under this administration, immigrants have been denigrated. Before even being given a chance, they are labeled as criminals and murderers.

But America is a Nation of immigrants and the land of opportunity. As the first Dreamer and one of the first two former undocumented immigrants to serve in Congress in our Nation's history, I have used my personal experience to fight for other Dreamers so that DACA recipients are able to remain in America and thrive.

I have fought to ensure that our asylum process is upheld and that young, innocent children are not separated from their families at the border. I have advocated for comprehensive immigration reform.

My Democratic colleagues and I have also fought relentlessly to protect people's healthcare and the Affordable Care Act, especially as Republicans have tried time and time again to get rid of preexisting conditions.

I was proud to announce my support for the Medicare for All Act because healthcare is a human right, and all Americans deserve quality and affordable healthcare.

I joined my union brothers and sisters in championing workers' rights, fighting for a \$15 minimum wage, the right to join a union, and equal pay for women.

I fought against the unconstitutional travel ban, fiercely defended funding for Planned Parenthood, and stood side by side with our LGBTQ community in the fight for full equality.

As a member of the Financial Services Committee, I have fought to keep people in their homes and advocated for affordable housing and the immediate need to address homelessness in America.

I was proud to join the Nevada delegation in standing strong to fight against efforts to bring nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain. Yucca Mountain is not safe and should remain closed forever.

I introduced the STEP for Veterans Act, which would provide grants to community colleges to train veterans with the job skills that employers need in their communities. Although we can never do enough to thank our veterans for their sacrifices, I am proud of the work that I did to help them get the resources they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, one of the worst days of my life and in many of my constituents' lives was last year on October 1, 2017, when Las Vegas became the site of the deadliest mass shooting in modern American history. In total, 58 innocent lives were lost.

While they are gone, I wanted to make sure that their memories were not lost. That is why I told each of their 58 stories here on the House floor, so that their precious and vibrant lives would be remembered and never forgotten.

I am optimistic that the House will finally pass meaningful legislation next year to prevent more tragedies from happening.

□ 1230

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I thank my team who worked tirelessly day in and