

taxes being raised on homeowners across the country over the next 10 years.

And, as a result of these actions for the budget and the taxes, we have doubled the budget deficit this year, with the prospect of deficits every year of a trillion dollars or more as far as the eye can see.

After Republicans have cut over \$2 trillion in taxes since 2001 for just the top 1 percent, what is the solution our Republican friends are offering to deal with the consequences? Look at the budget they just passed. Mr. Speaker, \$2 trillion of cuts in programs for everybody else: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act.

At some point, the public is going to catch on to what is happening to them. In fact, maybe they already are. Maybe that is the reason that the Republican tax cuts are less popular than Bill Clinton's tax increase.

It is time that we take a step back, while we still can, and get back on the appropriate fiscal course. It does not mean trade wars and providing money for people who don't need it.

Let's allow the economy to function without gimmicks and bailouts.

CTE BILL A WIN FOR ALL AMERICANS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, which has seen unanimous support in both Chambers of Congress, something I hope continues today. I proudly championed this bill because I truly believe that passing it will be a win for students, for workers, and for every person in America.

Mr. Speaker, America is ready for a win.

In June 2017, the House unanimously passed this bill to strengthen career and technical education. On Monday, the Senate also approved it unanimously, and we are now just steps away from getting this critical legislation to the President's desk to be signed into law.

This bill has been supported by House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman VIRGINIA FOXX and Ranking Member BOBBY SCOTT. I thank them both. I want to thank the Democratic lead, Representative RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY, and my CTE Caucus co-chairman, Representative JIM LAN-GEVIN.

House and Senate leaders have brought this legislation to their respective floors because they know it is an important bill.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation aims to restore rungs on the ladder of opportunity, because all Americans deserve a good-paying, family-sustaining job.

Too often, we see students pushed down the college-for-all pathway that just doesn't work for some people.

But CTE has established itself as a path that many high-achieving students choose in pursuit of industry certifications and hands-on skills that they can use right out of high school in a skills-based education program or in college.

By modernizing the Federal investment in CTE programs, we will be able to connect more educators with industry stakeholders and close the skills gap in this country.

Mr. Speaker, 6.7 million jobs, good jobs, are currently available because people need to be qualified to get them.

In fact, today, right here in Washington, CTE will be highlighted. The House Education and the Workforce Committee has invited 24 innovators from across the country for the bipartisan Innovation Forum and Showcase. Dedicated professionals will share with Congress and the public how they are addressing the Nation's education and workforce development changes.

I am proud to count among these professionals Mr. Joe Luther from my district. Mr. Luther is the horticulture and landscaping instructor at the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology, located in Pleasant Gap, Centre County, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Luther uses hands-on instruction to inspire students to reach great heights and achieve success in life. He brings real-life scenarios into his classroom at every opportunity to show students what their future can be like in the workforce.

I know every Member of this House wants to give every American, regardless of where they come from, the best opportunity to succeed. That is why I urge my colleagues to support the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act when it comes back to the floor today with the Senate amendment.

This bill and the amendment will modernize the Federal role in our Nation's CTE program, which is long overdue; but, most importantly, it will restore rungs on the ladder of opportunity. It will inspire a new generation of builders and thinkers and makers and creators, and it will give every American a shot at the American Dream, which is opportunity and success in life.

RECOGNIZING UPCOMING CENTENARIANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize three of my constituents who are all celebrating birthday 100 very, very soon. Mrs. Cora Jones "Boot" McLeod, Mrs. Christine Johnson Umstead, and Mrs. Annie Belle Gilmore Rogers are all members of historic Mount Vernon

Baptist Church located in Durham, North Carolina, pastored by my friend Dr. Jerome J. Washington.

These centenarians, Mr. Speaker, will soon celebrate their birthdays, surrounded by family and friends. These women have committed much of their lives to the development of their family and community. They are devout Christians of the missionary baptist faith who love their church.

Mrs. Cora Jones Boot McLeod was born on August 8, 1918, in Raleigh, North Carolina, and attended Rosenswald Schools. She started her own business in Durham as a professional beautician. Mrs. McLeod has spent all of her life encouraging her family and community to be independent and faithful in their pursuits. Her leadership is reflected in the business community and at her beloved Mount Vernon Baptist Church, where she served as church usher.

Mrs. Christine Johnson Umstead was born on August 16, 1918, in Roxboro, North Carolina, located in Person County, just north of Durham. She came to Durham as a food service professional. In retirement, she has encouraged others to become active senior citizens by setting an example and providing motivation to all. Mrs. Umstead joined Mount Vernon in 1948 and has remained an active church member.

Over the years, she has provided faithful leadership and fellowship as a Christian missionary, a member of the senior citizens organization, and the J.E. Best Bible Class.

Finally, yet importantly, is Mrs. Annie Belle Gilmore Rogers. Mrs. Rogers was born on October 20, 1918, in Durham, and her ancestors were founding members of Mount Vernon Baptist Church. Over the past 100 years, she has exemplified the value of faith, education, and resourcefulness.

She attended what was then Hillside Park School, which we now know as Hillside High School, in Durham. She went on to become a teacher's assistant at C.C. Spaulding Elementary School, where she helped educate young minds who would go on to become future leaders.

Mrs. Rogers recognized the value of managing her resources and teaching her family to do the same. She was among the first members and leaders of the Mount Vernon Baptist Church Credit Union, at a time when African Americans had few opportunities for investing their limited resources or borrowing money to develop individual wealth. The credit union stands today as the last functioning church credit union in the State, with members of Mrs. Rogers' family serving on its board.

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Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride this morning that I speak these words today from the floor of the House of Representatives. These three strong and powerful African American women

have worked and labored to empower their families and Mount Vernon Baptist Church into a spiritual force serving the Durham community.

I am grateful to these remarkable women for their love of humanity and contributions to their community. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing these three great Americans our very best wishes as they each celebrate 100 years of life.

SUSTAINABLE CONTROL OF THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to one very remarkable young woman. Earlier this year, I had the honor of meeting Masedi while visiting Botswana as part of a delegation trip.

Sadly, Botswana is still struggling with HIV/AIDS. Every year, there are 14,000 new infections, and 1 in 5 adults in the country has HIV/AIDS. Masedi is one of these adults.

Born with HIV/AIDS 23 years ago, she lost both of her parents and many other family members to this disease. But when my husband, Dexter, and I visited with her in Botswana, she was full of optimism and determination.

Masedi's story is remarkable, and what she has had to overcome is truly inspiring. She has made it her mission to educate the people of Botswana on HIV/AIDS to dispel any rumors or stigmas related to this disease and to one day see a Botswana free of this terrible ordeal.

We were so inspired with this visit, and she is truly a shining role model for the entire country.

That is why our PEPFAR program is so vitally important, Mr. Speaker. In just over 15 years, PEPFAR has saved and improved millions of lives while preventing millions more in HIV infections. Thanks to American leadership, PEPFAR, and remarkable individuals like Masedi, we can achieve the goal of sustainable control and eradication of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

CONGRATULATING BOB ROSASCO'S EFFORTS WITH MINTS INTERNATIONAL SEMINARY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and thank my dear friend Bob Rosasco for his efforts with MINTS International Seminary and its seminary-in-prison degree program.

Since 2010, this organization has been teaching theology in Florida's prisons in order to educate, to train, and to equip members of the prison population, so they can teach others about religion and the word of God.

This program provides inmates with the necessary tools and training that prepare them to reenter society and become productive members of the community after their release. Studies have shown that those who participate in education programs, including reli-

gious programs, while incarcerated are much less likely to reoffend.

Because of Bob Rosasco and the efforts of so many like him, this program now has more than 200 students participating, with plans to keep expanding beyond Florida and across the United States.

We are blessed to have Bob Rosasco as a member of our south Florida community, and I commend him for continuously giving back to others by sharing his time, his knowledge, and his passion.

RECOGNIZING RYAN DOOLEY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ryan Dooley, a dedicated Federal employee, a public servant, and my friend who lives in my congressional district in beautiful south Florida.

I first met Ryan 14 years ago, shortly after he arrived in Miami as Assistant Director of the State Department's Miami Passport Agency. Ryan's commitment to service is unparalleled, and because of his efforts, he was soon promoted to Director of the Miami Passport Agency.

When the San Juan Passport Agency opened its doors to the public in 2014, Ryan was chosen to lead that office as well. For the first time, our fellow Americans living in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands gained direct access to much needed-passport services, and that was truly a historic milestone.

Today, Ryan is responsible for helping countless citizens across a huge geographic area. Ryan and his staff are consummate professionals dedicated to serving their communities efficiently and accurately. Under Ryan's leadership, they have met and overcome numerous passport workload challenges.

I have had the opportunity to work with Ryan on multiple occasions, both in Miami and here in D.C., and I can say that he is respected and admired by his colleagues at local, State, and Federal levels.

I also know numerous State Department employees who got their start in Miami and were mentored by Ryan and encouraged to excel in their public service paths.

In his career that has taken him around the world, Ryan has always promoted the ideals of freedom, of democracy, and of being responsible to the citizens of our great Nation.

I would like to say, on behalf of my constituents: Ryan Dooley, thank you so much for all of your tireless work. I commend you for a job well done. I hope that you continue to serve the people of south Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands faithfully. I wish you and your partner, Gerald Darby, the best in the years to come. Gracias, amigo.

MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.

Mental health challenges do not discriminate. They affect Americans of all ages, races, backgrounds, and genders. It doesn't matter if you are from a blue State, a red State, or a swing State. Mental illness is in your community. It affects your family and exists in your friend group and with your coworkers.

Tragically, while mental health challenges impact so many people across the board, too many never see or get treatment because of the stigma associated with mental healthcare. It shames them into silence.

So it is fitting that this year's theme is "CureStigma." While stigma keeps far too many from seeking and receiving the care that they need, the silence of stigma plagues African American populations and other ethnic groups.

It is a sad and staggering statistic that African Americans are 20 percent more likely to report serious psychological distress than their White counterparts but just 25 percent will seek care. There is a tragic inequity in that figure, given that 40 percent of their White counterparts will seek care.

Is this a matter of stigma? Of access to care, culturally competent care, and associated resources? Or perhaps a combination of them all.

Mr. Speaker, it is past time that we tackle the stigma associated with mental health that keeps too many trapped without hope, recourse, or recovery.

As for access to care, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, all health insurance plans are required to cover mental health services, just as they would cover cancer screenings and tetanus shots. Still, this administration, either through cruelty or willful ignorance, has actively attacked the mental health requirement and sought to push bad or, as I call them, junk insurance plans that neglect mental health services.

We must do better. Congress must be better. Too many, especially in vulnerable populations, are still in desperate need of this care.

That is why I am proud to be cosponsoring the Mental Health in Schools Act offered by my good friend, Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO. This bill will provide comprehensive mental health programs to students in schools, with a special focus on dealing with trauma and violence. Congress can make a world of difference today, if we pass this bill.

I am also proud to be cosponsoring the Veterans Mental Health Accessibility Act introduced by my colleague from Pennsylvania, Congressman MATT CARTWRIGHT. His bill would make veterans who serve in combat zones eligible for more mental health services through the VA.

This is really commonsense legislation. With more than 20 of our brave veterans committing suicide daily, it is of critical importance that we pass this bill.