

Yesterday, HUD awarded \$1.6 billion to help the Virgin Islands to recover after the hurricanes. These recovery funds awarded were provided through HUD's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program and are a part of the hard-fought battle here in Congress to appropriate funding, specifically to the territories.

The Virgin Islands normally receives a mere \$1 million from this fund. This crucial funding will help us to address the disaster-related deficiencies in housing, public service, and infrastructure as determined by local officials with citizen input.

I am imploring our local government to engage the community and have strategic plans in this. Building more resilient infrastructure in the Virgin Islands is critical to future economic stability. We must rebuild the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico the right way.

Our children are presently in schools in the Virgin Islands 4 hours per day as they share space because of the tremendous loss of infrastructure. The negligence leading to inadequate care and oversight of our loved ones is unacceptable. The stress of hurricanes does not need to be exacerbated by inefficient evacuation protocols and lack of transparency.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Congress and others to do what is necessary, to support the Virgin Islands and others in rebuilding.

HIGHLIGHTING THE GIVE SEVEN DAYS CHALLENGE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the Give Seven Days challenge that began in my district in Kansas this week, an outreach program founded by a woman named Mindy Corporon.

Mindy tragically lost both her father, William, and her 14-year-old son, Reat, in the horrific shooting at the Jewish Community Center and Village Shalom in Overland Park back in April of 2014.

Who among us would have questioned Mindy if she slipped into despair after such a loss? Losing a parent is difficult enough, and losing your child on the same day is something no person should ever have to endure. But instead of despair, Mindy has chosen love, faith, kindness, and remembrance.

She founded Give Seven Days, which challenges young and old to embrace diversity across race, religion, and culture. It also honors the memory of William, Reat, and Terri LaManno, the third victim of the attack.

Mr. Speaker, let's all follow Mindy's example. Let's remember those we have lost and, in their memory, create a wave of positive change for the future.

Let's make a ripple and change the world.

COMMENDING BENSALEM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a group of thoughtful and innovative students in my district from Bensalem, Pennsylvania.

Six students at Bensalem High School have been working in their industrial design class to build a snow sled for the blind. Working with students from Villanova University to make their prototype as strong as possible, they came up with a design that included a backrest and steering handles, and they also enhanced this device with sensors that vibrate the handles when obstacles are detected.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the hard work of students Jonathan Champagne-Cox, Brandon Gomez, Jakub Hajduk, Tom Kelly, Eric Rosenberg, and Michael Wible. I would also like to commend Bensalem curriculum coordinator Dan Lubacz for his guidance and for teaching his students that their gifts and talents could be used in compassionate ways.

REGULAR ORDER IN THE REGULATORY RELIEF PROCESS

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

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, the regulatory relief bill that passed the Senate just a few short weeks ago was crafted to get past the 60-vote cloture threshold. Our Senate colleagues are now asking the House to pass that deal without amendment because they don't have an interest in voting on the measure again.

That is not the legislative process envisioned by the Framers of the Constitution and demonstrates a disregard for the policy work of the people's House.

The House Financial Services Committee has worked tirelessly to pass bipartisan bills that will provide necessary regulatory relief to Main Street America.

Chairman HENSARLING has identified 15 commonsense bills that passed out of the Financial Services Committee with broad bipartisan support and have the support of the ranking member. Yet some in the Senate continue to insist that any amendment to legislation is inadmissible.

While I support the goal of providing much-needed relief to our community banks and credit unions, I believe we should take a more thoughtful and inclusive approach that considers the will of the people as represented in this body.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the leadership in the House, as well as Chairman HENSARLING, for fighting for

the bipartisan policy initiatives of the Members of this Chamber in the regulatory relief process.

HONORING NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

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

Mr. HURD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Library Week to recognize the importance of our Nation's libraries to local communities.

Our local libraries cultivate lifelong learning and reading and a profound sense of community across south and west Texas. They serve as community gathering places and local epicenters of educational innovation.

At our libraries, folks of all ages can learn about their community's history, while accessing technological tools that lead us into the future.

In many towns in the 23rd District of Texas, our public libraries go far beyond providing books and serve as the primary provider of literacy programming, especially in underserved rural areas. This is why I have taken advantage of an important program within the Library of Congress that allows Members of Congress to donate books to local libraries across their districts.

For National Library Week, I would like to express gratitude for all the local librarians who provide these priceless services.

CONGRATULATING LADY ROCK LIONS ON THEIR WIN

(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, I rise today in honor of the Lady Rock Lions basketball team for winning the 2018 National Association of Christian Athletes Division 2 women's tournament.

These young women from The Rock School in Gainesville played through a grueling season to earn their spot in the tournament this past February. Their dedication paid off, and the Lady Rock Lions were named national champions.

Their hard work, discipline, and unbreakable spirit have earned them the right to stand among the greats of high school basketball. I am confident in their ability to continue to succeed both athletically and academically, and I look forward to watching these young women bring more honor, pride, and success to not just their lives, but to our district.

Go Lady Rock Lions and, yes, you do rock.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote

or the yeas and nays are ordered, or if the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 2) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

“ARTICLE—

“SECTION 1. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over receipts by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 2. The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public shall not be increased, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 3. Prior to each fiscal year, the President shall transmit to the Congress a proposed budget for the United States Government for that fiscal year in which total outlays do not exceed total receipts.

“SECTION 4. No bill to increase revenue shall become law unless approved by a majority of the whole number of each House by a rollcall vote.

“SECTION 5. The Congress may waive the provisions of this article for any fiscal year in which a declaration of war is in effect. The provisions of this article may be waived for any fiscal year in which the United States is engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national security and is so declared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority of the whole number of each House, which becomes law. Any such waiver must identify and be limited to the specific excess or increase for that fiscal year made necessary by the identified military conflict.

“SECTION 6. The Congress shall enforce and implement this article by appropriate legislation, which may rely on estimates of outlays and receipts.

“SECTION 7. Total receipts shall include all receipts of the United States Government except those derived from borrowing. Total outlays shall include all outlays of the United States Government except for those for repayment of debt principal.

“SECTION 8. This article shall take effect beginning with the fifth fiscal year beginning after its ratification.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 811, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from

New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 2 hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

□ 1230

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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 materials on H.J. Res. 2, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

March 2, 1995, was a pivotal day in the history of our country. On that day, the United States Senate failed by one vote to send a balanced budget constitutional amendment to the States for ratification. The amendment had passed the House by the required two-thirds majority, and the Senate vote was the last legislative hurdle before ratification by the States.

If Congress had listened to the American people and sent that amendment to the States for ratification, we would not be facing the fiscal crisis we are today. Rather, balancing the Federal budget would have been the norm, instead of the exception, over the past 20 years, and we would have nothing like the annual deficits and skyrocketing debt we currently face.

In 1995, when the balanced budget amendment came within one vote of passing, the gross Federal debt stood at \$4.9 trillion. Today, it stands at over \$20 trillion. The Federal debt held by the public is rising as well and is increasing rapidly as a percentage of the country's economic output. Unlike the past, when the debt spiked to pay for wars of finite duration and then was reduced gradually after hostilities ended, more recently, the debt has risen as a result of having to pay for entitlement programs that are of indefinite duration and difficult to reduce over time.

As John Cogan of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University wrote: “All of the increase in Federal spending relative to GDP over the past seven decades is attributable to entitlement spending. Since the late 1940s, entitlement claims on the Nation's output of goods and services have risen from less than 4 percent to 14 percent. Surprising as it may seem, the share of GDP that is spent on national defense and non-defense discretionary programs combined is no higher today than it was seven decades ago.”

As the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has observed, such high and rising debt will have serious negative consequences. Interest rates will increase considerably, productivity and wages will be lower, and high debt increases the risk of a financial crisis.

What is particularly troubling is that the debts we are incurring under enti-

tlement programs will burden multiple future generations. Indeed, a few years ago, a cross-national study found that the United States ranked worst among 29 advanced countries in the degree to which it imposes unfair debt burdens on future generations.

University of Virginia philosophy professor Loren Lomasky has written that theorists have devoted considerable attention to injustices committed across lines of race and gender. Far less attended are concerns of intergenerational fairness. That omission is serious. Measures that have done very well by the baby boomers are much less generous to their children and worse still for their grandchildren. The single greatest unsolved problem of justice in the developed world today is transgenerational plunder.

It is time for Congress to stop saddling future generations with the burden of crushing debts to pay for current spending. We should not pass on to our children and grandchildren the bleak fiscal future that our unsustainable spending is creating.

The only way to ensure that Congress acts with fiscal restraint over the longterm is to pass a balanced budget amendment. Experience has proved time and again that Congress cannot for any significant length of time rein in excessive spending. Annual deficits and the resulting debt continue to grow due to political pressures that the Constitution's structure no longer serves to restrain.

In order for Congress to be able to consistently make the tough decisions necessary to sustain fiscal responsibility, Congress must have the external pressure of a balanced budget requirement to force it to do so. Constitutional principle will prevail where political promises have not.

The Framers of the Constitution were familiar with the need for constitutional restrictions on deficit spending. When the Constitution was ratified, it was the States that had exhibited out-of-control fiscal mismanagement by issuing bills of credit to effectively print money to pay for projects and service debt. As a result of that lack of fiscal discipline, Article I, section 10 of the Constitution specifically deprives States of the power to issue bills of credit. Over 200 years later, it is the Federal Government that has proved its inability to adopt sound fiscal policies, and it is now time to adopt a constitutional restraint on Federal fiscal mismanagement.

Several versions of the balanced budget amendment have been introduced this Congress, including two I introduced this Congress, as I have every Congress for the last decade. H.J. Res. 2, the version we are debating today, is nearly identical to the text that passed the House in 1995 and failed in the Senate by one vote. It requires that total annual outlays not exceed total annual receipts. It also requires a true majority of each Chamber to pass tax increases and a three-fifths majority to raise the debt limit.