

They are people who just need a helping hand.

I have said this before, but let me say it again. I have never met a person who wakes up in the morning and says, "I want to be poor today." That is just not a reality.

Let me add this. I have never met a person who wakes up at 5 a.m. to go to her first job, comes home at 1 p.m. to take a nap, and heads out to her second job at 4 p.m., yet still lives paycheck to paycheck, still relies on SNAP and Medicaid to make ends meet, but thinks to herself, "I like to struggle." She does not exist, because that is just not how the world works.

Programs like SNAP, Medicaid, housing assistance, our entire social safety net is a supplement that helps people struggle just a little bit less.

Yet my colleagues across the aisle and their friends in the White House keep pushing the false narrative that people who rely on government assistance to make ends meet are just freeloaders who take advantage of the government handouts and buy drugs. The majority party and the 45th President keep pushing their callous, immoral narrative in order to tear apart the social safety net.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Government should be making it easier for Americans to maintain a decent standard of living. We have to protect our most vulnerable and those who are in need. Let us end this administration's war on the working poor and help make lives better for our constituents.

The American people deserve A Better Deal.

LET'S PUT OUR KIDS BEFORE CONGRESS

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, today, once again, we are going to debate what we need to do to stop these senseless attacks on our schools.

Our schools are a place of memories. Think about it. We can all, every one of us, recite stories of when we were in elementary school. We all know stories about friends or things that happened in junior high school and in high school. Our life's memories are filled back in those schooldays, those memories.

The children today, the kids today, have different memories of school. No child in America should go to school afraid, and no parent in America should worry about their children, if they are going to come home safely, when they send them to school.

As I stand here right now, outside these doors there are armed guards with machine guns, guard dogs, metal detectors to keep us safe. But today, once again, children will go to school across America and sit like sitting ducks in a classroom.

When a crazed madman attacked my colleagues and friends at baseball prac-

tice, our response was instant. It was immediate. Democrats and Republicans, we all agreed we need more security for Congress, we need more money to secure our offices, to secure our staff to make sure they are safe. We even found money to provide security for us at home. People move pretty fast here when it is about themselves and their families.

Why do we think that our lives are more important than the lives of any parent's child in America?

Why do we think we are more important that we can find security for ourselves so quickly?

We should take every metal detector in this building and send it to some school tomorrow until we find the money to secure our schools like we did for ourselves.

I read an article where root canals and colonoscopies have a higher approval rating than Congress. Maybe the American people will think differently if we put our kids before Congress.

□ 1030

HONORING SPECIAL FORCES SOLDIER AARON BUTLER

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

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, this week, I had the privilege to speak to the parents of Special Forces Soldier Aaron Butler from Monticello, Utah.

From the time Aaron was in the first grade, he wanted to join the military and serve our country. After a legendary career as a four-time State wrestling champion at Monticello High School, Aaron joined the Utah National Guard.

Within a few years, he was one of just four soldiers who graduated with honors from the Army Green Beret Special Qualification Course.

Throughout his service, Aaron's teammates and superior officers regarded him as a natural leader with an unmatched work ethic.

He was tough and dedicated. He loved our country, and he took his responsibility to protect it seriously.

On August 16, 2017, Aaron was serving as a staff sergeant in Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group of the Utah National Guard on his first combat deployment that should have ended in October.

Tragically, an explosion occurred while he was clearing a booby-trapped building in Afghanistan, killing Aaron and injuring 11 teammates.

His family, seven siblings, parents, and fiancée, as well as his teammates, were devastated. His hometown and the rest of our State mourned this tragic loss.

His sister said that if Aaron had given his own eulogy, he would have said: I came. I lived. I killed bad guys. I died.

Aaron and his courageous sacrifice will never be forgotten. Our country is

forever indebted to the service of Aaron and countless others who make daily sacrifices to protect our country and keep us safe.

And our country is, likewise, forever indebted to the families that have supported them.

Like many others, I have been blessed by the dedicated military service of a family member. My father served in the Navy during World War II. I was reminded of his great service during a recent visit to the U.S. Naval Academy, where I had the honor to meet with a group of Utah cadets, and again during a visit with U.S. troops stationed in Poland and Abu Dhabi.

This weekend, we will celebrate Memorial Day and take the opportunity to express our deepest and most profound gratitude to those who have fallen in the service of our country. I thank them, their families, and all those who are willing to serve. Our way of life and every ideal we hold dear has been built on the sacrifice of these heroes.

This week, I am proud to speak in support of the proposals in the National Defense Authorization Act that will provide our troops with support to increase capability and capacity in a force that has been asked to do too much with too little for too long.

In this, I am pleased to support a well-deserved pay raise for our troops and extend special pay and bonuses to servicemembers in high-demand fields, something our servicemembers and their families have more than earned.

After heroically serving this country, our veterans deserve the very best that we can give them back home.

This week, I was honored to support more than a dozen veterans bills that passed the House. These proposals will help improve the lives and honor the men and women who have served so selflessly.

This legislation will help provide for disabled veterans who have been wounded in service. It will ensure our veterans have access to the care and resources they have earned. It will keep our homeless veterans off the street. It will ease educational burdens placed on our veterans by the Federal Government. It will protect our veterans from the dangers of opioid abuse. It will increase accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs to guarantee those brave individuals and their families receive the quality of service they deserve.

This Memorial Day, we honor the dedicated generations of men and women who have fought for our country and ensured our freedom. May we all strive every day to live worthy of their sacrifice, and may God bless the United States of America.

THE MEDAL OF HONOR

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

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at

the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty." These are the words that begin every Medal of Honor citation, our Nation's highest and most prestigious military decoration.

They are uncommon but not as uncommon as the actions and sacrifice detailed in the narrative summaries of those awards.

Of the estimated 50 million Americans who have worn a military uniform, 3,440 have received the Medal of Honor.

The criteria for the award are profound, clear, and always deadly; indeed, almost all recipients sacrificing their lives to earn them.

Their service is memorialized at military installations throughout the world. You can read of their bravery on walls, monuments, and headstones. Buildings, streets, ships, and forward-operating bases bear their names in an attempt to honor, to inspire, and to remember.

If you wear a uniform, you walk in the dark shadows of heroes every day.

Today, Mr. Speaker, there are 71 living recipients. Tomorrow, there will be 72.

Mr. Speaker, in the early morning hours of March 4, 2002, a helicopter attempted a landing on a mountain peak high in the Arma Mountain range of southeastern Afghanistan.

The mission was reconnaissance. But, Mr. Speaker, war has no regard for the plans of men. War is violent. War is chaotic. War is unforgiving. And as the helicopter touched down, it was engulfed in a hail of lead and rocket-propelled grenades.

The helicopter escaped, but one man remained: Chief Petty Officer SEAL Neil Roberts. He was alone. He was isolated, and he was surrounded.

In a letter to his family, Roberts would write, "All the times spent in the company of my teammates were when I felt closest to the men I had the privilege to work with. I loved being a SEAL. If I die doing something for the teams, then I died doing what made me happy. Very few people have the luxury of that."

Mr. Speaker, men and women join the military for many reasons, but they do not join with a desire to die. There will always be moments of uncertainty and fear and hesitation, moments when fear turns the thoughts to your own safety, well-being, and survival.

Every service issues a uniform. None of them issue courage. In those moments, where beliefs and resolve are tested, leadership illuminates the path.

On March 4, 2002, Master Chief Special Warfare Operator SEAL Retired Britt Slabinski chose to lead. He led his men back into the fight, into overwhelming odds and superior enemy fire. There would be no element of surprise. There would be no tactical advantage, and despite the odds and despite the risk, he chose to lead.

They assaulted trenches and bunkers and hardened machine gun nests. They

took the fight to the enemy until it reached the brink of their own destruction. They did not run. They did not hide. They fought.

Mr. Speaker, bravery is not motivated by fear, rage, hate, or the desire for awards or recognition. Bravery is motivated by love: love for an ideal, love for a country, and love for a teammate.

Bravery is not a certainty; it is a choice.

Master Chief Slabinski and his men chose to be brave. His actions, his personal courage, and his leadership are an example, not just to every sailor, soldier, marine, and airman, but to every American.

His citation has earned its place among the other heroes who have received the Medal of Honor. Its ownership, its meaning, and its promise belong not just on the walls of every military installation but on the walls of every home in America.

Master Chief Slabinski's actions serve as a beacon, as a reminder of who we can become, of what we can accomplish when we, instead of running away, rise up and challenge our darkest fears, our worst enemies, or overwhelming odds.

Mr. Speaker, long live the brotherhood.

RECOGNIZING PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOLS THAT RANK IN THE TOP 100 IN THE STATE

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, we recently concluded Teacher Appreciation Week, and I am proud to stand with the teachers throughout our community in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. It is of utmost importance that we recognize their service and sacrifice for all of our young people.

Recently, this has culminated in our district having several schools that ranked in the top 100 in the State of Pennsylvania for both standardized test scores and graduation rates.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the following schools now on the floor of the House: The New Hope-Solebury High School, Council Rock High School North, Central Bucks High School East, Abington Senior High School, Council Rock High School South, Central Bucks High School South, and the Quakertown Community High School.

I am proud to represent a community that produces such high-achieving young adults, and I would like to thank our educators for the work they do in molding our future generation.

RECOGNIZING MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, May is Military Appreciation Month, and I am proud to stand here today to recognize the brave men and women in uniform who have served our Nation valiantly.

As a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I am in awe of the sacrifices made and risks taken by our Armed Forces every single day to keep our country safe.

And I speak for all of my constituents in Bucks and Montgomery Counties when we truly say that we value the troops' service and sacrifice, and we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the 75 graduating high school seniors who were honored this month at Spring Mill Manor in Northampton by Our Community Salutes to recognize their enlistment in our Armed Forces.

These exemplary young men and women received a certificate from Montgomery County State Representative Tom Murt, a veteran of the Iraq war, and received their first military coin.

Mr. Speaker, as elected officials, we must continue to enact policies that ensure the well-being of all of our men and women in the military. There is no more important responsibility than serving those who have so bravely stepped up in times of crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to stand up for our military this month and every month. And to all those who serve, we say: Thank you.

NEW HOPE HOSTS A PRIDE PARADE

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, last weekend in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was the 15th Annual New Hope Pride Parade.

This parade served as the culmination of a week-long celebration of LGBT culture and achievements, and I am proud to recognize this event and our LGBT community in Bucks County and throughout our district.

Currently, the New Hope Pride Parade stands as the only recognized event of its kind that crosses State lines between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

I would like to recognize board member Jennifer Wohl, under whose guidance the attendance at this event grew from 1,000 in 2003 to 15,000 last year.

I would also like to thank the president of New Hope Celebrates, Matthew Hanson, for his work in advancing equality in Pennsylvania and across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, it is critical that we advocate for measures that will support equality for all American citizens. I will continue to do so as a Member of this House, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same with every single action we bring to this floor. We value them, Mr. Speaker.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 42 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.