

would create a modern public health infrastructure across our Nation designed to increase early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's. It would also focus on supporting the needs of caregivers who often bear the lasting impact of this disease.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to stand with Alzheimer's patients, with their families, and with their caregivers and support this important bill.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE
CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR
OF H.R. 3828

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.R. 3828, the Patsy T. Mink Gender Equity in Education Act of 2017, a bill originally introduced by Representative Louise Slaughter of New York, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

THE "VACANT VA" IS AN INSULT
TO OUR HEROES

(Ms. BROWNLEY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I am deeply concerned that the Department of Veterans Affairs is missing nearly a dozen key, very important leaders, which is a grave disservice to our Nation's veterans.

It has been 4 weeks since the President announced his latest VA Secretary nominee, but he has yet to formally submit the nomination to the Senate. The VA has been without a permanent Under Secretary for Health since February of 2017, and there are at least nine Deputy Under Secretaries and Assistant Deputy Secretary positions without a permanent appointee.

Without strong, steady leadership, how will the VA provide the best healthcare and timely benefits our Nation's veterans deserve?

The President must take responsibility for these failures of leadership and immediately prioritize identifying, properly vetting, and appointing the qualified leaders the VA needs because this "vacant VA" is an insult to our heroes.

WE NEED A FISCAL CONSERVATIVE
IN CHARGE OF THE PEN-
TAGON

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I know that one of the easiest

things in this world to do is to spend other people's money; and for at least 50 years or more, we have been reading and hearing about unbelievable waste by the Pentagon and excessive charges by defense contractors who hire so many retired admirals and generals.

But in today's American Conservative magazine, there is an article about Air Force spending that really takes the cake. The article is entitled: "Why Do Air Force Planes Need \$10,000 Toilet Seat Covers?" The story is by Dan Grazier, a former Marine captain. He wrote the following:

"... a Department of Defense contractor told the Air Force that each new toilet seat cover for the C-17 cargo plane will cost \$10,000. Will Roper, the Air Force's Chief Acquisition official, rather than pooh-poohing the cost, defended it by claiming the company would have to switch production from other products to make a limited number of toilet covers, thus driving up the expense."

It is unpatriotic, Mr. Speaker, for any Federal department, but especially the Defense Department, to spend taxpayers' money so recklessly. I wish someday—someday—we could get a fiscal conservative in charge at the Pentagon.

OFFSHORE DRILLING

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have taken their appalling assault on New Jersey to new lows: The Natural Resources Committee is considering legislation that would penalize States like New Jersey, where Governor Murphy and our people have had the courage and foresight to block drilling in State waters.

What House Republicans don't realize is that New Jerseyans will never be blackmailed into accepting drilling miles away from our \$38 billion-a-year tourism industry. We know the damage that the BP oil spill did to communities on the Gulf Coast, and we will stop at nothing to prevent it off New Jersey's waters.

The Trump administration offered the largest offshore drilling plan we have ever seen last year, but even the President understands the true dangers of drilling. We know this because he excluded drilling off Florida waters at the request of his political allies there.

Republicans understand the risk of offshore drilling, yet they are all too happy to subject coastal communities throughout our country to the risk.

So much, Mr. Speaker, for State rights.

Mr. Speaker, New Jerseyans have a long memory, and we will never forget this assault on our economy and our way of life.

OUR NATION'S OPIOID EPIDEMIC

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the work the House is doing to address the opioid epidemic sweeping our Nation.

Sadly, in 2016, our Nation lost more people to overdose deaths than were lost during the entire Vietnam war. One of those lives lost was Samantha Huntley, whose picture I have here.

Samantha was an outgoing cheerleader at Kickapoo High School in Springfield, Missouri. When she was 16, she was in a car wreck and broke her back. Her doctor prescribed opioids to deal with the pain, and when they ran out, Sam turned to heroin.

At age 18, she confessed to her mom she needed help, but she was never able to beat her addiction. Tragically, Sam succumbed to an overdose last year, at age 20.

This epidemic must not take any more of our young people. That is why we are passing over 70 bills this week to address this crisis. Now is the time to prevent other tragedies so beautiful, amazing youth like Samantha can live.

CRUELTY IN ITS PUREST FORM

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, tonight children—2, 3, 4 years old—will sleep alone in cages on American soil.

Yes, the brutality being perpetrated by the United States Government is about who we are as a country. It is about morality. It is about humanity. But first, it is about those kids:

The 5-year-old boy from Honduras who collapsed on a kitchen floor in Michigan, sobbing for his parents;

The mother who had to listen to her 7-year-old daughter frantically screaming in a detention room next door as she was hauled away;

The 3-year-old boy who was put, inconsolable, on a flight to the Midwest after his mother was left behind;

A 4-month-old baby ripped from his father's arms.

I don't care what you believe. I don't care who you vote for or what you think about the nuances of immigration reform. These children—babies—need to be with their parents, just like every other child in this country. Anything less is cruelty in its purest form.

CONGRATULATING LIEUTENANT
ERIC SCHRAGE

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant Eric Schrage of the Collinsville Fire Department and congratulate him on being awarded the Medal of Honor Award from the Firefighting Medal of Honor Awards Ceremony this past May.

Lieutenant Schrage was recognized for his actions in responding to a fire

in an apartment building while driving his own personal vehicle last September. After Lieutenant Schrage assessed the situation and determined that the residents were trapped, he took matters into his own hands.

Without regard for his own safety, he was able to enter the building and rescue a semiconscious woman trapped in her apartment, remove her from the complex, and remain with her until medical attention arrived.

After rescuing the woman, he took actions to prevent the fire from spreading to other parts of the apartment. His quick actions helped prevent further damage and loss of life in the surrounding apartments.

I am proud to recognize Lieutenant Schrage for his courage and selfless actions that saved a woman's life.

Thank you, Lieutenant Schrage and all the first responders for all that you do to protect us and keep us safe every day.

PROTECT OUR LOVED ONES WITH PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the Trump administration's effort to gut the Affordable Care Act.

Last Friday, the Justice Department failed to defend a key provision of the ACA that protects people with preexisting conditions. The decision jeopardizes millions of people's healthcare in Texas.

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex has one of the highest uninsured rates in the entire country. The congressional district that I represent, alone, has the highest uninsured rate in the entire country.

Right now, Republicans are complicit in allowing insurance companies to discriminate against over 10 million Texans with preexisting conditions.

Mr. Speaker, this is bad, and we are asking for basic empathy. We want to make sure that people don't have to live in a constant state of panic and praying for the day that their health is in jeopardy and know that their insurance won't be there for them.

Let's save the Affordable Care Act. Let's make it stronger. These insurance plans that support hardworking families were put in place for a reason. We need to protect our loved ones with preexisting conditions, and that is what we demand.

BATTLING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

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

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, Maine is a big small town. Our population is only 1.3 million people, and it seems like everybody, Mr. Speaker, knows everybody else. But this opioid epidemic has devastated so many of our families

in the great State of Maine, including having a big impact on my own.

Every day, one Mainer dies from an opioid epidemic up in our great State. We must continue to battle this devastating scourge on our population, and it must be all hands on deck.

Several months ago, Congress appropriated \$4 billion back to the States for increased law enforcement and early education and for recovery programs, but there is so much more, Mr. Speaker, that needs to be done. That is why this week I am so proud that the House of Representatives passed, with a big bipartisan vote, the Safe Disposal of Unused Medication Act. This allows hospice workers to safely dispose of unused opioids and other powerful medications so that they don't fall into the wrong hands.

I am grateful, Mr. Speaker, for all Democrats and Republicans here in D.C. and back in Maine who helped give our families more security. We have got to stay on the offense and battle this epidemic until we have won.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

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

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a sad story of what happens when we do not value our workers' safety.

Cynthia Palomata was a nurse from the bay area who worked in the county jail. She complained to her supervisors that her work area had insufficient lighting for reviewing paperwork. Rather than updating the lighting system or providing her with a secured light fixture, she was given a common desk lamp. One day, she was treating a patient, and when her back was turned, the patient grabbed the lamp and hit her over the head, knocking her into a coma. She never woke up.

Every year, thousands of Americans are killed while at work, more than 4,000 in 2015 alone. That is why we have introduced, on a bipartisan basis, the Healthcare Workplace Violence Prevention Act, to stop tragedies like Cynthia's from ever taking place again. It is bipartisan and it is common sense.

The bill requires facilities to create violence prevention plans that address all levels of safety. Healthcare and social service workers face high risk.

FLAG DAY AND CELEBRATING U.S. ARMY'S BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Flag Day and celebrate the U.S. Army's 243rd birthday.

Each year on June 14, we celebrate the Stars and Stripes, which the Second Continental Congress designated as a symbol of our Nation on this day in 1777.

Since our founding, our flag has flown across the country and the world. It has flown during both our most tragic moments and our greatest triumphs. It has also been a glorious symbol of hope for our brave servicemen and -women, who salute it, defend it, serve it, and, in some cases, die for it to protect our freedom and liberty.

Yesterday, I was proud to join Secretary of the Army Mark Esper, Army Chief of Staff General Milley, and the Sergeant Major of the Army to celebrate the rich history of our Army.

Without the Army 243 years ago, we would not be the great Nation that we are today. And today, we celebrate two great symbols of freedom, our Army and our flag, which both symbolize America being the land of the free and the home of the brave.

RECOGNIZING MARK GWYN

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the recent retirement of director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, a native of Tennessee's Fourth District, Mark Gwyn. Throughout Mark's 30-year career, he served as the standard for Tennessee law enforcement.

Beginning as a patrol officer for the McMinnville Police Department in 1985, Gwyn quickly joined the TBI as a special agent, where he showed superb investigative ability, leadership skills, and work ethic.

Eight years later, he was promoted to executive officer, then to assistant director, overseeing the forensic services division, and, finally, to director of the TBI in 2004.

Serving longer than any of his predecessors, Gwyn implemented many policies and programs that helped the bureau evolve over the past several years. He steered the bureau's fight to combat illegal methamphetamine production in the State and took great steps in combating human trafficking.

He oversaw the development of Tennessee's nationally recognized fusion center, which provides numerous services that help link local, State, and Federal resources together to improve the safety of all Tennesseans.

As we look ahead, there will almost certainly be new challenges that TBI will face and difficulties that its future leaders will have to overcome. But with the foundation built during his tenure, I am certain that TBI will face these challenges with the same professionalism, efficiency, and grace that Director Gwyn has exhibited.

I thank Mark Gwyn for his service and wish him well in his retirement.

SECURING THE INTERNATIONAL MAIL AGAINST OPIOIDS ACT OF 2018

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 934, I call up