

Mr. Speaker, I am in awe of the power of our Penn State students and their care and concern for others, and I thank them for this outstanding contribution to the community.

OUR FAILURE TO STOP THE SLAUGHTER IN SYRIA IS SHAMEFUL

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today, the brutal conflict in Syria enters its eighth year. As we meet, safe and secure in this Chamber, the Syrian regime, with the support of its principal ally, Russia, is pulverizing Eastern Ghouta.

On February 24, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution demanding a 30-day cease-fire across Syria. This was supposed to permit a “durable humanitarian pause” so that aid could be delivered and people who are critically sick and wounded could be evacuated.

It hasn't worked. Instead, a brutal campaign of airstrikes, shelling, and ground offensives has intensified. Populated areas remain under siege. The targeting of civilians continues, and hundreds more men, women, and children have been killed.

In the words of the U.N. Secretary General: “Syria is bleeding inside and out.”

Mr. Speaker, our failure to stop this terrible slaughter is shameful. It is unacceptable. We must urgently work with our allies, put an end to this nightmare, and find a path forward.

CONGRATULATING JOHNSTOWN'S ENVIRONMENTAL TANK AND CONTAINER COMPANY

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Johnstown's Environmental Tank and Container Company, a division of JWF Industries, for being named Manufacturer of the Year at the Sixth Annual 2018 Oil & Gas Awards.

The Manufacturer of the Year Award recognizes the outstanding contributions that a manufacturer has made to the industry in the region, such as advances made in environmental stewardship, efficiency, innovation, community leadership, and health and safety, and I am proud of ETC's achievement.

Manufacturing is a key to a nation's prosperity and drives the American economy. As America competes on a global scale, it is critical that this industry continues to grow, creating a wealth of job opportunities for all Americans. Over 500,000 people in Pennsylvania rely on the strength of the manufacturing sector.

Before the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the United States had the highest busi-

ness tax rates in the industrialized world. Now this law is removing this economic choke hold, putting American businesses at a more favorable corporate tax rate than their foreign competitors, and also allowing companies to write off the full cost of new equipment when it is purchased.

America is gaining its competitive edge, and the manufacturing industry is at the forefront of this success story.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRIS HAZENCOMB

(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, today I rise to remember the life of Chris Hazencomb. Chris attended the Route 91 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

Chris was a sports junkie who loved the Angels, Raiders, and Lakers. He worked at the local Walmart and is remembered by all of his customers as being very friendly.

Chris was close to his mother, Maryanne, and even had a gift for her with him while at the festival. Chris died shielding his friend, Nikki, from gunfire with his own body. He is remembered for his love of helping people and his constant need to put others before himself.

I would like to extend my condolences to Chris' family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEPHEN HAWKING

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday our world lost the beloved Stephen Hawking, a man who spent his life defying all obstacles and pursuing the depths of human knowledge. He is the epitome of proving your circumstances don't define you.

Hawking faced being told in his early twenties that he only had a few years to live. Fearlessly, he went on to not only beat those odds, but, along the way, demonstrated the beginning and the end of our universe as we know it today.

Hawking taught us that, if you dare to dream and work hard, you can succeed; and I know he is responsible for inspiring many of our scientific minds, both young and old alike.

As we celebrate his life, let us remember not only his accomplishments, academic and otherwise, but his fighting spirit. We are grateful for all he taught us and the legacy he left our world. Let us all remember him by embracing his steadfast determination and lead lives of action, as he did.

MAPLE WEEKEND

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exciting spring tradition in upstate New York and, particularly, the 22nd Congressional District.

Vernon-Verona-Sherrill School District, or VVS, is holding its Maple Weekend this coming weekend. Maple Weekend is run for two weekends each year by the Future Farmers of America, also known as FFA. This FFA organization has approximately 125 members, and its success has been recognized both on the State and national levels.

Despite the two nor'easters that New York has received in March alone, VVS' FFA organization has worked tirelessly to prepare for the upcoming maple season. This weekend, VVS will join 170 other local organizations across New York to prepare demonstrations on how to harvest and produce maple syrup products, host pancake breakfasts which feature our award-winning syrup, and provide tours of the mouthwatering “sugar shack,” where maple products are created.

Last year, VVS' Maple Weekend extravaganza drew more than 2,000 visitors. I am thrilled to attend each year and to take part in this educational and delicious local event that is expertly organized each year by high school students from FFA.

These same FFA members from VVS travel throughout New York State, from Buffalo to New York City, using their Maple Syrup Trailer to educate other high school students across our State, teaching them how to produce maple syrup and to produce maple candies and other delicious maple products.

New York State still produces the very best maple syrup in the world and is continually winning the award for the best maple syrup.

I would like to congratulate these outstanding VVS and FFA students on their hard work, and I wish them and the hundreds of other maple producers across the State the best of luck during this very difficult season for maple production.

CELEBRATING THE 106TH BIRTHDAY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(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 honor the Girl Scouts of the USA on their 106th birthday and to commend the organization for helping girls become leaders in their communities and in our Nation. It is fitting that the Girl Scouts' birthday falls during Women's History Month.

In 1912, Juliette Gordon Low founded the first Girl Scout troop, with 18 girls, in Savannah, Georgia. 106 years later, more than 50 million women are Girl Scout alums, and the program reaches nearly 2 million girls. Today, Girl Scout alums launch rockets into space, serve as CEOs of international companies, sit on academic boards, and more.

As we celebrate the Girl Scouts' 106th birthday this week and Women's History Month, I applaud the Girl Scout councils that serve girls in my State for building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

I am proud that this program was founded in the First Congressional District of Georgia and in my hometown of Savannah, Georgia.

TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS DESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my displeasure that the House was unable to pass the Right to Try Act this week. This bill would have allowed very sick or terminally ill patients to request access to drugs and treatments that have yet to be approved by the FDA.

For any patient dealing with a serious, life-threatening illness, a sliver of hope can go a long way. Yet, for some reason, even after the Senate, of all places, passed this proposal nearly unanimously, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle blocked this measure from passing.

Sick patients deserve the right to utilize every possible tool at their disposal, even if it is still experimental. The government really has no business telling a terminally ill patient they cannot pursue a certain avenue of treatment, and, as its name suggests, this legislation gives them the right to try.

I thank Mr. RUTHERFORD for his work on this legislation. I urge the House to bring this back to the floor and pass it as quickly as possible.

THE PARALYSIS THAT BESETS THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to share some thoughts with you during this Special Order hour at the request of the minority leader.

I am a professor of constitutional law, as those of you who watch our proceedings here may know by now, and I would like to talk about the Constitution, and I will get there before this is over.

But I want to start, Mr. Speaker, with a basic question of political science, which is: Why does it seem as if it is so hard for us to get the people's business done in Congress these days?

Why does it seem so difficult that, even when we have a vast consensus on what to do about a particular issue, we still can't get it done?

Why is it that the approval rating of our institution, according to the most recent Rasmussen poll, is at 15 percent, which I think most people would agree is a pretty dismal showing for the people's Congress and here in the people's House.

Well, I want to talk about this problem in some historical and constitutional perspective, and I hope that it opens up some roots of thinking and feeling that might enable us to transcend some of the paralysis that now besets the United States Congress.

Of course, the simple explanation that is often given colloquially is that everybody in Washington is just fighting, and you have got the two parties at each others' throats, and everybody is so divided that nothing happens.

This explanation, although it turns out to be wrong, of course, has a long lineage to it. In fact, the Founders wrote very widely at the time our Constitution was adopted about the problem of faction, and they said, if you look at James Madison in *Federalist* No. 10, for example, he identifies faction as the central problem in the political life of a democracy. But he says that the latent causes of faction are sewn in the nature of man, and we see them everywhere.

Madison cites a zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well as speculation as a practice. He cites, also, an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for preeminence and power; and he invokes the human passions that have divided mankind into parties, inflaming them with mutual animosity.

So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, Madison writes, "that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and incite their most violent conflicts."

□ 1645

In other words, even when there is not something real and big to be fighting about, people will find something small, trivial, and petulant to fight about. And those of you with little brothers and sisters might agree that is just the way it is. Sometimes it is in human nature for people to fight.

But the Founders understood that faction was something that would arise in a democratic society where people have the liberty of thought and expression. In fact, Madison said one of the ways that you could deal with the problem of faction is to destroy the lib-

erty that gives rise to faction, but that, of course, plunges us into authoritarianism, monarchy dictatorship. One way you get rid of all the different views is you go to one party. You create a one-party state like they have got in North Korea, and then there is no conflicts because everybody does what the one party says.

So Madison dismisses that and says that is not going to work. We are not going to be able to remove the sources of faction, but why don't we try to control the effects of faction. And the way you do that, he said, is that if—in order to control the effects of a majority tyranny is you have a bill of rights that defends the rights of the minority so that people in the majority can implement their policy preferences, but they can't extinguish the rights of the minority, the right to speak, the right of press, the right to dissent, the right to vote, and so on.

But also, Madison said, if you extend the size of the republic, if you create a big country, then even if you get a majority on one particular issue, the majorities are shifting because then you will have a different majority on another issue and a different majority on another issue and so on.

But what happens, he says, if you have a faction that is tyrannizing the society, but it is not a majority faction, it is a minority faction? What if you have a small group that is able to hijack the process and prevent the majority from having its way? Well, he thought, there, democratic processes and Republican government would take care of it.

He says this: "If a faction consists of less than a majority"—a minority of people—"relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote."

The minority "may clog the administration, it may convulse the society, but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution."

In other words, Madison is assuming that, when it comes to public policy, the majority will eventually get its way if the governmental process is working correctly.

Now, let's fast-forward to 2018. I am taking three issues where the vast majority of the American people agree as to what should be done to deal with this serious, serious public policy problem.

Let's start with the problem of high prescription drug prices. Now, Congress passed a law saying that the government could not negotiate for lower prescription drug prices in the Medicare program with the big pharmaceutical companies, and it will not surprise you to learn that the big pharmaceutical companies who invest a lot of money and campaign contributions also paid for a lot of lobbyists to go and lobby for that provision to be put into the law.

So the Federal Government can negotiate for lower prescription drug prices