The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. Foxx).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:
WASHINGTON, DC, October 3, 2017.
I hereby appoint the Honorable VIRGINIA Foxx to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

GUN SAFETY
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, what if the headline in the morning paper was slightly different? What if we had a disease that had killed 59 people yesterday and sickened over 500 others? Do you think the Nation would demand action?

If we had an outbreak every day that had over 100,000 people a year killed and injured, Congress would be in a frenzy. Yesterday, we found 2 minutes for a moment of silence, and we moved on.

Gun violence is a public health hazard every bit as important as any other disease or outbreak. Ours is the only developed country in the world that cannot protect our families from death and injury from guns on a massive scale.

After years of frustration in Congress and another school shooting in my district, I sat down with my constituents to go through, what are the things that we can do that would make a difference?

We understood that you cannot completely stop evil people. There is not a statute that is foolproof, but our statutes are filled with efforts to try to make things better.

Let’s stop dealing with gun violence as a political issue and think about it as the public health epidemic that it is, already claiming over 12,000 lives in the United States this year.

We attacked auto death and safety in a resolute fashion. It didn’t happen overnight that we made automobiles safer and our highways less dangerous, but we stayed at it with law enforcement, with engineering, and with research, and we cut the rate of death over half.

We are starting now to deal with massive addiction and overdose as a medical condition that requires treatment, not just law enforcement with harsh punishment.

My report outlined nine areas where we could take action. There are 26 bills in Congress now that deal with these items, and we haven’t been able to deal with them meaningfully: no hearings and certainly nothing on the floor of the House.

There are provisions to keep guns away from the most dangerous users. Even members of the NRA support that. We can improve the mental health system. We can authorize and increase research into gun safety.

There is an outrageous provision in United States law that prevents the Centers for Disease Control to research gun violence that was authored by our late colleague Jay Dickey from Arkansas who, later in life, realized that was a horrific mistake. We ought to be able to understand and find ways to help prevent it.

We can control access to the most dangerous products. We can increase product safety for guns, which are inherently dangerous. We can empower healthcare professionals to deal with families to help prevent gun violence and understand what risks their families face, rather than outrageous provisions that seek to limit what healthcare professionals can do to deal with their patients. We can effectively regulate the sale of firearms. There should be no hidden sales where we do not have background checks.

This is all within our capacity. We can enforce existing laws, and we can mitigate the loss of life in shooting by helping provide more resources for first responders.

This isn’t pie in the sky. This will do nothing to take away the rights of Americans who want to target shoot or hunt. What it will do, is start the slow, steady process toward making our families safer and make sure that America is not the only developed country that cannot protect its families from gun violence.

GENERAL AVIATION
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to do a little myth-busting. Critics of the 21st Century AIRR Act are selling a myth that the 21st Century AIRR Act will be damaging and adverse to general aviation. This couldn’t be further from the truth.

I am a regular general aviation user and a student pilot. My brother-in-law
is a GA pilot. I would never support legislation that would be bad for my rural communities and the airports in those communities.

Let’s address a few of those myths. The nonprofit service provider for air traffic control will be prohibited from charging user fees to any segment of general aviation in contrast to the myths that are being sold out there. The act also prohibits the ATC provider from restricting access to any airspace or any airport.

Puerto Rico and its neighbors have access to airports or airspace would be subject to extensive government review and approval. Additional funding is provided to community airports to assist them to continue to grow and be vibrant in our communities.

Critics would have you believe that general aviation will not have a seat at the table. Again, not true. The nonprofit board of directors designates a seat for community airports, as it designates a seat for general aviation, lease pilots, airlines, and air cargo.

The FAA, in a hearing, indicated it would take another 10 years and $30 billion to update an air traffic control system from the archaic system we have now. When asked, they said that they hoped they would have it accomplished in 10 years. Hope is not a plan.

The Trump administration supports the 21st Century AIRR Act. Air traffic controllers support the 21st Century AIRR Act. Airline pilots support it. The airlines support it, and air cargo supports it. We can go through a long list, yet we continue to deal with myths that are being sold out there. The nonprofits from across the country are making their communities available to you so that you have a safe place to be while the rescue and recovery and rebuilding continues.

And standing with the Mayor of Chicago just yesterday, he said he wants the City of Chicago to be a place where any and all Puerto Ricans who need a safe place can come and we will help you resettled.

You are not alone. Mi amado Puerto Rico, no estás solo. Oímos tus peticiones de ayuda, y la fuerza del gobierno y milicia estadounidense finalmente vienen a ayudar.

Ha sido despacio, y comparto tu frustración sobre una respuesta que no se dio con la urgencia y prioridad que los Puertorriqueños—y cualquier ser humano que está sufriendo—se merecen.

Les digo a mis colegas lo que he visto, y lo que me has dicho cuando estuve ahí. Trabajé con ellos inmediatamente para asegurar que este Congreso trate a un Puerto Rico justo y generosamente.

Y no soy el único. Otros Puertorriqueños, y el Caucus Hispano están trabajando con el liderazgo de la Cámara para conformar un programa de ayuda.

Ciudades y pueblos, alcaldes y gobernadores a través del país, están abriendo las puertas de sus comunidades para que tengan un lugar seguro mientras el rescate, la recuperación y la reconstrucción continúan.

Y ayer, presente con el alcalde de Chicago, él me dijo que quiere que la ciudad de Chicago sea un lugar en el cual todo Puertorriqueño que necesita un lugar seguro pueda llegar y reestablecerse.

Madam Speaker, I flew to Puerto Rico on Friday to see what was happening on the ground with my own eyes. Madam Speaker, it was worse than I imagined, and it broke my heart to see my beloved island so destroyed and so scared for its future and feeling so alone and isolated.

There were dead animals all over the place, and people were so desperate for food and water. Anyone who is sick or elderly is finding it hard or impossible to get medicine and medical care.

Things are improving day by day, and the number of helicopters flying missions of mercy to the interior of the island is increasing. But almost every one has no electrical power. Almost everyone has little or no food and trouble finding it. Almost everyone has no water, and some are seeking water from unreliable or possibly contaminated sources.

At the same time, I also saw an amazing unity and toughness, a can-do spirit that my fellow Puerto Ricans have the ability to make a way where there is no way, to improvise, and, most importantly, to work together. Members of this Congress—one party or class that are right on the surface on a typical day in Puerto Rico, this faction versus that faction, all of that was blown away. The only status issue that matters for Puerto Ricans right now is the status of the SOS, save our souls. We need help, and plenty of it, now.

Yesterday, I spoke at a press conference in Chicago with Mayor Rahm Emanuel and leaders from Chicago, including Fire Commissioner Santiago and the head of Chicago’s Office of Emergency Management, a brigadier general in our National Guard.

The mayor announced that 22 Chicago firefighters, on their own dime, are going to Puerto Rico to help with rescue and recovery efforts, including bringing equipment that may help communications to remote parts of the island.

The mayor also announced that, in Chicago, we want to be for Puerto Rico what the federal government was for New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina—a place of refuge where we will help you get settled, get your kids into school, get you the medical care you need, and make you feel welcome.

One thing I learned in Puerto Rico this weekend is that, in Chicago and in the rest of the U.S., we need to start thinking about evacuation in addition to rebuilding and recovery.

I have welcomed my own family into my home, and people I know across the country are welcoming relatives escaping Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. But we need to wrap up our commitment beyond the family-to-family informal relationships and look systematically at how we organize ourselves to meet the great need of our fellow citizens on the island in the Caribbean.

Rebuilding Puerto Rico—making her a strong and self-sufficient island nation of industrious and hardworking people—will require a long-term commitment from this Congress and this country so that the well-being of our fellow man on the island can be met.

So, Madam Speaker, let’s roll up our sleeves and get to work. Once again, Chicago is there to support you, to enroll your kids in school, to get you medical attention, and to make sure you have a safe place until the recovery and rebuilding has been accomplished.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois will provide a translation of his remarks to the Clerk.
A NEW ABSOLUTE AIRSPEED RECORD

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

Mr. KNIGHT. Madam Speaker, I am truly blessed to represent a district in southern California that is the home of so many historic spots.

Today, I would like to tell you about one of those feats that turned 50 years old today, October 3, 1967, a date I will never forget, but it is probably a date I will never remember either because I was 9 months old.

On that date, a B-52 flew down the runway of Edwards Air Force Base with a small, white airplane tucked underneath her wing. A major who had thousands of hours in different platforms was in that jet. He had been on several different programs and had been a test pilot for many years and was a graduate of the United States Air Force Test Pilot School. He was the pilot of that small, white aircraft.

The plan was simple on paper. It was to accelerate to 100,000 feet and achieve a Mach of 6.50. As the pilots at Edwards Air Force Base will also tell you, it is a profession that they go about, and they do it in a very professional manner. The terms were 100,000 feet and 6.50, the ending was 102,100 feet and 6.72—a new airspeed record.

The interesting thing about this is that the air speed record had been set on November 18, 1966, by the same pilot and broken just 10 months later. That flight has now stood for 50 years. It is something that is now 50 years old today. I was a small kid because my father was right there with me when he set the record. That Mach meter sat on our television for every year of my life, until he was on his death bed. He said: I want that Mach meter to go to the Smithsonian. Which is exactly where we sent it.

This was something that was an achievement by many engineers, pilots, mothership pilots, and chase pilots, but it is something that is now 50 years old, and we need to continue to push.

DEVASTATION AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, any comments that I make in Spanish, I will provide translation in English.

Madam Speaker, I witnessed the devastation and humanitarian crisis this weekend when I traveled to the island of Puerto Rico with my colleague from Chicago, Illinois, LUIS GUTIERREZ. As I traveled throughout the area, I met dozens of emergency workers from various cities around our Nation on their way to provide assistance to families in Puerto Rico.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

I had the privilege of travelling to Puerto Rico this weekend along with my colleague from the State of Illinois, Congressman Luis Gutiérrez, and witnessed the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria. But most importantly, I saw how the Puerto Rican people has united to work in restoring Puerto Rico from its current state. Thousands and thousands of people, including Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz and the Governor, are committed with the well-being of the Puerto Rican people. I saw firemen and emergency workers at the Philadelphia airport trying to reach Puerto Rico to help their brothers and sisters. This has moved me and I understand the Puerto Rican people have a very big heart and immense solidarity.

Tuve el privilegio de viajar este fin de semana a Puerto Rico con mi colega del Estado de Illinois, Congresista Luis Gutiérrez, y fui testigo ocular de la devastación causada por el Huracán María. Pero más importante, vi cómo el pueblo puertorriqueño se ha unido a trabajar para levantar a Puerto Rico del estado donde se encuentra; miles de personas, incluyendo la alcaldesa Carmen Yulín Cruz y el mismo Gobernador están comprometidos con el bienestar del pueblo puertorriqueño. Vi a bomberos, trabajadores de emergencia, en el aeropuerto de Philadelphia tratando de llegar a Puerto Rico para darle ayuda a sus hermanos.

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Also, I call for a hearing on Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands recovery efforts. A congressional task force for coordinated relief efforts must be put in place. The delayed response in Puerto Rico was egregious.

I join my colleagues in calling for a hearing on Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands recovery efforts and for a full assessment on how to mitigate delayed reactions in the future and a strategic plan on a long-term recovery effort not only for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, but for the entire Caribbean region that, unfortunately, stands on the pathway of natural disasters, including hurricane season.

As my colleagues have stated, the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force resulted in a comprehensive plan. Yesterday, I released a 10-point plan following my assessment, and I offer this as a solution to provide an immediate emergency relief package for the humanitarian crisis we are witnessing in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands—let’s not forget them.

Yesterday, I released a 10-point plan following my assessment, and I offer this as a solution to provide an immediate emergency relief package for the humanitarian crisis we are witnessing in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It is my hope that we, as Members of Congress, will work together to find solutions quickly, as the lives of U.S. citizens and the efforts to rebuild have remained encumbered.

Madam Speaker, I call for an immediate $20 billion emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Congress needs to act on a humanitarian emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands no later than this week. They cannot wait another week. It is estimated that Puerto Rico will need $85 billion for their recovery efforts. At a minimum, Congress needs to enact a $20 billion emergency relief package for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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developed by Federal and local stakeholders, which then helped aid the recovery efforts in U.S. and elsewhere. A similar plan is needed for all of the areas affected during this hurricane season.

We must also create a permanent waiver of the Jones Act for diesel and fuel. The latest 10-day waiver by the Trump administration is not nearly enough. The Jones Act needs to be waived for at least a year so that we can have enough. The Jones Act needs to be waived for at least a year so that redeveloped by Federal and local stakeholders, which then helped aid the recovery efforts in U.S.

I also call for immediate deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier.

I joined 145 Members of Congress in urging the President to deploy the USS Abraham Lincoln.

We need to repair telecommunications and authorize the Army and engineers to repair hospitals.

Madam Speaker, I have four other points that I will later present to you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York will provide a translation of his remarks to the Clerk.

POLITICAL COURTS

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, the new term of the U.S. Supreme Court begins this week. I was a judge for 7½ years before I came to Congress, so I have great interest in their proceedings. It seems to me that our courts have become far too political over the last many years.

Up until the mid-1930s, most Federal courts seemed to try to stay out of politics and paid great deference to actions by Federal and State legislative bodies as being expressions of the will of the people.

For many years now, though, some Federal judges believe they should have been elected to Congress or to State legislatures. One of many examples involves the drawing of congressional, legislative, and local government voting districts. The word "gerrymandering" came into use in 1812, but it really has only been in very recent years that the Federal courts have become heavily involved in drawing specific lines in so many States.

If the court has a liberal judge, he or she will seemingly go to great lengths to throw out any lines that seem to benefit conservatives.

I was at the U.S. Supreme Court recently to introduce some lawyers from Knoxville. That day, the Court was hearing a challenge to some lines drawn by the Virginia Legislature. This is something that the Federal courts should really stay out of and leave to the State legislatures.

Also, opinions now are much longer than in the first 150 years or so, as some judges seem to believe they know almost everything.

Many of the issues that the courts are dealing with involve freedom of religion. Our Founding Fathers came here to this country to get freedom of religion, not for religion. I think it was very sad that a very intolerant group from Wisconsin went to great lengths to get a Bible verse removed from the Knoxville Police Department. We have people who proclaim their tolerance the loudest are some of the most intolerant people in this country today, and aimed primarily at conservative Christians.

In Zorach v. Clauson, a 1952 U.S. Supreme Court case, Justice William O. Douglas wrote that the law should not prefer "those who believe in no religion over those who do believe," and that there is "no constitutional requirement which makes it necessary for government to be hostile to religion and hence make clear that no governmental efforts to widen the effective scope of religious influence."

Justice Douglas was one of the most liberal Justices who ever served on the U.S. Supreme Court.

It surprises me now when I tell them that we open every session of the House and Senate with prayer, that there is a prayer room in the center of the Capitol, and several Bible studies go on in the Capitol each week.

Madam Speaker, on an unrelated topic, because we are dealing with the budget proposals this week, I think it is ironic that the only President in the last 70 or 80 years who has tried to rein in defense spending is the only one who spent his career in the military: President Eisenhower.

I spoke out in every way and voted against most of the major initiatives of the Obama administration, but it was false to say that the military has been depleted.

We spend well over $700 billion on defense and military construction each year. Last year, we spent $177.5 billion on new planes, tanks, weapons, and equipment, and similar amounts to that for many years. Most of this equipment does not wear out after just 1 year.

In the book "Ike's Bluff," when Eisenhower was told he could not cut defense spending, he replied that if he told his Secretary of Defense that he would reduce his budget that he would get another star, you would have to get out of the way of the rush.

He also said: "Heaven help us if we ever have a President who doesn't know as much about the military as I do."

Over 80 percent of those in Congress today have never served in our Armed Forces. I am proud to have been one who was privileged to serve.

Most of the Members of Congress today are afraid to oppose or even question wasteful defense spending for fear of some demagogue calling them unpatriotic or saying they are not supporting the troops. But, Madam Speaker, we need to wake up and realize that there is waste even in the Defense Department.

ENTERPRISE CARRIERS FROM MEXICO

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, today, there are over 800 so-called enterprise carriers from Mexico operating heavy trucks long distance in the United States. Now, what is wrong with that?

Well, Mexico doesn't have any drug or alcohol testing of its commercial drivers. Mexico does not have a centralized database of commercial driver's licenses and driving offenses, making it difficult, if not impossible, to attract attention to those who are unsafe and who would be disqualified here in the United States.

In Mexico, truck drivers are pretty much exploited and abused. They don't even have hours of service rules. Some drivers will drive for 1 or 2 days straight.

In the United States, of course, we have very restrictive rules for safety on hours of service. Those laws, theoretically, apply to the 800 Mexican enterprise carriers operating in the United States.

However, how many hours did that person drive before they got to the border? Was it 24 or 48? Then they cross over the border, and they are limited.

Congress objected and voted multiple times by huge bipartisan majorities on legislation I supported to say: No, we do not want these Mexican trucks running about freely in the United States until they can prove that they meet the same standards as our truck drivers.

We have had a few offenses. We don't even put special scrutiny on these enterprise carriers. We have very few inspectors out there. But they have managed to rack up some pretty horrific records on a random basis that raise huge questions about their safety.

They had over 900 violations per driver that cannot read or speak the English language sufficiently to respond to official inquiries, a violation of the law; over 800 violations for brake-related issues—worn brake hoses, defective brakes, et cetera; and hundreds of other violations for tire treads, exhaust leaks, and oil leaks. One company was fined $40,000.

There is only one way to solve this issue, and that is to modify the NAFTA agreement. Remember, this was authorized. They were given national treatment; that is, Mexico is treated the same as the U.S. They won, in one of those secret tribunals, a huge judgment against the United States.

The Obama administration caved in and allowed the door to be opened to
these unsafe carriers operating in the United States. We can close that door again by just modifying NAFTA.

The Trump administration is approaching this issue perhaps as early as next week in the NAFTA negotiations, and this should be at the top of their agenda. We give them a national treatment; they will have to meet our standards and prove that they have met our standards; they have to develop a meaningful driver’s license base; they will have to have drug and alcohol tests. They have to have two hours of service. Then we can talk about whether or not they can operate in the United States.

We had a system before NAFTA. Mexican truck drivers would bring the trucks just over the border. They were limited in how far they could go. They would drop the trailers. U.S. truck drivers would pick them up. Then there is one other issue here: Are we going to do to our trucking industry what we have done to so many in manufacturing? Are we going to drive down truck drivers’ wages?

It is already a tough business, particularly for independent drivers. Are we going to make them compete with people making 2 bucks an hour and don’t have to meet the same rules as they do? That is not fair competition, and it is not good for the American people, not for the jobs or the safety on our highways.

So I am asking the Trump administration to hang tough on this issue and take away this national treatment that we are giving to Mexico, which does not have an equivalent system to the United States, and go to something that is based on reciprocity and equivalency. That would be a good change to the NAFTA agreement, which, of course, I opposed from day one.

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL MANUFACTURING DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Jody B. Hice of Georgia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Thompson) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this Friday is National Manufacturing Day. We celebrate Manufacturing Day annually in order to recognize the manufacturing industry’s part in the growth and prosperity of the country, as well as raise awareness of the important investment and career opportunities within the manufacturing sector.

Manufacturing Day started in 2012 as an annual celebration of modern manufacturing meant to inspire the next generation of manufacturers, and it has done just that. According to a 2016 survey of students who attended Manufacturing Day events, 89 percent were more aware of manufacturing jobs in their communities; 84 percent were more interested in the industry; manufacturing provides careers that are interesting and rewarding; 64 percent were more motivated to pursue careers in manufacturing; and 71 percent were more likely to tell friends, family, parents, or colleagues about manufacturing after attending the event.

Mr. Speaker, the manufacturing industry impacts every community in the United States and is certainly true for Pennsylvania’s Fifth Congressional District. Pennsylvania has a rich history of being a manufacturing leader, especially our storied Pennsylvania Steel. The Commonwealth has been an important cog in the wheels of this nation’s industrial revolution thanks to industries like iron, coal, and lumber, in addition to steel.

Our Pennsylvania farmers have fed and continue to feed generations of Americans, providing safe and nutritious food for all our neighbors. From heritage companies to newer rising stars, we have a wide cross-section of products produced in the Fifth District of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight just a few.

Brookville Equipment Corporation in Jefferson County is the leading American manufacturer of diesel locomotive engines, street trolleys, and mining machinery. Brookville’s mass transit vehicles now refurbish streetcars for cities, including New Orleans, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. Since 1889, W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Company has been fashioning handcrafted pocketknives and sporting knives in McKean County, since 1896. Zippo Manufacturing Company, makers of the world famous Zippo windproof lighter, owns Case Knives today. Zippo is another family-owned business, based in the city of Bradford, McKean County, since 1936. Major leaguers have been swinging our fine Pennsylvania hardwoods thanks to Jefferson County company BWP Bats. BWP’s slogan is “Built With Pride.”

Huntingdon County’s Bonny Forge has a state-of-the-art forge facility capable of manufacturing our entire line of forged steel fitting and forged steel valve products since 1875. A new manufacturer is DiamondBack Truck Covers. Two Penn State students started this company in their garage in 2003. They make heavy-duty, utility-oriented, diamond plate aluminum truck bed covers for pickup trucks in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, in Centre County.

Mr. Speaker, this is just a handful of the manufacturers in my district who produce quality, American-made products. As co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, I am proud that the manufacturing industry employs thousands of career and technical education students in family-sustaining careers. These are great family-sustaining jobs.

As we celebrate National Manufacturing Day on Friday and draw attention to the roles manufacturers play in our communities, I commend all those who keep our economy booming through manufacturing.

STOPPING GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today heartbroken and bone weary from the gun violence that continues to wrack our country. This year there have been 273 mass shootings, shootings with four or more victims. Every day we read of another child tragically lost.

Our Nation awoke yesterday to the horrifying news of yet another mass shooting. Unfortunately, this body is set to consider rolling back some of the commonsense regulations we already have in place for gun safety.

It is inconceivable to me that this House is preparing to vote on legislation to weaken restrictions on the sale of silencers. Such sound suppressors make it more difficult for law enforcement officers to identify the point source of a weapon and to react to protect our public.

Why are we considering a bill that makes firearms more deadly and makes it more difficult for police to respond?

But that is not all. There is also a proposal to weaken State concealed carry laws with national reciprocity. This dangerous legislation would undermine local safety laws and deny States their right to establish their own concealed carry safety standards. Requiring States to accept the concealed standards of every State will effectively create a dangerous race to the bottom and leave the least restrictive State law as the effective national standard.

Mr. Speaker, we should be debating and voting on proposals that can reduce gun violence in our communities. We must not allow the difficulty of the path ahead prevent us from embracing solutions that move us in the right direction.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Ghost Guns Are Guns bill with my colleague, Congressman Espaillat of New York. This bill will address the glaring
loophole that allows gun buyers to by-pass a background check by purchasing their weapons as unassembled kits online. These kits can be delivered to anyone’s doorstep with all the parts needed to assemble a fully functioning, totally untraceable firearm.

The Ghost Guns Are Guns Act simply says that these weapons should be regulated like other firearms and require a background check like other firearms. More than 9 out of 10 Americans support background checks. This bill is a commonsense step forward, and I urge my colleagues to join me in seeking its passage.

We also face the problem of stolen guns. Last year alone, more than 18,000 guns were lost or stolen from Federal firearm dealers. Many of these stolen weapons were later used in violent crimes. That is why I introduced the SECURE Firearm Storage Act, to require all Federal firearm licensees to securely store their inventory when not open for business.

The Chicago Sun-Times said this bill was, “so obviously right, it’s hard to believe it is even necessary.” I agree, and I invite my colleagues to join me in passing this bill as well.

There are many commonsense ideas. I am open to any and all ideas to make progress in reducing gun violence in our communities and helping make our communities safe—from universal background checks to making gun trafficking a Federal crime, to limiting access to firearms magazines and military assault weapons.

Enough is enough. We cannot allow this epidemic to continue. Together, we have the opportunity to save lives. I urge my colleagues to join me, and let’s take this time to act.

21ST CENTURY AIRR ACT

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, Congress has just approved an FAA extension to fund the agency for 6 months, but our work is not done. We have a responsibility to pass a long-term FAA bill that ensures America remains a leader in aviation.

The status quo means American aviation manufacturing will lose out to competitors in Europe, China, Brazil, and Canada. We will lose jobs. It means the drone industry will continue to go overseas for testing and development. That is more lost jobs. The status quo means more delays and lost time for our passengers.

Let me read you a quote: “The FAA is the only agency of government worse at procurement than the Pentagon. Congress has tried to reform it; it didn’t stick. We have got to try something different to get it to be more agile to give us 21st century equipment and software that we need.”

Mr. Speaker, that is not my quote. I am quoting the ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. And that, based on what he has said and what we have seen over the last 20 years, that is why it is time to reform the FAA.

With my Republican and Democratic colleagues, I introduced H.R. 2997, the 21st Century AIRR Act. Like all major reforms, there have been false claims made against this bipartisan bill. The false issues I want to address are from general aviation.

My colleague, the gentleman including SAM GRAVES, worked with the general aviation community to include everything they have asked for in this bill. Not one of their legislative requests was excluded. In fact, Congressman GRAVES now supports the bill because of how far we went to address the needs of the GA community. We did so because general aviation is vital to our unique aviation system, and I would never sponsor legislation that harms my own congressional district. It is the GA pilots and the several hundred GA pilots who live within it.

Here is what the general aviation community asked for:

They did not want to pay user fees to use air traffic control services, and they won’t. All they have to do is look at page 83 in the bill. The only entity that will be able to change this is Congress, just like it is today.

They did not want any airspace restrictions. This bill prohibits airspace restrictions for the GA, and just look at page 114 to find that. In fact, GA doesn’t have that guarantee today. Our bill actually puts that guarantee in law for the first time.

They wanted to fully fund the Airport Improvement Program. I want to fully fund the Airport Improvement Program, in part, because it helps my rural community and the GA pilots and the several hundred GA pilots who live within it.

As horrible as it is, it is only an inflection point on the daily loss of life to gun violence.

Unfortunately, a few Washington special interests that represent business jets oppose this commonsense reform. Think about it this way: 850 million passengers will fly commercially every year, and that number will go to a billion over the next 10 years; this bill is real reform that will benefit them at no cost and harm to the business jet aviation; in fact, every person that flies commercially subsidizes business jets using the air traffic control system.

A small number of GA owners, the number is about 500,000, are opposing something that will benefit a billion passengers that will fly annually.

Another thing that was brought up is that we harm the defense of this country. That is absolutely not true. As a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, I would never do anything that would harm the defense of this country. And Secretary Mattis and Deputy Secretary of Defense Shanahan have been on the Hill, have written letters supporting our efforts to this fact.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this is not speculation. This reflects the very carefully drafted text of the bill that the House will vote on in the coming days. I encourage Members to read the bill and come to us with questions.

This bipartisan bill has broad and diverse support. For example, Heritage Action, the pilots and the air traffic controller union, and the flight attendants union all support this very bipartisan bill. More than 500,000 pilots support the bill.

...
backed by Americans across the spectrum of political ideology.

Now we have had our moment of silence, so it is back to business as usual: Members of Congress who call a mass shooting evil and turn around and take cash from the gun lobby.

The leadership of this House is so enamored with silence that one of the only policies that they will talk about is silencing guns. Why would you endanger police officers and families by remaining silent on solutions to reduce gun violence and promote a bill that deregulates silencers? There is only one explanation, and that is that the monstrous roar of the gun lobby is drowning out the voices of families, it is drowning out common sense, and it is drowning out common sense.

Many say there is nothing to be done. There is a falsehood that any commonsense solution will lead directly to Americans losing their guns and their Second Amendment rights. This is as pernicious as it is cowardly. This is the United States Congress. Americans think that we are strong enough to have this debate on reducing gun violence. Why don’t we?

Don’t shrug off the loss of life. Don’t be complicit in the daily carnage of gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for each of us to stand up, to do our jobs, to come together and debate solutions, and to bring them to a vote. American families are counting on us, and they are watching.

BE A VOICE FOR UNBORN AMERICANS

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

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

As a father of three, a grandfather of three, and as a man of faith, I firmly believe that silencing bans is at conception. As a surgeon and a scientist, I know that unborn children feel pain at 20 weeks, at the very latest at 20 weeks.

Scientific studies have found that a baby’s first sensory receptors for pain are developed in the first 7 weeks. By 20 weeks, an unborn baby is so developed that they can hear music and respond to pain.

The Psalm says: “Children are a gift from the Lord.” If we here today do not protect this gift, who will? If we do not shield unborn Americans from a death so painful and unimaginable, who will?

The responsibility fails to us. Let us embrace this solemn duty.

I spent my medical career doing everything I could to save the lives of the patients in my care. Now, as a legislator, I can help save people with my vote.

I invite the entire House to be a voice for unborn Americans and pass the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

MASS SHOOTINGS IN AMERICA

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I know you have heard the story. Sunday, in Las Vegas, 59 people at a concert were mowed down and more than 500 were wounded.

I know you have heard this story, too: last June, 49 cellphones on the floor of the Pulse Nightclub were ringing and ringing and were never answered.

What about this story: two years ago, eight students who just wanted to learn and their professor who was there to teach them were mowed down in their classrooms at Umpqua Community College.

And everyone knows that, nearly 5 years ago, the bodies of 20 elementary school children and 6 teachers lay in Sandy Hook Elementary School in what was then the unthinkable act of horror.

So here we are again with what was once unthinkable becoming mundane.

Mr. Speaker, how have we as a society become so debased, how have we strayed so far from what is right and what is just so that we blindly just sit at the massacre of innocents in schools and movie theaters and classrooms and concerts and nightclubs? And it goes on and on and on.

So I ask you today, how many lives must be destroyed before Congress acts? Nine lives in Charleston showed us nine was not enough. Thirteen lives at Columbine showed us that 13 was not enough. Certainly 20 small children killed in their classrooms at Newtown? Again, not enough. Forty-nine lives in Orlando? No. The more than 33,000 Americans killed each year by guns? No, that is not enough.

The fact that more Americans have died from guns in the United States since 1968 than on battlefields in all our wars since the American Revolution, is that not enough?

Now 59 people have been murdered in Las Vegas and hundreds more are left struggling with injuries, both physical and mental, but the worst part—and believe me, I have trouble picking out the worst part—daily mass shootings have somehow become just ordinary.

The leadership of this House is drowning out compassion, and it is silencing guns. Why would you enunciate a movement that is silencing guns? Why would you enunciate a movement that is silencing guns?

Do we really lack the courage of conviction? No. Other industrialized countries have seen no such blood-soaked streets.

By remaining silent, we are not just being cowardly, we are being complicit in these crimes.

Mr. Speaker, we must honor the dead by taking action. Now is the time for a vote, and we know what the vote is on. Our human instinct is to try to find patterns and make sense out of the most horrific and senseless acts.

Whether the shooters are terrorists or domestic abusers or the mentally ill, one pattern is the same: access to deadly weapons that can allow a lone gunman to lay waste to human life on a massive scale must stop.

This is why we must ban assault weapons that have, time and time again, caused mass bloodshed and the attachments that make them into automatic weapons that you can purchase for a mere $50.

Automatic weapons are banned in the United States, machine guns are banned in the United States, but if you can buy a $30 attachment and make it into a machine gun, how have we banned anything?

Let’s make sure every gun purchase requires background checks rather than just 60 percent of gun purchases.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to do more than be silent.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE UNIFIED TAX REFORM FRAMEWORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share some information about the Unified Tax Reform Framework that was released last week by Republicans in the House of Representatives.
I think it is important that, with all of the sad news coming out this week in the country, particularly in Puerto Rico and Las Vegas, we do share with the American people some information that will be so important to them long term and will help our economy get a good jump start.

Incidentally, last quarter, our economy grew at 3.1 percent, but very few people have heard about that, and it is important that we point that out.

Mr. Speaker, the material provided by the Ways and Means Committee is extraordinarily valuable, and I also would encourage people to go on the Ways and Means’ website and on my website and on individual websites of Members to gain more information about this framework.

First, it lowers the rates for individuals and families. The framework shrinks the current seven tax brackets into three: 12 percent, 25 percent, and 35 percent. And actually, Mr. Speaker, many Americans will pay no taxes as a result of the tax reform, because we are going to double the standard deduction and enhance the child tax credit.

The framework roughly doubles the standard deduction so that typical middle class families will keep more of their paycheck. It also significantly increases the child tax credit. It eliminates loopholes for the wealthy and protects bedrock provisions for the middle class. It repeals the death tax and alternative minimum tax.

Mr. Speaker, dying should not be a taxable event. It is important that we not tax people, particularly farmers and small businesses, at the death of a businessowner or farmer-owne

It creates a new lower tax rate structure for small businesses. It will help to encourage promote competitiveness by lowering the corporate tax rate. So that Americans can compete on a level playing field, the framework reduces the corporate tax rate to 20 percent, below the 22.5 percent average of the industrialized world.

It will boost the economy by allowing for expensing of capital investments. The framework allows, for at least 5 years, businesses to immediately write off or expense the cost of new investments, giving a much-needed lift to the economy.

It moves to an American model for competitiveness. The framework ends the perverse incentives to offshore jobs and keep foreign profits overseas. It levels the playing field for American companies and workers by allowing the profits achieved overseas to come back by imposing a one-time low tax rate on wealth that is already accumulated overseas so there is no tax incentive to keep the money offshore.

Mr. Speaker, we need to get our economy booming again to create jobs and to make our country much greater than it is today. I endorse this framework put out by the Ways and Means Committee and look forward to the work that is going to be done by the committee as it refines the framework and brings forth a bill for us to vote on.

WE CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Himes) for 5 minutes. Mr. Himes. Mr. Speaker, we all awoke yesterday to a grim but familiar ritual. As we looked at our phones, we saw that dozens of people had been slaughtered in Las Vegas by a madman with a gun.

For the victims, the survivors, and their families, this is a nightmare come true, and my heart goes out to them and to the first responders and to the many people who rushed to help in that hellish situation. But now what?

The question can’t be escaped, and it hits particularly hard those of us who live in the shadow of Sandy Hook, years ago, where 20 babies were killed, and we thought that that would be enough to cause this Congress to act—to act for sanity, to act for common sense, to act for life. But it wasn’t. And neither was Orlando, nor San Bernardino, and now neither, I fear, will be the horrendous massacre in Las Vegas.

Let’s be clear that no other tragedy—there are not terrorists flying into buildings, not hurricanes which render entire islands without power and without hope, cause us to say: This is not a time to address this problem.

We ask ourselves: What can we do better? What can we learn? How can we stop this? Except on this issue. Orlando—Congress does nothing; Sandy Hook, 20 dead children—Congress does nothing; now Las Vegas.

What is happening right now is that conversations are happening in offices to figure out what the decent interval of time is between the deaths in Las Vegas and when we can introduce a bill that will make it easier for people to buy silencers. Not even the near fatal attack on one of our own, my friend Stephen Scalise, was enough to cause us to seriously consider what we might do to staunch the flow of blood that characterizes this country, and this country alone.

Let’s be clear. Let’s be very clear about what those of us have to do and what we don’t want to do.

First of all, to all those who are listening to this and saying, “They just want to take away my guns,” no, we do not. I and those of us who stand for gun safety respect the Second Amendment. Many of us enjoy hunting. Many of us enjoy target practice. Many of us believe that perhaps you are safer if you can defend yourself. We have no interest in taking away anybody’s guns.

We are interested in at least two things that have the virtue of being supported by the vast majority of Americans: universal background checks, the simple idea that, if you are going to exercise your Second Amendment rights and buy a weapon, we should check to see if you are violent, if you are a terrorist, if you are likely to do harm with that deadly weapon. That is a simple idea that has about 90 percent support in this country, and I think most Americans would agree that there is some line—some line—between the weapons that we should have access to as a result of our Second Amendment rights and to what we need to do and those weapons that can wreak the kind of havoc that we saw in Las Vegas.

Last year, after the shooting at the Pulse nightclub, I decided in desperation that I would not participate in any more moments of silence in this Chamber, that prayers and sympathy are fine, but this room can fix this problem. But this room and the people in it refuse to do so, even though we call ourselves Representatives, and we will not bring forward ideas that our constituents would support.

So today, in our despair, we must remember that our great struggles—sufferage, civil rights, healthcare—took decades for us to achieve. We can break the cycle of violence, but we have to act. We have no other choice.

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 11 o’clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Pastor Kevin McKee, Chapel on the Campus, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, our God, creator of Heaven and Earth, sustainer of all things, give the women and men of this Chamber the character and courage to...
pursue what is right and what is good. May they be able to discern what is best not only for their constituents, but for all Americans. Understanding the human condition and the mercy of God, may they work together to advance true liberty.

Be present today, O God of wisdom, to direct the affairs and deliberations of this honorable assembly and their committees.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule 1, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KENNEDY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING PASTOR KEVIN MCKEE

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pastor Kevin McKee, who opened with the prayer this morning in this Chamber.

Kevin and his wife, Mary, have been amazing pillars in our community as we have been through extraordinary challenges associated with Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and Isaac; a thousand-year flood last year; the worst oil spill in the Nation’s history; the incredible shootings of five of our loved ones who are too young to speak for themselves but who are old enough to feel physical pain.

I appreciate the success of South Carolina Citizens for Life, who work to give a voice to those who do not have one. With the great leadership of Executive Director Holly Gatling of the Midlands, Leon Wizorek of Barnwell, and Sally Zaleski of Orangeburg, this organization has been working to save lives.

As a cosponsor of the legislation with colleagues TRENT FRANKS, VICKY HARTZLER, MIA LOVE, and KAREN HANDEL, I am grateful to stand for life, upholding the conservative values and protecting the lives of our unborn babies. Every life is precious and has great value.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Thank you, Dr. Tom Price and Betty Price, for your successful service to American families.

CHIP AND CHC PROGRAM

Ms. BONAMICI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge swift reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program and the Community Health Center Program. CHIP keeps kids covered before they are too young to speak for themselves. Every life is precious and has great value.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

Thank you, Dr. Tom Price and Betty Price, for your successful service to American families.

SUPPORT FOR PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, our prayers go to all victims of the Las Vegas massacre.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that I have been an advocate for pro-life values and protecting the rights of unborn babies. Today, the House will vote on the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. This will save the lives of babies who are too young to speak for themselves but who are old enough to feel physical pain.

I appreciate the success of South Carolina Citizens for Life, who work to give a voice to those who do not have one. With the great leadership of Executive Director Holly Gatling of the Midlands, Leon Wizorek of Barnwell, and Sally Zaleski of Orangeburg, this organization has been working to save lives.

As a co-sponsor of the legislation with colleagues TRENT FRANKS, VICKY HARTZLER, MIA LOVE, and KAREN HANDEL, I am grateful to stand for life, upholding the conservative values and protecting the lives of our unborn babies. Every life is precious and has great value.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

Thank you, Dr. Tom Price and Betty Price, for your successful service to American families.

CONGRATULATING LIGO ON RECEIVING NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, when folks think of innovation and new technology, Louisiana often comes to mind.

We have been able to pioneer cell phone technology and have been involved in genomics and DNA. We have incredible naval technologies, with offshore oil and gas at depths never before even contemplated. We have been able to power this Nation’s economy.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, with the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory receiving the Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of and measurement of gravitational waves, Louisiana is recognized once again.

I want to give a shout-out to LIGO and Livingston Parish for their amazing discovery in 2015 and for being recognized with the Nobel Prize in Physics.

CONGRESS MUST RESPOND APPROPRIATELY

Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, Las Vegas, Nevada, 3 days ago—59 people dead, 527 injured, one shooter. It was the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. modern history.

Pulse nightclub, Orlando, Florida, 2016—49 people dead, 58 injured, one shooter.

Sandy Hook Elementary School, Newtown, Connecticut, 2012—20 kids aged 6 and 7 and 6 adults, all dead, one shooter. The one shooter killed his mother and then killed himself.

I have heard it said that the best gun control is a steady hand. Perhaps, but a steady hand requires a healthy and sound mind. Assault weapons are designed to kill people, and to kill lots of people quickly. Their availability made massacres in Las Vegas, Newtown, and Orlando possible.

In the days ahead, we will learn much more about the shooter and his guns than about his victims—once again. My hope is that this Congress will use this information wisely and find the courage to respond appropriately. In this way, and only in this way, do we actually honor the victims.

RECOGNIZING OLD GREGG SCHOOL ON ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

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 congratula-tate Old Gregg School Community and Recreation Center on its 10th anniver-sary. I recently had the opportunity to visit the repurposed school in Spring Mills and partake in the anniversary celebration.

For more than 80 years, the Old Gregg School building in Spring Mills educated children and young adults throughout the eastern Penns Valley in the time-honored values and responsibililies of community and service. The traditions of the historic Gregg Township School have been celebrated and expanded in the Old Gregg School Community and Recreation Center, which is now a multipurpose, nonprofit facility benefiting the entire Penns Valley community.

Old Gregg School Community and Recreation Center is regarded as a treasure in the heart of Penns Valley. It supports small businesses with affordable office space, offers athletic facilities for recreation, open space for meetings and events both indoors and out, and has well-maintained grounds and outdoor play areas.

Mr. Speaker, Old Gregg is an example of how to repurpose a space to benefit the entire community. It truly is a gem of Penns Valley that all residents treasure.

ENDING GUN VIOLENCE

(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, on Sunday night, in mere minutes, one man took at least 59 lives, forever altered hundreds more, and left invisible, incurable wounds.

On Monday morning, our Nation welcomed all of them into America’s fast-est growing community: families left with a gaping hole in their hearts caused by a bullet; a community that does not have the luxury of moving on from gun violence after TV cameras leave, after the front pages fill with news stories; a community that includes families Black and White, rich and poor, big and small, Democrat and Republican.

Ending gun violence isn’t political. It is personal. So we are now powerless. We are not helpless. We are not hos-tages to some political organization. We are not bystanders, as bullets tear through our concerts, prayer circles, elementary school classrooms, night-club, military compounds, and quiet neighborhoods.

This is up to us, every single Amer-i-can. This is our country, our home, and our families. We can decide that one person’s right to bear arms does not come at the expense of a neighbor’s right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We must say, “No more.”

PROTECTING LIFE

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

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, the Founding Fathers enshrined the guarantee of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happy-ness. They regarded life as a core promise and one that was to be protected.

The Federal Government is responsible for protecting those rights, and currently we are failing at that responsi-bility.

As I speak in this body, America is one of only 13 countries in the world that have legalized late-term elective abortion after 20 weeks. More specifically, it is estimated that approximately 13,000 late-term abortions are carried out in our country each year on healthy babies.

This is simply immoral and, as lawmakers, we have the ability to take commonsense measures to protect the unborn. The bill that we are voting on today, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, is one of those measures.

Mr. Speaker, every human being was given inalienable rights, chief among them being life itself. Governments are supposed to protect those rights. As a lawmaker, I plan to do so by supporting the bill before us today. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

RAW DEAL FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have once again presented a budget that is reckless, regressive, and reprehensible. It is a budget that would hurt working families, the middle class, seniors, the sick, veterans, and rural America. It is even a budget that would cut Head Start, Meals on Wheels, and Special Olympics.

It is a raw deal for the American people. That is why Democrats are focused on better jobs, better wages, and a better future. Democrats are focused on higher pay for the American people, lower costs for the American people, and providing the American people with the tools to succeed in the 21st century economy.

Democrats are focused on providing the American people with a better deal.

IN SUPPORT OF THE 21ST CENTURY AIRR ACT

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the 21st Century AIRR Act gives a voice to rural America on aviation issues.

For too long, our aviation assets have been managed with little to no input from the citizens in the real world who are most impacted. The 21st Century AIRR Act benefits rural and small communities through local empowerment.

This bill enhances the Airport Improvement Program and ensures grant availability for airports in the years ahead. These grants support infrastructure construction and rehabili-tation critical to local and regional economic development.

The bill also promotes air traffic control tower technology. This promising concept has vast potential to allow rural airports to maintain tower service at a far lower cost and to actually bring service to airports that have previously been unable to support it.

The 21st Century AIRR Act is visionary, innovative legislation that will make the long-needed improvements to more efficiently serve American flyers and keep rural America connected to our aviation system.

URGING SUPPORT OF MICAH’S LAW

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, at 20 weeks into a pregnancy, babies can hear music, respond to human voices, and most importantly, they can feel pain. These are our children at their most vulnerable, yet current law con-tinues to allow for abortions to take place even after this point in a preg-nancy.

That is why I have been a strong sup-porter of Micah’s Law, which is legisla-tion that would prohibit abortion after 20 weeks.
This bill is not a partisan issue but, instead, a moral issue. By passing this law, every year we would be saving over 12,000 babies who can feel pain and hear our voices. It should be noted that this proposal has seen bipartisan support across the country. In fact, 60 percent of those supporting prohibiting abortions after 20 weeks, including 63 percent of those who consider themselves pro-choice.

This legislation is about nothing less than protecting those who cannot protect themselves. We remain one of only seven countries in the entire world that continues to allow abortions after 20 weeks. We must act to change this. I urge my colleagues to join me today in supporting the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, or McSally's Law.

A CALL TO RENEW YOUR STATUS UNDER DACA

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

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this Thursday, October 5, is an important deadline: 154,000 young men and women have until this Thursday to renew their status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA. Those 154,000 DACA recipients, whose authorization expires before March 6, 2018, must renew their application.

If you are one of them, please send in your application today. Under the new DACA rules, you are entitled to receive two more years of deferment, but only if the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services receives your application by October 5. If you have not already sent in your application, send it in the fastest way possible. A regular first class stamp will likely not arrive in time.

My district is home to many DACA beneficiaries known as DREAMers. Do not wait. To all the other DREAMers, I say: Don’t lose hope. You have the support of the vast majority of the American people, and we are fighting every day to get the Dream Act to the House floor.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, the first week of October marks the celebration of an organization very near and dear to my parents' hearts, as well as many friends. It is National 4-H Week. It is a time to reflect on the importance of youth development and mentoring within our communities. 4-H was founded to be focused on youth within rural and agricultural areas. It teaches skills and the importance of community service.

Today, 4-H has evolved into a global network covering over 50 countries. As the nation’s largest youth leadership organization, 4-H exemplifies the kind of learning, engagement, and leadership that is needed in our country. Their many programs focus on health, science, agriculture, and citizenship in a positive mentoring environment. The experience provides young people leadership lessons, as well as the value of practical skills and hands-on learning.

HONORING ELAINE NEKRITZ

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant, terrific mentor, and good friend, Elaine Nekritz, who retired this week as State representative for Illinois’ 57th District.

For more than 14 years, Elaine has ably represented the communities of Buffalo Grove, Arlington Heights, Northbrook, Wheeling, Palatine, Mount Prospect, and Prospect Heights in the Illinois House of Representatives.

During this time, she has been an outspoken advocate for her constituents, a passionate defender of the environment, and a champion for women’s rights.

Future generations in Illinois will benefit from Elaine’s work to invest in infrastructure, including a high-speed rail link between Chicago and St. Louis.

Her smart backing of criminal justice reform ensures more young offenders have an opportunity to reform their lives through juvenile court.

The residents of the 57th District will miss her energy, dedication, and tireless communication with her constituents.

I am personally grateful for Elaine’s service and wish her the best and her husband, Barry, the very best in whatever comes next.

HONORING PASTOR LORAN LIVINGSTON

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

Mr. PITTMenger. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Pastor Lorand Livingston and his wife, Sandra, in recognition of their 40 years of ministry at Central Church of God in Charlotte, North Carolina.

God has used the Livingslions to grow and lead a church that truly impacts the Charlotte community and the world. Each week, over 6,000 people gather together for a wonderful praise and worship experience, along with a dynamic biblical message from Pastor Livingston.

Under their leadership, the congregation actively serves those in poverty, provides help for women facing an unplanned pregnancy all the way through life, and programs to assist seniors. Central Church also hosts an annual 5K race to raise awareness in the fight against human trafficking.

If you want to address race relations in Charlotte, a good place to start is Central Church, where generations actively worship together every Sunday hearing the love of Jesus.

Thank God for Pastor and Mrs. Livingston and their dedication to Christ, Central Church, the Charlotte community, and their various missions around the world.

SENDING CONDOLENCES TO NEVADAN FAMILIES AND VICTIMS OF LAS VEGAS SHOOTING

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, then why is it so hard for us to talk about this? Why can’t we come together in a bipartisan, bicameral way? Where is the concern? We have had too many moments of silence in this Chamber for mass shootings.

Why are we not moved when people are dying in our districts daily? The American people send condolences and they deserve action.

PROTECTING THE GOD-GIVEN SOULS OF THE UNBORN

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a more important issue to get right than protecting the God-given souls of the unborn and their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I will never forget listening to the heartbeat of my first child, Nathan, I cried all the way to the car, praising God for this miracle, and the words of the Psalmist came to me. ‘You formed my inward parts; you wove me together in my mother’s womb.’

Currently, the United States is one of only seven developed countries that allow elective abortions after 20 weeks. That puts us on the same moral equivalence, in this regard, to China and North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 36. I stand with the vulnerable and the
HONORING PALM SPRINGS POLICE OFFICERS JOSE VEGA AND LESLEY ZEREBNY

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of H. Con. Res. 71. It has been said frequently that our Federal Tax Code today is more than 60 times longer than the Bible, and it contains none of the good news.

It has been more than 30 years since we updated our tax system, and many Americans are struggling to make ends meet, to find decent paying jobs and prepare for retirement. No matter where I travel in my district, Mr. Speaker, I hear stories about how our excessive Tax Code and burdensome regulations continue to hinder our businesses and stunt our economic growth.

Congress must act now and deliver a Tax Code that meets the current demands of the 21st century economy. Fortunately, my Republican colleagues and I have put forth a framework to do exactly that. Our plan will create more jobs, fairer taxes, and bigger paychecks for working class Americans and small businesses.

When the people are allowed to keep more of their hard-earned dollars instead of turning them over to an already bloated Federal Government, we will unleash the free market again. It will be past time we get our economy back on track, and passing meaningful tax reform is a crucial first step in completing that mission.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RICHARD THELEN

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

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an incredible constituent in my district, Richard Thelen. Seventy-two years ago, Mr. Thelen was aboard the USS Indianapolis with nearly 1,200 others when it was hit by two Japanese torpedoes and sank within a matter of minutes. He and 316 men of the crew survived 5 days in the ocean surrounded by sharks without any food or drinking water. They defied truly remarkable odds.

After this ordeal, Mr. Thelen went on to finish high school and was honorably discharged from the Navy. He was a truck driver for more than 40 years and raised six children. Today, he is 89 years young, and it is a privilege to have him as a part of the Eighth District community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform this body that I am prepared to introduce legislation to honor Mr. Thelen of Lansing, Michigan, and the rest of his shipmates, with the Congressional Gold Medal award.

As we remember the survivors of this terrible tragedy, those we lost, and the recent finding of the ship itself, we thank you, Mr. Thelen, for your valiant service to our country.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to act quickly to reauthorize the Community Health Center Fund, which expired last week on September 30.

Community health centers provide cost-effective and accessible primary care, mental health counseling, and substance abuse treatment for over 27 million patients nationally, including over 200,000 of my constituents in Kentucky’s Sixth District.

The upfront Federal investment in community health centers leads to savings down the road by fighting the cycle of opioid addiction, preventing more complex health conditions, and diverting patients away from higher cost centers of care, such as the emergency room.

I have visited community health centers in my district, including White House Clinics, Sterling Health Solutions, Family Care of Bluegrass, and Health First Bluegrass, and I have witnessed firsthand what a difference these organizations make in providing much needed care to at-risk Kentuckians.

Without the support of the Community Health Center Fund, these CHCs may soon be forced to cut back services, lay off staff, or even shut down clinics.

Mr. Speaker, admittedly, there is a robust debate in this country and a wide diversity of opinion about how healthcare reform, the ACA, and what repeal and replacing the ACA should look like, but we should all agree that community health centers are part of the solution.

PROTECTING THE UNBORN

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support to the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. This legislation is crucial toward protecting the most vulnerable among us: the unborn.

As a doctor, it is my job to stay current with the latest medical research, and I have done so in my job in Congress, too. The research overwhelmingly shows that children 20 weeks or less are capable of feelings pain. This is brought forth by the fact that when an in-utero procedure is done, both the mother and the unborn child are given anesthesia. Not to do so allows that child to recoil in pain and show a stress response in the uterus.

I have heard, personally, as a physician, heartbeats in babies as early as 6 weeks of age in utero. To reject this legislation is critical, it is needed, it is past due, and I urge my colleagues to support this.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 36, PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 548 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution, it shall be in order for the House to consider the following:

H. Res. 548

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to act quickly to reauthorize the Community Health Center Fund, which expired last week on September 30.

Community health centers provide cost-effective and accessible primary care, mental health counseling, and substance abuse treatment for over 27 million patients nationally, including over 200,000 of my constituents in Kentucky’s Sixth District.

The upfront Federal investment in community health centers leads to savings down the road by fighting the cycle of opioid addiction, preventing more complex health conditions, and diverting patients away from higher cost centers of care, such as the emergency room.

I have visited community health centers in my district, including White House Clinics, Sterling Health Solutions, Family Care of Bluegrass, and Health First Bluegrass, and I have witnessed firsthand what a difference these organizations make in providing much needed care to at-risk Kentuckians.

Without the support of the Community Health Center Fund, these CHCs may soon be forced to cut back services, lay off staff, or even shut down clinics.

Mr. Speaker, admittedly, there is a robust debate in this country and a wide diversity of opinion about health care reform, the ACA, and what repeal and replacing the ACA should look like, but we should all agree that community health centers are part of the solution.

PROTECTING THE UNBORN

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support to the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. This legislation is crucial toward protecting the most vulnerable among us: the unborn.

As a doctor, it is my job to stay current with the latest medical research, and I have done so in my job in Congress, too. The research overwhelmingly shows that children 20 weeks or less are capable of showing pain. This is brought forth by the fact that when an in-utero procedure is done, both the mother and the unborn child are given anesthesia. Not to do so allows that child to recoil in pain and show a stress response in the uterus.

I have heard, personally, as a physician, heartbeats in babies as early as 6 weeks of age in utero. To reject this legislation is critical, it is needed, it is past due, and I urge my colleagues to support this.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. Cheney), followed by me, for the purpose of conclusion.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 548, which provides a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

This bill protects and extends compassion to the most vulnerable among us, the unborn, by prohibiting abortions, with limited exceptions, after the point at which scientific evidence shows that an unborn child can feel pain.

Mr. Speaker, this really should be called Micah’s bill in honor of a little boy named Micah Pickering, who was here on the Hill last week with his mom. He was born at 20 weeks old. And we saw, and felt, and heard from the heart of Micah, that with the right medical care, babies born at 20 weeks can survive and grow into healthy adults.

Micah’s mother spoke last week about her experiences: “When Micah was born, his eyes were still fused shut. His bones were not hardened yet. He was born, his eyes were still fused shut. He couldn’t breathe on his own. He was born at 20 weeks old. And funding, as I said, for both food stamps and the school lunch program before it expired.

This bill is dangerous, and it is unconstitutional. The Supreme Court established in Roe v. Wade, and reaffirmed in Planned Parenthood v. Casey, that women have the constitutional right to choose abortion care. This is the Constitution of the United States that we all justly revere.

Meanwhile, every Federal court that has reached a decision on bans like this has blocked it every time. This includes rulings striking down bans in States like Arizona, Idaho, Arkansas, North Dakota.

Mr. Speaker, this bill before us is nothing more than the latest attempt by the majority to pass off political posturing as proven science.

Now, after birth, strangely, this body exhibits scarce attention to the well-being of the child, and that is proven by the fact that you cut back on food stamps; Women, Infants, and Children care; daycare; Head Start; one after the other, the same group that couldn’t find it in their hearts last Friday to extend the Children’s Health Insurance Program before it expired, along with the majority to pass off political posturing as proven science.

Today, Mr. Speaker, Micah is a healthy 5-year-old boy.

Babies like Micah at 20 weeks have well developed brains and central nervous systems, developed enough so that medical evidence has increasingly confirmed these babies feel pain, and not only pain, but intense and possibly excruciating pain.

Research also indicates that, after 20 weeks, an unborn baby’s responses to painful stimuli are similar to adult responses to the extent that when surgeons, Mr. Speaker, are performing intrauterine surgery, corrective procedures on these unborn children, surgeons have seen babies flinch, jerk, and recoil from those sharp objects and incisions. In response to this, Mr. Speaker, surgeons routinely now administer anesthesia to unborn children in the womb before performing surgery. This anesthesia has been associated with a significant increase in babies’ stress hormone levels during medical procedures.

Mr. Speaker, late-term abortions, usually performed by inducing labor after the fetus has been injected with a lethal pharmacological agent or by the horrific practice of dismemberment, causing babies intense pain, should be illegal, and that is what this bill ensures.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this bill also takes steps to protect women, providing exceptions for those cases of rape, and incest, and the life of the mother.

H.R. 36 also provides women with a cause of action, allowing them to sue abortionists who don’t provide protection for aborted babies who are born alive.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act protects the sanctity of life by ensuring protection from pain for the most vulnerable among us, Mr. Speaker, this is a moral obligation of this House and of our government. Therefore, I urge support for the rule to allow for consideration of H.R. 36.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me my time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending outside, is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 548, which provides a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks?

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 44 years ago, the Supreme Court affirmed in Planned Parenthood v. Casey, that women have the unequivocal right to choose abortion care. This is the Constitution of the United States that we all justly revere.

Meanwhile, every Federal court that has reached a decision on bans like this has blocked it every time. This includes rulings striking down bans in States like Arizona, Idaho, Arkansas, North Dakota.

Mr. Speaker, this bill before us is nothing more than the latest attempt by the majority to pass off political posturing as proven science.

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Now, after birth, strangely, this body exhibits scarce attention to the well-being of the child, and that is proven by the fact that you cut back on food stamps; Women, Infants, and Children care; daycare; Head Start; one after the other, the same group that couldn’t find it in their hearts last Friday to extend the Children’s Health Insurance Program before it expired, along with the majority to pass off political posturing as proven science.

The majority did absolutely nothing after 23 children, 6-year-olds and 7-year-olds, were shot and killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, 5 years ago. And funding, as I said, for both food stamps and the school lunch program is routinely cut. To think there is anything else to call but pure hypocrisy: We love it until it is born, and then it is somebody else’s problem.
A 3-year-old girl in my district was recently killed by the adults she believed were supposed to take care of her. They abused her so violently that she was bruised from head to toe and was internally hurt. There were adults around, but not a single one helped her.

The Child Protective Services of Monroe County got two reports about abuse and neglect, but the agency was too overworked and stretched too thin to act in time, which is another hypocrisy: We are not going to fund those programs enough so that little children would live. Three years old, and nobody lifted a finger to help this child. They did nothing to save her life.

This is just some of the reality that children face today. All too often, this Congress does absolutely nothing to address it. To truly care about children is to care for them long after they are born.

Now, we have taken up this bill before, and it was a one-house bill, never able to pass the Senate, and I sincerely hope this bill sees that same fate.

When the American people went to the ballot box, they were electing politicians, not somebody to meddle with is the fact of a woman's right to choose, which is protected by the Constitution of the United States. Enough already.

Mr. Speaker, the majority acts like a group of elected physicians. It has some. They are quiet. It is shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today not as an elected doctor, not as any elected thing except as a Member of Congress. But also I rise today as a father of a child who we were told before she was born that it would probably be best to kill her; that she had a disability, and it was probably best that there would be better choices for us to make in life than to not have her.

I rise today for Micah's bill simply for those that the statement has been made that once children are here, there are problems that are political choices and life circumstances. Those are things that we have to deal with and that we should actually look at, but those are only available for those who are lucky enough to have a birthday. This bill is really about a birthday. It is about giving the unborn a chance at life.

It is interesting to me today, Mr. Speaker, that many medical professionals will tell you that this bill also will choose to anesthetize those same babies in the womb because of their reaction to the procedure. They don’t want to talk about that. They want to talk about something else.

But I simply come back to saying that this bill is about life. And maybe, it is said, that this is something we are talking about, a procedure, but it is talking about life, and it is talking about birthdays. It is talking about that life in that womb matters, and the potential from life until death is something that I believe God has given.

When we vote today, let’s take it out of the realm of choosing a choice. We are standing here today and I am standing here today to take up for the rights of that baby in the womb and making sure that birthdays come, that life happens. When you look at someone like Micah and you understand that many people would have wrote them off as unviable, God had a different choice, and that is, today, that young boy that was on Capitol Hill last year.

But it doesn’t take Micah for me. It just takes Jordan for me, my 25-year-old who just texted me just a few minutes ago to say: Daddy, I love you. Over 25 years ago someone told me and my wife that she was not worth having.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to stand for those still in the womb waiting for life.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey. This is her story.

With the help of a fertility specialist, Kerri and her husband were thrilled to be expecting their first baby in January of 2016. All of Kerri’s tests and scans were showing great until the 20-week ultrasound.

Kerri recounts: Our ultrasound tech spent a lot of time looking at her heart, and, finally, the doctor from maternal fetal medicine came in.

As she scanned, she told Kerri and her husband that there were some severe brain and heart abnormalities. The doctor also told them the chest cavity was small and that the lungs were not developing properly. A few days later, a geneticist told Kerri and her husband that the baby had three copies of every chromosome, a very rare condition. The doctor informed them that infants born with this condition very rarely survive more than a few days after birth.

According to Kerri: We both calmly made the decision to have an abortion. We did not want our little girl to suffer. We would much rather take on that suffering then her.

On behalf of Kerri, New Jerseyans, and women everywhere, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this rule and vote “no” on H.R. 36.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud today to stand and support this rule that will allow for the passage of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which is also known as Micah’s Law. The underlying legislation will protect thousands of unborn babies from the excruciating pain of abortion.

Twenty weeks post-fertilization is an incredible milestone in pregnancy for moms and their unborn babies. Children at this stage in development have fingers and toes, and they have well-developed neurological structures that can feel pain. In fact, babies at this age are hypersensitive, feeling pain more acutely than you and me.

Premies, children born at the beginning of the sixth month, just like Micah, can survive outside the womb. These babies are the future doctors, nurses, scientists, teachers, law enforcement officers in our country.

H.R. 36 protects this next generation of potential children. Let’s support this rule.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Ms. CAROLYN B. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak for April and against this unconstitutional underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, her story is about one of the most complex, painful decisions a woman can face, but it would have been even more painful if this bill that we are debating, which is opposed by the American Medical Association, was the law at the time.

Kerri recounts: Our ultrasound tech spent a lot of time looking at her heart, and, finally, the doctor from maternal fetal medicine came in.

As she scanned, she told Kerri and her husband that there were some severe brain and heart abnormalities. The doctor also told them the chest cavity was small and that the lungs were not developing properly. A few days later, a geneticist told Kerri and her husband that the baby had three copies of every chromosome, a very rare condition. The doctor informed them that infants born with this condition very rarely survive more than a few days after birth.

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On behalf of Kerri, New Jerseyans, and women everywhere, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this rule and vote “no” on H.R. 36.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL).

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. WATSON COLEMAN) for yielding to me.

I rise today as a father of a child who we were told before she was born that it would probably be best to kill her; that she had a disability, and it was probably best that there would be better choices for us to make in life than to not have her.

I rise today for Micah’s bill simply for those that have been made that once children are here, there are problems that are political choices and life circumstances. Those are things that we have to deal with and that we should actually look at, but those are only available for those who are lucky enough to have a birthday. This bill is really about a birthday. It is about giving the unborn a chance at life.

It is interesting to me today, Mr. Speaker, that many medical professionals will tell you that this bill also will choose to anesthetize those same babies in the womb because of their reaction to the procedure. They don’t want to talk about that. They want to talk about something else.

But I simply come back to saying that this bill is about life. And maybe, it is said, that this is something we are talking about, a procedure, but it is talking about birthdays. It is talking about that life in that womb matters, and the potential from life until death is something that I believe God has given.

When we vote today, let’s take it out of the realm of choosing a choice. We are standing here today and I am standing here today to take up for the rights of that baby in the womb and making sure that birthdays come, that life happens. When you look at someone like Micah and you understand that many people would have wrote them off as unviable, God had a different choice, and that is, today, that young boy that was on Capitol Hill last year.

But it doesn’t take Micah for me. It just takes Jordan for me, my 25-year-old who just texted me just a few minutes ago to say: Daddy, I love you. Over 25 years ago someone told me and my wife that she was not worth having.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to stand for those still in the womb waiting for life.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey. This is her story.

With the help of a fertility specialist, Kerri and her husband were thrilled to be expecting their first baby in January of 2016. All of Kerri’s tests and scans were looking great until the 20-week ultrasound.

Kerri recounts: Our ultrasound tech spent a lot of time looking at her heart, and, finally, the doctor from maternal fetal medicine came in.

As she scanned, she told Kerri and her husband that there were some severe brain and heart abnormalities. The doctor also told them the chest cavity was small and that the lungs were not developing properly. A few days later, a geneticist told Kerri and her husband that the baby had three copies of every chromosome, a very rare condition. The doctor informed them that infants born with this condition very rarely survive more than a few days after birth.

According to Kerri: We both calmly made the decision to have an abortion. We did not want our little girl to suffer. We would much rather take on that suffering then her.

On behalf of Kerri, New Jerseyans, and women everywhere, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this rule and vote “no” on H.R. 36.
Mr. Speaker, Allie has one thing to say to lawmakers here today: We made the choices that are best for our family, and I trust all women to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no."
Dr. Jennifer’s patients come from my home State of California. They were a married couple on their second pregnancy. They were so excited to grow their family. But they discovered, at 22 weeks, that the fetus was severely growth-restricted, had no fluid around it, had anomalies, and would not survive the pregnancy. Although this was a wanted pregnancy, they chose to terminate the pregnancy at 23 weeks rather than prolong the suffering of the mother and her fetus. Dr. Jennifer wants lawmakers to know that abortion restrictions would have forced her patient to carry this pregnancy until the fetus died in the womb, despite the medical advice that their baby would not survive to term. H.R. 36 and policies like it deny families their constitutional right to a choice about how they want to move forward with medical decisions that impact their bodies and their families. On behalf of Dr. Jennifer and her patient, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop these bans.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule and the underlying legislation. The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, or Mciah’s Law, is of utmost importance. Not only does the bill affirm the common humanity and inherent rights that we share with the most vulnerable members of our society, it offers our Nation an opportunity to prevent excruciating pain for those same members, and it will stop a form of violence that has gone on for too long. This bill is a step forward in reversing a culture of violence and restoring a culture of life.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that passage of this legislation will save 2,750 children per year. That is 2,750 girls and boys who will have a chance to contribute to our society. If you want to facilitate a culture of life, vote for this bill. If you want to begin to prevent violence in our country, vote for this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise for the story of Jessica, a mother of one, soon-to-be mother of two. However, at 21 weeks, an MRI detected a fatal anomaly regarding her unborn son’s brain. A critical part of the brain of the fetus had simply not developed. She decided to end the pregnancy at almost 22 weeks. But today I rise for Christy Zink, a District of Columbia resident who was a mother of one, soon-to-be mother of two. However, at 21 weeks, an MRI detected a fatal anomaly regarding her unborn son’s brain. A critical part of the brain of the fetus had simply not developed. She decided to end the pregnancy at almost 22 weeks. On behalf of Christy Zink, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans and stop the pain.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule and the underlying legislation. We come here today, of course, as Members of Congress, but as we look at what happened in our country the last several weeks, one of the things that has been lauded very much is first responders. That are rushing to the scene to help people who have been affected, who are going through pain and suffering.

I would like you to consider today’s legislation and the rule, as we are first responders. We stand for life. We stand for the ability, as a people, and there is no other nation in the world like the American people who respond when they are suffering when they are in pain, when their lives are in danger. And yet we turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to what we are doing to these children. These are little boys and little girls waiting to be born.

If we do not stand and for them, who will stand for them?

If we are not the first responders, who will be the first responders?

If it is not us in the people’s House who go beyond the hypocrisy of a political statement and are rushing to the scene to help people who have been affected, who are going through pain and suffering.

Let’s talk about Leslie and her husband, who found out that they were pregnant and were thrilled. Unfortunately, the pregnancy did not go well. Tests revealed that Leslie’s fetus’s brain was never able to separate hemispheres, giving her child no chance for survival. Let’s talk about pain.

By the time the test exposed this tragic news, Leslie was over 20 weeks pregnant, but she lived in a State with abortion restrictions. However, she lives in Wisconsin, where abortions after 20 weeks are illegal. Had she lived there during this time, she would have been forced to deliver a baby and be pregnant for 20 more weeks, compounding the emotional horror of the experience. Let’s talk about pain.

In Leslie’s own words: “I still mourn my daughter every day, but I cannot begin to understand how a position that would rather see me dead and neither of my sons ever born just to prolong a tragically doomed pregnancy can be called ‘pro-life.’”

On behalf of Leslie, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans and stop the pain.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans and stop the pain.

So I would encourage my colleagues, talk to Dr. Roe, talk to some of the OB/GYNs who serve in this Chamber, because they fully understand, as we understand, that the gift of life is not something that comes through the law. This is a natural gift, this is a gift of God. And that child who is receiving that life, who is held in the womb, if they are poked or prodded or there is an uncomfortable situation, they experience pain. That is why this legislation is referred to as the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

I encourage support of this legislation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I remind the House that the House keeps the District of Columbia from spending its own funds for low-income women who want to end a pregnancy at even 1 week.

But today I rise for Christy Zink, a District of Columbia resident who was a mother of one, soon-to-be mother of two. However, at 21 weeks, an MRI detected a fatal anomaly regarding her unborn son’s brain. A critical part of the brain of the fetus had simply not developed. She decided to end the pregnancy at almost 22 weeks. On behalf of Christy Zink, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans.
past 20 weeks. These countries include China and North Korea.

Our Nation suffers an egregious offense to be listed with North Korea and China, two oppressive regimes that show no respect for human life or human rights in allowing the killing of these precious babies as they endure these cruel abortions.

This bill is important, as we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. As an engaged and active member of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, I fully support this bill, as I stand for life.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise for Rose from Michigan.

In Rose’s first pregnancy, which was planned and very wanted, severe brain abnormalities were detected in the 22nd week. She made the decision, she said “I will take that risk,” because the doctor said there was a 70 percent chance that the child would be able to function. But at 28 weeks, the doctor made an analysis that said a severe brain condition with a life expectancy under 4 years, with severe seizures and limited development.

We are talking about suffering now. The baby would have problems swallowing, breathing, even smiling. The baby would never be able to communicate or control her body. And today we are talking about suffering.

Rose made the choice between a short, painful life and peace. She chose the latter.

Rose says: “I believe we made the most compassionate and loving choice we could for our baby, but the grief was initially overwhelming.”

On behalf of Rose, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans.

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

It is important to acknowledge the pain of the cases that those on the other side of the aisle are mentioning. But I would note, Mr. Speaker, that there has been no mention, no discussion on the other side of the aisle about the pain that these babies feel, and that when you are in a situation like the ones that have been described, what is happening is those babies are being subjected to really, oftentimes, a horrific procedure. The question is, because a baby is found to have some chromosomal anomaly, to have some very severe handicap, whether or not they deserve to be subjected to the pain we now know they feel.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle not to ignore the challenges and the issues involved here with respect to the pain that these babies feel. I would also note, Mr. Speaker, that the CBO, in a very unusual step, has stated that this bill would save 2,750 lives annually. That is something that the CBO doesn’t often do, but it is very important for us to recognize.

I don’t think we can have a discussion about this bill, about these issues, without discussing the pain that these babies feel, and I would urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to focus on that as well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 20 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what my colleague is saying, but there is no scientific evidence or proof that an unborn fetus feels the pain. That is one of the reasons we are not discussing it over here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELAZQUEZ).

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding. For over 40 years, the landmark Supreme Court decision, Roe v. Wade, has stood as a bulwark for women’s reproductive rights and healthcare rights.

Now, in 2017, House Republicans are leading yet another unconstitutional, dangerous, and outright assault on women’s health and privacy. This extreme bill not only takes aim at Roe v. Wade by lowering the ban on abortion to 20 weeks, it goes even further by promising to throw doctors in jail. This is a cynical, repugnant effort by Republicans to pander to a far-right base while jeopardizing women’s health—all for a political payoff.

At the same time this House is considering a measure restricting a woman’s right to choose, we have not found time to assist 3.5 million American citizens who are suffering and dying in Puerto Rico. You call that pro-life? I urge Republicans: listen to the majority of Americans who support a woman’s right to privacy and a safe abortion. Reject this shameful bill.

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

Let me just note, Mr. Speaker, that the scientific evidence is extensive in terms of the pain that these unborn babies feel. In particular, the standard of care, Mr. Speaker, for babies who are born prematurely, as well as for babies who are patients in vitro, is to provide anesthesia. And that standard of care is based upon evidence that these babies have pain receptors, that these babies react to pain, that and that they feel pain.

Mr. Speaker, I think the notion that there is no scientific evidence for this is flat wrong. I don’t think we can ignore the example of babies like Micah, babies who are born, babies who grow up to lead very full and healthy lives and who deserve a chance.

Mr. Speaker, I think that as individuals and as Representatives, elected Representatives, it is our obligation, in fact, to do everything we can to protect these babies, and that is what this bill is about.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ), a doctor.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, like every physician, I took an oath to do no harm and make every decision in the best interest of my patients in the emergency department. That oath drives every choice a doctor makes, whether it is prescribing medications, treating chronic illnesses, and even choosing how best to triage and treat a trauma patient. H.R. 36 would stand in the way of a doctor’s ability to best care for their patients.

This bill would force doctors to ignore the symptoms that they have learned through years of training and practice that show a patient’s condition could become a more serious medical condition.

Can you imagine going into your doctor’s office as a pregnant woman and being told your twins would not live and that giving birth could rupture your uterus, causing severe bleeding? That is what happened to Phil and his wife from Missouri. They learned at week 21 that she was at risk of a ruptured uterus and that the twins would die because of twin-twin transfusion syndrome.

Phil said: “Decisions about abortion need to be made with families and the best medical information available.” I couldn’t agree more. A physician’s sole focus should be the health of their patient, not the consequences of an arbitrary law that has no basis in medical evidence, and no basis that this bill is even necessary or that it will improve health outcomes.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from California.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, that is why, as a physician and a father, I oppose this legislation. We need less bureaucratic obstacles that get in the way of a doctor caring for their patients. We don’t want to interfere with a provider’s ability to deliver the best care for their patients.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3440, the Dream Act, which deals with children as well. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would help thousands of young people, children, who are Americans in every way except on paper.
Mr. Speaker. I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the unanimous consent request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO), to discuss our proposal.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker. President Barack Obama, under his executive powers, established the DACA program which temporarily protected immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children from potential deportation.

Our Nation made a promise to DREAMers that by coming out of the shadows, following the rules and laws of our great land, they would not be deported to a foreign country that they never knew or barely remembered.

DREAMers are residents of the United States under no volition of their own as young children, making this country the only home most have ever known.

DREAMers have jobs, pay taxes, and contribute to the prosperity of our Nation’s economy. In its implementation, the DACA program has added over 50,000 jobs to our economy. Ninety-three percent of DREAMers are currently employed.

Over the next decade, DACA beneficiaries are projected to contribute $460 billion to our Nation’s GDP; $24.6 billion in Medicare and Social Security; and an estimated $2.5 billion annually for State and Federal contributions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York. However, on September 5, President Trump announced he would end DACA and look to Congress to develop a legislative solution for DACA recipients.

Well, Congress has a solution. It is H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, gives us a chance to choose compassion by preventing abortions from taking place if the child is 20 weeks or older. Science proves that not only can these children feel pain, but since their pain inhibitors are undeveloped, they feel pain even more intensely than we can. In Dr. Condic’s words, "it is with horror that we wonder whether we will choose to ignore the pain of the fetus or not."

Mr. Speaker, I am choosing not to ignore their pain. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this compassionate bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the majority keeps trying to take the women’s personal decision and put it in someone else’s hands. Over the years, they have tried to allow bosses to make the healthcare decisions for their employees. They pushed a bill that would allow women to die if an emergency room employee comes to the room and had a "conscientious objection" to performing an abortion that would save her life.

Today, they are trying to pass an abortion ban that would put up even more obstacles and prevent women from receiving safe and legal abortion, which is protected by the Constitution.

The bill before us today strikes at the heart of Roe v. Wade. Opponents of the Supreme Court decision have been clear and outspoken that that is precluded by the Constitution. Abortion after 20 weeks does not contain reasonable exceptions for victims of rape and incest. The legislation flies in the face of what the American people—women and men—want us to be doing.

The majority must have quickly forgotten the national Women’s March that took place in January. Millions of persons across the country and around the globe marched in the largest day of protest in our Nation’s history. More than half a million people took to the streets to protect and save lives.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows: AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 548 OFFERED BY Miss SLAUGHTER

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to
The VOTE on the PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the question whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon’s Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 306-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the member being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the member being made by the Member in charge. “The refusal of the House to sustain the previous question defeats the motion for the previous question on the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.”

THE SPEAKER pro temmove the previous question on the rule.... When the previous question is rejected, the Speaker, at the request of the majority leader of the House, may order the previous question to be voted on, and the majority leader, after consulting with members of his party, shall then propose an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.”

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

Ms. Slaughter. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The Speaker pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 184, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No 55] YEA—233

NAYS—184

Abraham Calvert Calvert (GA) Calvert (TX)
Aderholt Rogers (AL) Jenkins (KY) Jenkins (WV)
Allen Parlons Wilson (CA) Wilson (GA)
Amash Clawson Cook (IL) Crowder (AL)
Amodt Cheney Collins (GA) Collins (NY)
Amodei Cushman Banks (IN) Banks (NY)
Bacon Colbe Comer Cornett (OK)
Bace Constaeth coronavirus DeSantis (FL)
Barrett Dokee Dooley (GA) Dooley (IN)
Barr Estes (TX) Estes (KS) Estes (WY)
Barton Friedman Friedman (CA) Friedman (NY)
Bergman Cook Crawford Grothman
Black Brooks (IN) Buchanan Budd Burgess
Blum Broun (GA) Brooks (GA) Brooks (UT) Brooks (WV)
Brodie Broun (NY) Broyhill Buck Buck (GA)
Brown (GA) Brown (IL) Brown (NV) Brown (WV)
Young (IA) Young (AK) Young (KY) Young (LA)

Rice, Jody B. Higgins (LA) Hill Holmberg Hollingsworth
Huntington Huelskamp Hulgren
Isa Jenkins (KS) Jenkins (WV) Johnson (LA)
Jordan Jones Jones (WV)
Katko Kelly (NY) Kellogg
King (IA) King (NY) Kinsey
Kasten (TN) Labrador LaHood Lamborn
Lance Latta Sponsor (MN) Spalter
LeBiondo Love Lemke
Luetkemeyer MacArthur (NY) Magaziner
McClain McClintock McKinley
McKown McCaul McCaul (TX)
McClintock McEnany McFadden
McCaul (CA) McGovern McHenry
McGovern McHenry (GA) McHenry (MD)
McIntyre McHenry (NY) McHenry (WI)
McMorris Rodgers Rodgers Rodgers (MI)
McNulty McSally McSally (AZ)
McConnell McSally (CO) McSally (AZ)
McSally McSally (AZ) McSally (AZ)
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DEALERS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

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This vote, the question whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

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Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

Ms. Slaughter. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The Speaker pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption.

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McMorris Rodgers Rodgers Rodgers (MI)
McNulty McSally McSally (AZ)
McConnell McSally (AZ) McSally (AZ)
McSally (AZ) McSally (AZ) McSally (AZ)
The Speaker pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The Speaker pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX in the subsection proceedings.

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION ACT OF 2017

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 652) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection and intervention, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

The Clerk reads the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM FOR EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT REGARDING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING NEWBORNS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

(a) SECTION HEADING.—The section heading of section 399F of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 268c) is amended by striking “NEWBORN AND INFANT” and inserting “NEWBORN, INFANT, AND YOUNG CHILD”;

(b) STATEWIDE SYSTEMS.—Section 399F(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 268c-1(a)) is amended—

(1) IN GENERAL.—By striking “NEWBORN AND INFANT” and inserting “NEWBORN, INFANT, AND YOUNG CHILD”;

SEC. 3. EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT REGARDING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING NEWBORNs, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask that the Speaker pro tempore be recognized, and I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the Speaker pro tempore is well known for introducing legislation to protect the unborn and bring newborns into the care of medical professionals. He is also an advocate for the rights of the deaf and hard-of-hearing, and this legislation is no exception.

The Speaker pro tempore stated that the House would have voted “yea” on rollcall No. 547.
(2) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—
(A) by striking “newborn and infant” and inserting “newborn, infant, and young child”; and
(B) by striking “providers.” and inserting “providers (including, as appropriate, education and training of family members),”;
(3) in paragraph (1)—
(A) in the first sentence—
(i) by striking “newborns and infants” and inserting “newborns, infants, and young children (referred to in this section as ‘children’);” and
(ii) by striking “and medical” and all that follows through the period and inserting “and quality assurance (or ‘national’ screening) interventions (including family support), for children identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing, consistent with the following:
(B) in the second sentence—
(i) by striking “Early” and inserting the following:
“(A) ‘Early’;
(ii) by striking “and delivery of” and inserting “, and delivery of;”;
(iii) by striking “schools” and all that follows through the period and inserting “organizations such as schools and agencies (including community, consumer, and family-based agencies), in health care settings (including medical homes for children), and in programs mandated”; and
(iv) by striking “of hearing” and all that follows through the period and inserting “hard-of-hearing”; and
(C) by striking the last sentence and inserting the following:
“(B) Information provided to families should be accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date, and evidence-based, as appropriate, to allow families to make important decisions for their children in a timely manner, including decisions with respect to the full range of assistive hearing technologies and communications modalities, as appropriate.
“(C) Programs and systems under this paragraph shall offer mechanisms that foster family-to-family and deaf and hard-of-hearing consumer-to-family support.”;
(4) in paragraph (2), by striking “To collect” and all that follows through the period and inserting “To continue to provide technical support to States, through one or more technical assistance centers, to further developing and enhancing State early hearing detection and intervention programs;”;
(5) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:
“(3) To identify or develop efficient models (educational and medical) to ensure that children who are identified as deaf or hard-of-hearing through screening receive follow-up by qualified early intervention providers or qualified health care providers (including those in medical homes for children), and referrals, as appropriate, including to early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. States shall be encouraged to effectively increase the rate of such follow-up and referral.
(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, DATA MANAGEMENT, AND APPLIED RESEARCH.—Section 399M(b)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290g–1(b)(1)) is amended—
(1) in the first sentence—
(A) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following: “(A) In GENERAL.—The Secretary;
(B) by striking “to complement an intramural program” and inserting the following: “or designated entities of States—
(i) to develop, maintain, and improve data collection related to newborn infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation (including audiologic, medical, and language acquisition evaluations), diagnosis, and intervention services;”;
(C) by striking “to conduct” and inserting the following: “(ii) to conduct;” and
(D) by striking “newborn” and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: “newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and outcomes;
(iii) to ensure quality monitoring of hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and systems for newborns, infants, and young children; and
(iv) to support newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs, and information systems;”;
(2) in the second sentence—
(A) by striking “the matter that precedes subparagraph (A)” and all that follows through subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:
“(B) USE OF AWARDS.—The awards made under subparagraph (A) may be used—
(i) to provide technical assistance on data collection and management, including to coordinate and develop standardized procedures for data management;
(ii) to assess and report on the cost and program effectiveness of newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, and intervention programs and systems;
(iii) to collect data and report on newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems for applied research, research evaluation, and policy improvement;
(B) by redesigning subparagraphs (D), (E), and (F) as clauses (iv), (v), and (vi), respectively, and aligning the margins of those clauses with the margins of clause (i) of subparagraph (B) (as inserted by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph);
(C) in clause (v) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph)—
(i) by striking “newborn and infant” and inserting “newborn, infant, and young child”; and
(ii) by striking “language status” and inserting “hearing status”; and
(D) in clause (vi) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph) (as inserted by ‘‘(A) to establish newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems for applied research, research evaluation, and policy improvement,’’—
(i) by striking “newborn infant” and inserting “newborn, infant, and young child hearing screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems for applied research, research evaluation, and policy improvement,”;
(B) by redesigning subparagraphs (D), (E), and (F) as clauses (iv), (v), and (vi), respectively, and aligning the margins of those clauses with the margins of clause (i) of subparagraph (B) (as inserted by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph);
(C) in clause (v) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph)—
(i) by striking “newborn infant” and inserting “newborn, infant, and young child”; and
(ii) by striking “language status” and inserting “hearing status”; and
(iv) in paragraph (1)—
(A) by striking “consult with” and inserting “consult with”;
(B) by striking “other Federal” and inserting the following:
“(A) other Federal;
(C) by striking “States and local agencies, including those” and inserting the following: “(B) States and local agencies, including agencies;”;
(D) by striking “consumer groups of and that serve” and inserting the following:
“(C) consumer groups of, and that serve,”;
(E) by striking “appropriate national” and inserting the following: “(D) appropriate national”; and
(F) by striking “who are deaf and” and inserting the following: “(E) individuals who are deaf or”; and
(G) by striking “other qualified” and inserting the following:
“(F) other qualified”; and
(H) by striking “newborns, infants, toddlers, children,” and inserting “children,”;
(i) by striking “third-party” and inserting the following: “(G) third-party”; and
(J) by striking “related commercial” and inserting the following: “(H) related commercial”; and
(2) in paragraph (3)—
(A) by striking “States to establish newborn and infant” and inserting the following: “(A) to establish newborn, infant, and young child;”;
(B) by inserting a semicolon after “subsection (a)”;
(C) by striking “to develop” and inserting the following:
“(B) to develop;
(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION; RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION.—Section 399M(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290g-1(d)) is amended—
(1) by striking “which” and inserting “that;
(2) by striking “newborn infants or young”;
and
(3) by striking “parents’” and inserting “parent’s’;
(f) DEFINITIONS.—Section 399M(e) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290g-1(e)) is amended—
(1) in paragraph (1)—
(A) by striking “(1)” and all that follows through “procedures” and inserting the following:
“(1) The term ‘audiologic’, when used in connection with evaluation, means procedures—
(B) by striking “to assess” and inserting the following:
“(A) to assess;
(C) by striking “to establish” and inserting the following:
“(B) to establish;
(D) by striking “auditory disorder”; and
inserting “auditory disorder”;”;
(E) by striking “to identify” and inserting the following:
“(C) to identify;
(F) by striking “options.” and all that follows through “linkage” and inserting the following: “options,” including—
“(i) linkage;
(G) by striking “appropriate agencies,” and inserting “appropriate agencies,”;
and
inserting the following: “appropriate agencies;”;
(ii) medical evaluation;
(iii) assessment for the full range of assistive hearing technologies appropriate for newborns, infants, and young children;”;
(iv) audiolinguistic rehabilitation treatment; and
(v) referral to national;”;
and
(H) by striking “parent, and education” and inserting “parent, family, and education;”;
(2) by striking paragraph (2); and
(3) by redesigning paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (2) through (5); and
(4) in paragraph (2) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection)—
(A) by striking “refers to providing” and inserting the following: “means—
“(A) providing linkage;”;
(B) by striking “with hearing loss, including nonmedical services,” and inserting “who is deaf or hard-of-hearing, including nonmedical services;”;
(C) by striking “ensuring that families of the child are provided” and inserting the following:
“(B) ensuring that the family of the child is.”;
(i) provided;”;
October 3, 2017
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE
H7695
Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to be in strong support of S. 652, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2017, sponsored by Senator Portman from Ohio. This legislation has been championed in the House by my friend, the vice chair of the Health Subcommittee, Representative BRETT GUTHRIE, as H.R. 1539.

The bill does have strong bipartisan support and, in fact, passed this House unanimously in the last Congress. Federal support for early hearing detection and intervention programs across the country help identify children with hearing loss and directs them to early intervention services.

This program is a model of how government at different levels and public and private agencies can and should work together. In addition to mandating upon current programs, this legislation improves the recruitment, retention, education, and training of qualified personnel and health providers to identify and assist young children with hearing loss.

By updating and reauthorizing HRSA and CDC grants to help States treat hearing newborns and young children. By updating and reauthorizing HRSA and CDC grants to help States treat hearing newborns and young children. My home State of Florida has required newborn screening since October 1, 2000. We need to keep this going. According to the most recent State data in Florida, 98 percent of all newborns in Florida will be screened within the first month. That is absolutely vital to detect problems early in their lives.

So let's work together. Extending this newborn screening initiative for another 5 years ensures that babies will continue to have access to this vital hearing screening, and we can make sure that kids across America get the healthcare that they need.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again thank my colleagues, Representatives GUTHRIE and MATSUI and Senators PORTMAN and KAIN, for leading the charge on this important effort. I encourage my colleagues to support this bipartisan S. 652.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.
The Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention Program established almost 2 decades ago has been life-changing for those born deaf or hard of hearing. A member of my staff in Sacramento, Devin, was born hard of hearing but didn’t receive a screening at birth. For the first few years of her life, she appeared to be struggling to keep up with her peers.

It wasn’t until Devin reached the middle of kindergarten that her teacher suggested she get her hearing tested. After receiving her diagnosis, Devin’s family was able to seek out tools and resources to help her catch up to her classmates in school.

Devin’s story illustrates the importance of early detection and intervention. We know that a child’s development in the first few years of their life can have a major impact on their well-being later on.

By extending this program through our legislation, we are ensuring that infants continue to have access to hearing screenings at birth so their parents can make informed choices about their care and management early on.

We have come so far in increasing the number of babies who are screened every year. By passing this legislation, we are continuing that progress.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congressman Guthrie, for his leadership on this issue, and I ask for everyone’s support.

Mr. Burgess. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consumne to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Guthrie), the author of the bill and the vice chairman of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. Guthrie. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. Matsui) and I have worked on a lot of issues together, and it is always a pleasure to work with her and to move important things forward. I know a lot of times you see a lot of big issues need to be addressed, but a lot of things are getting done here in the House.

Today, once we pass this bill, it goes to the President. It is coming back from the Senate, so it goes to the President.

My interest in this is when I was in the General Assembly of Kentucky, the Governor had a big proposal dealing with children in the first 3 years of their life and was looking at a lot of money to be spent. And I remember doing research on a site, I found a report from a doctor from Vanderbilt, and I went down and met with her. So there has been a lot of debate on the research of some of the things that we were looking at moving forward.

She said: In normal stimulation, a child is going to rise to their ability. But she did say this: If you took a healthy baby and put it into a closet with no light, and it couldn’t hear, and pull it out 3 years later—which obviously you couldn’t do that—it wouldn’t be able to see and it would never be able to develop its hearing because the brain does start adjusting at a young age.

That is why you can learn a language far better as a child than you can as an adult.

So I was driving back, and part of what Governor Patton of Kentucky had proposed was screening, eyesight screening, and early childhood hearing detection as part of the bill. So a lot of us were saying: “What do you do with mandated screening?”

I was driving back, and I remember thinking, well, if you were born and you can’t see well, then that is the same thing as being put in a dark closet? Because if you don’t figure out till you show up to school that you can’t see, then I don’t think that the same difference is being put in a dark closet? Because if you don’t figure out till you show up to school that you can’t see, then I don’t think that the same thing is happening.

So for the small amount of money that it actually costs, we passed and authorized, in Kentucky, mandated screenings. It is for eyesight, which my son got caught in going into kindergarten. That is the first time you can really test them, when we gather them, but you can test newborns at birth. If you can find a newborn at birth that has a hearing impairment and get it corrected, it will develop just like all the other healthy children, so why not do it?

So I got to Washington, D.C. It is a national program. It is not something I came up with. It was authored before, but I was the one who added the first 3 to 5 years of ability and lost language ability for a lifetime.

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Mr. Speaker, I yield all Members to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Ms. Castor of Florida. Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to thank my Energy and Commerce colleagues, especially Mr. Guthrie and Ms. Matsui. I urge approval of this bipartisan bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Burgess. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Bilirakis).

Mr. Bilirakis. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention Program.

If this law were around when I was a newborn, we might have caught my hearing loss at a younger age. I don’t want kids to go through what I have gone through. Representative Guthrie said it about his child. I had vision problems, too.

And we need to give these children an opportunity to succeed. That is why we are here in this Congress. That is why it makes it worthwhile to make a difference in a person’s life. All they are asking for is an opportunity to succeed. So now as a user of hearing aids myself, I was proud to cosponsor the bipartisan bill, the House version introduced by my colleagues, Mr. Guthrie and Ms. Matsui.

Studies have shown that important language development skills are learned prior to a child’s third birthday, as hearing and language are closely linked. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 33 children are born every day with hearing impairment, making it the most common congenital condition in the United States. If left undiagnosed, a child can risk developmental challenges and setbacks.

Since its inception in 1999, the Newborn Hearing Screening and Intervention Program has improved the lives of numerous children. Over its first 15 years, the percentage of newborns screened every year increased from 40 percent in 2000 to approximately 90 percent of infants in 2015. The bill builds on this legacy of success, allowing for vital screenings and monitoring to continue, while improving timely follow-up for infants to receive the care they need—key to healthy development.

The Speaker pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. Burgess. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. Bilirakis. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, all these children are asking for is an opportunity to succeed.

I had difficulty hearing in the classroom. I don’t know how I got through, but I did. I had a hard time seeing the blackboard. I don’t know how I got through my math, but I did.

Again, this is why we are here: to make a difference.

Mr. Burgess. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Speaker pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Burgess) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 652.

The question is taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.
A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING GIRLS’ ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN VULNERABLE SETTINGS ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2408) to enhance the transparency, improve the coordination, and intensify the impact of assistance to primary and secondary education for displaced children and persons, including women and girls, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act” or the “Protecting Girls’ Access to Education Act.”

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) partner with and encourage other countries, public and private multilateral institutions, nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations representing parents and children, to support efforts to ensure that displaced children have access to safe primary and secondary education;

(2) work with donors to enhance training and capacity-building for the governments of countries hosting significant numbers of displaced people to design, implement, and monitor programs to effectively address barriers to such education;

(3) incorporate into the design and implementation of such programs measures to evaluate the impact of the programs on girls, with respect to the reduction of child marriage, gender-based violence, and severe forms of trafficking in persons (as such term is defined in section 103(a) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(a)));

(4) coordinate with the governments of countries hosting significant numbers of displaced people to—

(A) promote the inclusion of displaced children into the educational systems of such countries; and

(B) develop innovative approaches to providing safe primary and secondary educational opportunities in circumstances in which such inclusion is not possible or appropriate, such as schools that permit discriminatory enrollment.

(5) help increase the access of displaced children, especially girls, to educational, economic, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including through the government's authorities responsible for educational or youth services in such host countries.

(b) COORDINATION WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are authorized to coordinate with the World Bank, appropriate agencies of the United Nations, and multilateral or bilateral organizations to work with governments in other countries to collect relevant data, disaggregated by age and gender, on the ability of displaced people to access education and participate in economic activity, in order to improve the targeting, monitoring, and evaluation of related assistance efforts.

(c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are authorized to work with civil society organizations to promote safe primary and secondary education for displaced children.

SEC. 5. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR DISPLACED CHILDREN.

(a) In General.—The Secretary and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized to prioritize and advance ongoing efforts to support programs that—

(1) provide safe primary and secondary education for displaced children;

(2) work with donors to enhance training and capacity-building for the governments of countries hosting significant numbers of displaced people to design, implement, and monitor programs to effectively address barriers to such education;

(3) help increase the access of displaced children, especially displaced girls, to educational, economic, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including through the government's authorities responsible for educational or youth services in such host countries.

(b) COORDINATION WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are authorized to coordinate with the World Bank, appropriate agencies of the United Nations, and multilateral or bilateral organizations to work with governments in other countries to collect relevant data, disaggregated by age and gender, on the ability of displaced people to access education and participate in economic activity, in order to improve the targeting, monitoring, and evaluation of related assistance efforts.

(c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are authorized to work with civil society organizations to promote safe primary and secondary education for displaced children.

SEC. 6. REPORT.

During the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Administrator shall include in any report or evaluation submitted to Congress regarding assistance programs for natural or manmade disaster relief or response the following information (to the extent practicable and appropriate):

(1) A breakdown of the beneficiaries of such program by location, age, gender, marital status, and school enrollment status.

(2) A description of how such program benefits displaced children.

(3) A description of any primary or secondary educational services supported by such program that specifically address the needs of displaced girls.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SHIEH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROYCE of California. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection. Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to recognize Congressman STEVE CHABOT and Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY on the Foreign Affairs Committee for their work on this important issue of protecting girls and protecting their access to education, especially in vulnerable settings.

We all know that education is a critical driver of upward social mobility for these young girls, for economic growth, for overall stability in terms of a society. As we confront an increasing number of conflicts around this globe, education has got to remain a very key component of U.S. foreign assistance.

Around the world today, there are 27 million children who are out of school in conflict zones. Half of all children in refugee camps do not have access to primary education.

With many recent conflicts that have lasted, now, a decade, we are now seeing entire generations of children who fail to receive even the most basic education; and even if they are eventually able to return home, they carry back those deficits in terms of what they have not learned, and those deficits can last a lifetime.

We have actually seen that this humanitarian crisis with real strategic implications.

In Syria, for example, an estimated 4 million children are out of school in an environment warped by constant violence. Refugee children outside of Syria are placing tremendous strains on the educational systems, and I have seen this in countries like Jordan, in Lebanon, in Turkey.

And yet, in crisis situations around the world, the lack of stable educational opportunities make these children more vulnerable: more vulnerable, especially for girls, to exploitation; more vulnerable, especially for boys, to radicalization.

Girls face unique barriers to education in conflict zones. In these affected countries, girls are 2 times more likely than young boys to be out of school. They frequently encounter cultural barriers that prevent them from seeking an education, and they often lack safe routes to that little school and back home from that school.
Promoting girls’ access to education reduces their risk of falling victim to gender-based violence or to early marriage or to human trafficking. It is also the just thing to do.

H.R. 2408, the Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act, authorizes the State Department and authorizes USAID to enhance existing education programs for displaced children and to especially be engaged with girls.

The bill calls on the State Department and USAID to coordinate efforts with the private sector as well, with civil society groups, with multilateral organizations, to collect relevant data to improve the effectiveness of these programs that we are engaged in.

Finally, the bill would require that the State Department and the USAID include data on education programs for displaced children in any report to Congress on disaster relief and recovery efforts so that we are aware that they are engaged in addressing this issue.

We must strengthen the role of education in humanitarian assistance. Refugees and other displaced persons live on a knife edge of despair. Without access to education, children in conflict zones, especially girls, are more exposed to violence, to exploitation, and even to radicalization.

By helping to realize their innate potential, education gives these children hope, hope for today, and it gives them critical skills for tomorrow so that they can contribute to their homes, their communities, and so that they can contribute to the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our chairman on the Foreign Affairs Committee, Ed ROYCE, and our ranking member, Eliot ENGEL, as well as the author of this bill, Mr. CHABOT of Ohio and Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Both of these Members have worked hard on the bill to expand access to education around the world. I agree with them that this is an important priority for our foreign policy.

When children are able to get basic education, it pays massive dividends down the road. Those girls and boys grow up with great opportunity, and they play a bigger role in their economies and their communities.

We have seen research that, when children can learn about certain issues like nonviolent civic engagement, support for violence drops. That adds up to stronger and more stable countries and better partners for the United States.

Children belong in a classroom. Mr. Speaker, where they happen to be born, but in too many places, that access just doesn’t exist. What happens then?

We know in places like the Middle East, in North Africa, violent extremists are happy to fill in the void, to recruit and indoctrinate the next generation with their hateful and violent ideology. This problem is especially acute among refugees of displaced populations.

Mr. Speaker, 3.7 million schoolchildren under the U.N. refugee agency’s mandate have no school to go to. Some countries are trying to tackle this challenge, like Lebanon, where the government now has enrolled Syrian refugees in schools, but the need is just too great. Out of 500,000 school-age refugees, nearly half are out of school.

This bill aims to help address those really desperate situations. It calls for the USAID to ramp up access to these children, and particularly young girls. It will help us gather more data to assist government and NGOs that are also grappling with this problem, and it authorizes the Secretary of State and the USAID Administrator to prioritize this issue, to work with multilateral organizations, and to seek out partners in the private sector and civil society that will bring innovative new approaches to expanding access to education. This bill will put more young girls in the classroom in places around the world where this help is badly needed. I am glad to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, Chairman ROYCE has been a strong proponent of this, as has Eliot ENGEL. I want to especially thank Robin KELLY for her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2408, a bipartisan bill that aims to provide a safe education for millions of children, especially girls, who live in the most dangerous and unstable places across the globe.

As a parent and now a grandparent, a former teacher, I know that education physically and mentally empowers our children.

Unfortunately, millions of children receive no education due to the circumstances which are beyond their control. This is particularly true for the growing number of displaced people across the world, as it is exceedingly difficult for children in conflict zones to receive a primary or secondary education. Armed conflicts across the world, particularly in places like Syria and now Burma, have led to the internal displacement of millions of women and children, and forced them to literally flee their own homes.

There are currently 65 million people displaced worldwide, and at least 21 million are refugees. They are out of their own countries. This is the highest number since World War II, and the number has been steadily rising since 2011.

Many of the displaced people are survivors of human rights abuses and violence. Half of these victims are under the age of 18. They are born and raised in the most formative years of their lives. If they are not given the opportunity to succeed, they will be subjected to a lifetime of conflict and instability.

Education is a key component to helping lift these vulnerable children out of the depths of poverty. Access to education not only gives children the opportunity to grow and learn, but also offers safety and shields them from violence, extremist ideology, human trafficking networks, and a relentless cycle of abuse.

There is no question that access to education provides stability and consistency to children living in extremely unstable conditions, especially girls.

That is why I introduced H.R. 2408, the Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act, along with Robin KELLY from Illinois. I again want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member Eliot ENGEL for their leadership in this area.

This bipartisan legislation will move us in the right direction by making access to primary and secondary education a priority with our State Department and USAID. It aims to directly benefit displaced children, specifically girls, and will help to address one of the world’s greatest challenges facing refugees across the globe.

This legislation also encourages greater international coordination and leverages existing resources by promoting education for refugees where they are through local schools.

The Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act will ensure that millions of child refugees will have an opportunity to reach their highest potential, even those in the most tumultuous conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), my colleague on the Foreign Affairs Committee and a real champion for women and girls.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and the leaders of our committee for their bipartisan efforts. It is very appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan legislation that directs the State Department and USAID to support programs and educate displaced children, with a special focus on girls.

When you look at the horrors of the world, from South Sudan to Burundi, to Syria, think about the fact that there are 55 million displaced children, 28 million refugee children that have been uprooted from their homes due to violence and poverty, and making up half of those refugees.

Here is the thing. What happens when a young person has no hope, no education, no future potential of a good
job to one day take care of their family? Will they become victims of trafficking or vibrant members of society? Will these millions of children become our friends or foes? Will the communities they live in be our trading partners or havens for terrorists?

Around the world, only a quarter of refugee children are enrolled in secondary school, and the number, as my colleagues have pointed out, is even worse for girls. Just seven girls for every ten refugee boys are enrolled in secondary school. We are talking about a lost generation.

In Syria alone, over 5,000 schools have been destroyed. Just ask a young lady named Muzoon. She is known as the Malala of Syria. At age 15, she fled her besieged home in Syria. When she was told to bring only her essentials, she packed a suitcase full of books because she knows, “That education is a shield that we can use to protect ourselves in life.” She even went door to door in refugee camps to convince children to keep their daughters in school instead of pressuring them into early marriage.

Muzoon knows and we know that when girls are educated, they lead to healthier, more productive lives that enhance the economy and the peacefulness of their societies.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this fine legislation.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield five minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE; Ranking Member ENGEL; and, in this case, especially Congressman ALIHO SIRES, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, for once again helping to bring another important bipartisan Foreign Affairs measure to the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of the Protecting Girls’ Access to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act. My good friend, STEVE CHABOT, has been a former teacher today who has reached out to these young children. We are talking about a lost generation.

Mr. Speaker, I am a former Florida certified teacher. I understand the value of education. Mr. SIRES from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES).

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

Mr. Speaker, I am also a former certified teacher, and expanding access to education is the key to combating terrorism. When we increase opportunities through education, we help more girls and boys by giving them the tools to think critically and resist those who mean to harm us. We are helping to give these children an alternative with the possibility of positioning them to make further positive impact on their communities and their countries.

Time and time again we have seen the results of what happens when children are not provided a better path: extremism, radicalism, and terrorism. This is one of our best opportunities to provide a more safe and secure world not only for them, but also for us, too.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Congressman CHABOT and Congresswoman KELLY for their hard work. I support this bill, and I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MR. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are surrounded here by former teachers today who have brought this bill, who have worked with us to bring this bill to the House floor, and we understand their impulse to reach out to these young children and try to see to it that they have an equal chance out in the world.

This is something that teachers do, and this focus on young girls, especially young girls in the most vulnerable situation, as a result of conflict in those regions making them at risk for trafficking, for exploitation or being child brides, these former teachers understand the importance of having a program directed specifically to this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT); the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY); and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, of course, as chairman, for helping to ensure that international humanitarian efforts are prioritizing this issue of access to education for girls.

By improving coordination between the State Department, USAID, the private sector, and multilateral organizations, what this bill is going to do is to improve the chances that these young lives will be able to blossom above the ashes of war, above these conflicts that rage in these spots around the world, so that they might reach their full potential. If they do, they will be able to help the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask every Member for their support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2408.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NIGERIAN INVESTMENT CONDITIONALITY ACT (NICA) OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1918) to oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1918

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Nigerian Investment Conditionality Act (NICA) of 2017.”

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The House Committee on Foreign Affairs convened a congressional hearing on December 1, 2011, entitled “Democracy Held Hostage in Nicaragua: Part 1” where former United States Ambassador to Nicaragua Robert Callahan testified, “First, that Daniel Ortega’s candidacy was illegal, illegitimate, and unconstitutional; second, that the period leading to the elections and the elections themselves were marred by serious fraud; third, that Daniel Ortega and his Sandinista party have systematically undermined the country’s fragile governmental institutions.”

(2) According to the Organization of American States (OAS) report on the Nicaraguan
2011 Presidential elections, the OAS recommended that the Government of Nicaragua take a number of steps to improve its electoral systems, including accrediting poll watchers, ensuring political parties and civil society are represented to observe elections, and redesigning the structure of the Nicaraguan electoral council to allow proper registration of the electorate.

(3) On January 25, 2012, a press statement from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said: “As noted by international observers and Nicaragua’s political groups, recent elections were not conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and the entire process was marred by significant irregularities. The elections marked a setback to democracy in Nicaragua and undermined the ability of Nicaraguans to hold their government accountable.”

(4) According to the Department of State’s 2015 Fiscal Transparency Report: “Nicaragua’s fiscal transparency would be improved by including all off-budget revenue and expenditure in the budget, auditing state-owned enterprises, and conducting a full audit of the government’s annual financial statements making audit reports publicly available within a reasonable period of time.”

(5) According to the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015: “In 2011 the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) announced the re-election of President Daniel Ortega and Vice President Rosario Murillo of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in elections that international and domestic observers characterized as seriously flawed. International and domestic organizations raised concerns regarding the constitutional legitimacy of Ortega’s re-election. The 2011 elections also provided the ruling party with a supermajority in the National Assembly, allowing for changes in the constitution, including extending the reach of executive branch power and the elimination of restrictions on re-election for executive branch officials and mayors. Observers noted serious flaws during the 2012 municipal elections and March 2014 regional elections.


(7) On June 7, 2016, the Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor posted on social media the appointed government of Nicaragua said it will deny electoral observers requested by Nicaraguan citizens, church, and private sector to encourage the government of Nicaragua to allow electoral observers as requested by Nicaraguans.”

(8) On June 14, 2016, President Ortega expelled U.S. State Department officials (two officials from U.S. Customs and Border Protection and one professor from the National Defense University) from Nicaragua.

(9) On August 1, 2016, the Department of State issued a press release to express grave concern about limiting democratic space leading up to the elections in November and stated that “[o]n June 8, the Nicaraguan Supreme Court stripped the opposition Liberal Party (PLI) from its long recognized leader. The Supreme Court took similar action on June 17 when it invalidated the leadership of the remaining independent opposition party with the legal standing to present a presidential candidate. Most recently, on July 29, the Sandinista Election Council removed 26 PLI national assembly members (16 seated and 12 alternates) from their popularly-elected positions.”

(10) On November 7, 2016, the Department of State issued a press release stating: “The United States is deeply concerned by the flawed presidential and legislative electoral process in Nicaragua, which precluded the possibility of a free and fair election on November 6. In advance of the elections, the Nicaraguan government sidelined opposition candidates and observers, repressed domestic dissent and observation at the polls and access to voting credentials, and took other actions to deny democratic space in the process. The decision by the Supreme Court to disqualify independent international electoral observers further degraded the legitimacy of the elections.”

(11) In November and December of 2016, the Board of Executive Directors of the Inter-American Development Bank postponed consideration of a policy based loan of $65 million to the Government of Nicaragua due to the efforts of the United States mission that promote democracy, unless the Secretary of State certifies and reports to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to:

(b) combat corruption, including investigating and prosecuting government officials that are credibly alleged to be corrupt;

(6) protect the right of political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and other civil society actors to operate without threats or harassment;

(1) hold free, fair, and transparent elections overseen by credible domestic and international electoral observers;

(2) promote democracy, as well as an independent judicial system and electoral council;

(3) strengthen the rule of law;

(4) respect the right to freedom of association and expression.

(14) According to the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016: “[A]lthough by the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) party resulted in de facto concentration of power in a single party, with an authoritarian executive branch exercising significant control over the legislative, judicial, and electoral functions.”


(16) The term “international financial institution” means the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation, and the International Finance Corporation’s Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. The term “international financial institution” means the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank’s Board of Executive Directors, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank Group, the Inter-American Development Bank’s Board of Executive Directors, and the Inter-American Investment Corporation.

SEC. 8. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to support—

(1) the rule of law and an independent judiciary and electoral council in Nicaragua;

(2) independent pro-democracy organizations in Nicaragua;

(3) free, fair, and transparent elections under international and domestic observers in Nicaragua; and

(4) anti-corruption and transparency efforts in Nicaragua.

SEC. 4. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) In General.—The President shall instruct the United States Executive Director at each international financial institution to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States Permanent Representative to the OAS to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States Permanent Representative to the OAS to use the voice, vote, and influence of...
Daniel Ortega who lost the Presidency in 1990, has tightened his grip on power by weakening government institutions and the opposition and ensuring power for himself and his family by excluding international election observers. By requiring that the Secretary of State certify that Nicaragua has taken steps to provide election transparency and combat corruption before the United States votes to provide the Government of Nicaragua with loans, we help ensure that taxpayer money is not used to prop up corrupt authorities, or to derail the legitimate democratic rights of the Nicaraguan citizens. We need only to look to Venezuela to see that the consolidation of state power and organized crime and corruption actually go hand in hand. As a region, we must stand in strong opposition to authoritarianism and corruption in Nicaragua, while not punishing the people of Nicaragua. And it is this point of not punishing the people of Nicaragua that also makes this measure possible. And for that reason, and because of this, the authors of the bill have ensured a carve-out, that carve-out exempts all loans that are for humanitarian purposes. So this bill stands squarely with the people of Nicaragua and their hopes for freedom and democracy and the rule of law. Its passage is just one way that we can demonstrate this support. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the measure. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Daniel Ortega who lost the Presidency in 1990, has tightened his grip on power by weakening government institutions and the opposition and ensuring power for himself and his family by excluding international election observers. By requiring that the Secretary of State certify that Nicaragua has taken steps to provide election transparency and combat corruption before the United States votes to provide the Government of Nicaragua with loans, we help ensure that taxpayer money is not used to prop up corrupt authorities, or to derail the legitimate democratic rights of the Nicaraguan citizens. We need only to look to Venezuela to see that the consolidation of state power and organized crime and corruption actually go hand in hand. As a region, we must stand in strong opposition to authoritarianism and corruption in Nicaragua, while not punishing the people of Nicaragua. And it is this point of not punishing the people of Nicaragua that also makes this measure possible. And for that reason, and because of this, the authors of the bill have ensured a carve-out, that carve-out exempts all loans that are for humanitarian purposes. So this bill stands squarely with the people of Nicaragua and their hopes for freedom and democracy and the rule of law. Its passage is just one way that we can demonstrate this support. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the measure. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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H.R. 1918 calls on the U.S. Government to oppose loans at international financial institutions for Nicaragua unless the Nicaraguan Government takes some effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections and commitments to upholding democratic principles.

I think that the administration need to work together and find ways to empower the Nicaraguan people and defend against Ortega's hostile behavior toward innocent civilians. It is my hope that this bipartisan legislation will pass in the Senate and quickly be signed into law.

I thank the chairman and ranking member once again and their staff for all their help in bringing the NICA Act to the floor. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this bill to hold the Ortega regime accountable for its actions.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, and is the author of this legislation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, H.R. 1918, the Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act, also known as the NICA Act, and I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for working with my office to bring this important measure to the floor today. I also want to thank my legislative “brother,” “mi hermano,” the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES), who is the Democratic lead on this legislation, because his leadership on all things related to human rights is admirable, and his steadfast support for the people of Nicaragua has been unwavering.

I also want to thank the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee Chairman JEFF DUNCAN. He has been helping us in leading the effort and bringing attention to the human rights abuses that are sadly occurring in Nicaragua.

This legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, is straightforward, and it is simple. There have been a lot of exaggerations about what this bill does and what this bill doesn’t do.

Our bill is aimed at leveraging America’s influence and conditioning our vote at international financial institutions for Nicaragua until the leadership in that country takes significant steps to restore democratic order.

I think that we would all agree, as Members of the United States Congress, that to have democracies in this region is beneficial; and to have strong governance and strong rule of law and a strong independent judiciary, these are all values that we share and that the people throughout the hemisphere would have to have that in their countries as well.

So let’s go over, just briefly, what are some of the conditions in this bill. And please, as I go through them, ask yourself: Is that a damaging condition, or is that something that would help the people? Not whether it helps the ruling class, the rich guys, the fat-cat bankers, not whether it helps the regime or the government in power, but is it helpful to the people of those countries.

So let me go through the list, Mr. Speaker. This bill has as conditions:

To promote democracy. Promoting democracy, encouraging an independent and non-partisan electoral council. The rule of law.

Fighting corruption, including investigating and prosecuting government officials who are credibly alleged to be corrupt, who go against the people of Nicaragua and against those who wish to do damage to the country.

What else does the bill do? Well, one of the conditions is that it protects the right of political opposition parties. Don’t we want that, political opposition parties. Don’t we want journalists who are trying to get the truth to the Nicaraguan people just as they do here to the American people; trade unionists; human rights defenders and other civil rights advocates to operate without interference. Isn’t that what we want for all countries to have?

These conditions, Mr. Speaker, they are not unheard of; in fact, they are similar to what this country has already passed, what this Congress has already passed for the Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, of Guatemala, and of El Salvador. And now we want to do that for Nicaragua, so it is intended to help the people of Nicaragua.

This bill has safeguards in place to ensure that humanitarian assistance continues to be provided to address basic human needs. Humanitarian assistance will continue.

Some of those basic needs that we talked about, such as free and fair elections, they are not being met today due to the failed leadership in Nicaragua. And who does that help? Well, it helps the leaders, and it hurts the people when you don’t have free and fair elections. They want to help the people of Nicaragua.

Now, reports have surfaced that the Nicaraguan electoral council is giving away identity cards, so that minors, underage individuals can be allowed to vote. Nicaraguans who are not on the electoral rolls are also being allowed to vote.

What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? It means that there will be no way to determine if the individual voted more than once, and that is exactly how the status quo wants it; the fat-cats, they like it so that they can stay there and they can manipulate the results of the elections.

We are also seeing civil society leaders publicly expressing their concern regarding the deterioration of human rights in Nicaragua. As a result of speaking out against the government, they have been targeted for persecution. You speak out against the government, you have some false charges thrown at you.

And what about the indigenous communities? They have also expressed their concern regarding land grabs by the government. Violence is breaking out, and the National Guard is being dispatched to squash the peaceful protests by these indigenous communities.

So let us not forget, Mr. Speaker, just what kind of leadership structure we are dealing with in Nicaragua. The Russians have set up operations in Managua, they are proud of it, they put it in the front pages, and that poses a threat to U.S. national security interests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE of California. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Nicaragua continues to offer its unconditional support to Nicolas Maduro and the authoritarian regime in Venezuela. And according to congressional testimony, Venezuela’s entity, PDVSA, has also used its subsidiary in Nicaragua, which is called Albanisa, and I will give the exact letters of those names— to launder money.

So, Mr. Speaker, if Venezuela’s Maduro is using Nicaragua in order to evade U.S. sanctions, we need to take a closer look at these ties. We need to hold people accountable because all of that hurts the people of Venezuela and the people of Nicaragua. It helps the government, but it doesn’t help the people.

That is what this bill does. We want to hold the Nicaraguan Government accountable just like we do in other countries, as I said, in Central America. This is not something new, out of whole cloth, that we have invented. It has worked, and it has truly helped the people.

Now, earlier this year, Mr. SIRES and I, we traveled to Honduras, we traveled to Guatemala, and we saw firsthand how conditioning our support for these countries works and has been extremely effective.

How hurt those countries? It has not. It has worked. It has strengthened their democracy. It has strengthened the rule of law, the independent judiciary.

So placing conditions incentivizes countries to do the right thing, and it makes institutional reforms, as needed, to improve the livelihood of their citizens.

So I know that the Nicaraguan Government does not like this bill, but I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the people of Nicaragua would like to know that the United States Congress stands with them as they call for reforms that promote democracy, that strengthen the...
rule of law, that fight corruption, and that protect the rights of all political opposition parties, and that is exactly what this bill does.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern with H.R. 1918, the Nicaraguan Investment Conditionality Act of 2017.

Today I stand with the people of Nicaragua and the people of south Texas. Nicaragua has been our partner to the south. They work with us to combat drug trafficking, limit irregular migration, and make our region and our world a safer place. Nicaragua today is the safest country in Central America.

I agree, we must be vigilant in monitoring Nicaragua's transition to democracy. However, we must recognize that enacting this bill could have serious consequences on the region.

Nicaragua, and it could lead to instability, irregular immigration to the United States, to my border district, and an increase in criminal activity. My district was ground zero for the last immigration surge, and I would like to prevent that from happening again.

Nicaragua has its economic and political challenges, but it has taken steps to address poverty, climate change, and to grow its economy. How can we, in good conscience, support a measure that would punish the poorest country in Central America and the second poorest in the Western Hemisphere?

Moreover, Nicaragua stands with America and our allies against the rogue nation of North Korea. We cannot compare Nicaragua to Venezuela.

While we must hold countries accountable, we should bring them in rather than shut them out. We have the ability to guide these nations to embrace democracy and condemn bad actors.

Lastly, I want to make clear that this is not an endorsement of the Sandinistas or any other regime. Today I speak for the less fortunate in Nicaragua who suffer the most from NICA. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to find a solution to this complex issue.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important, when we consider the challenge that we have here, the Carter Center was involved in Nicaragua trying to oversee the election there. They came to the conclusion that the election was not transparent. The elections were not fair in Nicaragua.

The European Union was engaged in trying to monitor those elections. Again, the same conclusion.

The Organization of American States, it is the standard or it is the organization representing all of the governments in this hemisphere, they again raised the same issue.

When we think what we are trying to do here, the goal is, first, any loans that go to the benefit of the people of Nicaragua, that is exempt anyway. From the humanitarian standpoint, we want them to have the loans. But if we are going to make a loan that benefits the head of state or the government and, as part of that, we put the same conditions that the OAS puts on member loans, the same conditions that we put on other countries with respect to the rule of law or with respect to transparency and free and fair elections, I don't think that that is unusual in the least. As a matter of fact, those are the conditions we apply.

The attempt to focus on this and our frustration with it is to give that added boost, just as the Carter Center is trying to do, just as the European Union is trying to weigh in, just as the OAS is suggesting and that these reform and transparency. I think it is proper that this institution does the same. I think the carve-out we put in the bill for humanitarian aid addresses the other issues.

So from this standpoint, I think it is necessary for us to do what we can at this time to nudge this back toward free and fair elections.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL, and mi hermana from Florida, my sister, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for their work on this bipartisan measure and for their commitment to democracy in the Western Hemisphere. They have skillfully crafted the NICA Act to hold President Ortega accountable, while ensuring that the Nicaraguan people do not suffer. I am glad that we are advancing this measure, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In summing up here, the focus of this legislation is clearly to seek to end a practice which many in the international community find a vexing one, and that is it tries to ensure that the loans that are given to the Government of Nicaragua meet certain democratic benchmarks, issuing any loans that would specifically benefit those in the government. There is a carve-out, as I shared, for any humanitarian loans.

I think the reason this approach has gained bipartisan support is because the United States, in this instance, will be engaged still, but engaged in a way where we are not encouraging corruption. I say that because it pushes Nicaragua to allow for free and transparent elections, and that should be our goal. That is the goal of other election observers who have been involved in the past and have expressed their concerns about the state of play there.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the authors, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1918, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Hon. Paul D. Ryan,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Dear Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 3, 2017, at 9:26 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 396.

That the Senate passed with amendment H.R. 3616.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,
Karen L. Haas.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE SUPPORT ACT OF 2017

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1624) to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain municipal obligations as level 2A liquid assets, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1624
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the “Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL OBLIGATIONS.
(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 18 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828) is amended—

(1) by moving subsection (2) so that it appears after subsection (1); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:
“(a) Treatment of Certain Municipal Obligations.—

(1) In general.—For purposes of the final rule titled ‘Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule’ (79 Fed. Reg. 61439; published October 10, 2014) (the ‘Final Rule’) and any other regulation which incorporates a definition of the term ‘high-quality liquid asset’ (HQLA) and which specifies that banking agencies shall treat a municipal obligation that is both liquid and readily marketable (as defined in the Final Rule) and investment grade as a HQLA, the term ‘high-quality liquid asset’ is as defined in the Final Rule.

(2) Definitions.—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) Investment Grade.—With respect to an obligation, the term ‘investment grade’ has the meaning given that term under part 1 of title 12, Code of Federal Regulations.

(B) Municipal Obligation.—The term ‘municipal obligation’ means an obligation of a State or any political subdivision thereof, or any agency or instrumentality of a State or any political subdivision thereof.

(b) Amendment to Liquidity Coverage Ratio.—Not later than the end of the 3-month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Reserve System, and the Comptroller of the Currency shall amend the final rule titled ‘Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule’ (79 Fed. Reg. 61439; published October 10, 2014) to implement the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Huizenga) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Maxine Waters) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. Huizenga. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of much-needed legislation that would simply fix a 2014 rule by financial regulators and allow municipal bonds to be considered as level 2B liquid assets, at a minimum, for purposes of calculating total high-quality liquid assets, or HQLAs, under the liquidity coverage ratio. The Municipal Finance Support Act is a bipartisan piece of legislation that passed unanimously out of committee, showing its clear need.

Municipal securities are frequently issued by the transportation, housing, and healthcare authorities of State and local governments to raise funds to pay for projects ranging from bridges and schools to hospitals and recreational facilities. Excluding municipal securities from treatment as HQLAs will result in higher borrowing costs for State and local governments during times of economic distress.

Furthermore, there is no reason why high-quality liquid bonds issued by the United States and municipalities should receive a lower standing than foreign sovereign debt with equivalent or, frankly, even lesser credit quality and market liquidity.

Finally, disincentivizing financial institutions from holding investment-grade municipal securities could cause banks to sell these bonds from the $3.8 trillion market, thereby forcing State and local governments to scale back pending projects on roads, schools, and other infrastructure projects financed with the bonds. Classifying investment-grade municipal bonds as level 2B liquid assets means that HQLAs will ensure low-cost infrastructure financing remains available for State and local governments.

Although the Federal Reserve has issued an amended rule allowing municipal bonds to count as HQLAs for some banks, neither the OCC nor the FDIC have acted to follow the Fed’s lead in amending their HQLA definitions to include these municipal securities.

The inaction creates a split regulation that, in which the treatment of municipal securities for the purpose of measuring the liquidity of the bank’s holdings depends entirely upon who the regulator is.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. Maxine Waters of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1624, offered by Mr. Messer and Ms. Maloney, represents a bipartisan effort to ensure that certain financial institutions will continue to hold municipal securities, while also supporting the spirit of an important bank guaranty in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Bank regulators promulgated the liquidity coverage rule to ensure that megabanks have a minimum number of assets that they could sell, even in the worst scenarios, to count assets like Treasury securities, GSE debt, and investment-grade corporate securities towards the pool.

Regulators found that these securities could be sold even in stressed environments, thereby allowing a megabank to weather the storm of an economic crisis. This rule, known as the liquidity coverage rule, is an important tool for banking regulators to guard against the type of contagion we saw during the financial crisis.

However, the bank regulators excluded all municipal securities because they concluded that municipal securities, as a class, are difficult to sell in stressed markets. This may be generally true, but the investment-grade debt of my State of California has lots of buyers and sellers and has a liquidity profile similar to many corporate securities. So it makes sense that, if there are municipal securities like California investment-grade debt that meet the same eligibility standards as other corporate securities, they should also be counted toward a bank’s liquid assets under the rule.

The Federal Reserve quickly recognized this problem and has since adopted a correction to permit bank holding companies under its jurisdiction to treat municipal securities that are liquid, market ready, and investment grade the same as similar corporate securities.

This bill, as amended, takes the relief adopted by the Federal Reserve and extends it to banks regulated by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. It isn’t clear to me just how many municipalities will benefit from this legislation, and I imagine most would not, but even if only a handful of our States and cities qualify, the bill is worth passing because it could help to reduce financing costs for those governments.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Mrs. Maloney’s hard work and bipartisan efforts on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Messer. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Messer), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Messer. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my coauthor on this bill, Congressman Maxine Maloney, for her great leadership on this legislation, as well as Chairwoman Huizenga, Chairman Hensarling, Ranking Member Waters, and the entire Financial Services Committee team for their hard work on this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a rare occasion in Washington when Republicans and Democrats can come together and get behind a change to the banking regulations, but we stand here today behind H.R. 1624 because the banking regulators, frankly, well, they messed it up. They created a rule that gives foreign municipalities a competitive advantage over our American cities and towns, and this advantage is hurting our communities.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is really quite simple. It will help cities and towns in my State and across the United States save money on roads and bridges and schools. President Trump has made rebuilding our infrastructure a priority for our Nation, and this bipartisan bill paves the way for this type of investment by lowering the price tag for roads and bridges.

H.R. 1624 reverses a backwards banking regulation that makes it more expensive for U.S. municipalities to finance infrastructure projects. Specifically, the bill will amend the regulation to enable more banks to hold municipal bonds to cover their liquidity requirements. This change should reduce the cost of borrowing for cities and towns across the country. Ultimately, this bill helps taxpayers by making it cheaper to finance infrastructure projects.

H.R. 1624 will help blue States and red States alike, and that is why you have seen such overwhelming bipartisan support for this in the Halls of Congress. The bill passed the Financial Services Committee.
Services Committee unanimously this summer, and very similar legislation passed the Chamber by a voice vote last year.

Still we have got more work to do, and there is now momentum in the Senate to get H.R. 1624 across the finish line.

The bill is also supported by numerous outside advocacy groups, including the National Governors Association, the Government Finance Officers Association, the National League of Cities, the National Association of State Treasurers, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and even the State treasurer from my home State of Indiana, my good friend, Kelly Mitchell.

Mr. Speaker, today we take the first step in this process in the House towards reversing this backwards regulation, and I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill.

MS. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank Mr. Messer for his leadership on this legislation.

He is absolutely correct. He worked very closely with Mrs. Maloney. This is a bipartisan bill. He correctly stated that we do sometimes get together and work on issues in ways that we can be helpful, not only to our constituents in general but to cities and towns. We have talked an awful lot about wanting to improve our infrastructures, and this is one way that it certainly can be done.

I would like to point out again the Federal Reserve’s role in this because of the way that they recognized the problem and what they did to adopt a correction to the problem. So this bill again, as amended, takes the relief adopted by the Federal Reserve.

Again, this is a case where we had Members who understood this problem, moved forward on it, and recognized that the Federal Reserve also recognized the problem. When you have several entities who have recognized a problem, it certainly makes good sense and good public policy for everybody to come together to correct it. So with the Federal Reserve having come forward and adopting this relief, it means that it is extended to banks regulated by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Again, I wish I could say that every city in the United States would benefit from it, but not all will. Not all need it. But for those who do, I think it is important for us to recognize that when we have the opportunity to come together and to help any part of our country, and when it is very easy to do so, I think we should do it. So I am very pleased that we have been able to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. Carolyn B. Maloney), who is the lead Democratic cosponsor of this bill.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding and for her leadership on this issue and so many others.

I strongly support the bill, and I would like to thank my good friend from Indiana (Mr. Messer) for his leadership.

We introduced this bill in order to level the playing field for our cities and States by requiring the banking regulators to treat certain municipal bonds as liquid assets, just like corporate bonds, stocks, and other assets. As a former member of the city council in New York, I know firsthand the importance of municipal bonds. They allow States and cities to finance infrastructure, build schools, pave roads, and build subways. They are all financed with municipal bonds.

Unfortunately, in the banking regulators’ liquidity rule—which requires banks to hold a minimum amount of liquid assets to a liquid asset ratio—municipal bonds are completely excluded from this category. That means that the Federal Reserve’s role in this because this is arbitrary discrimination against municipalities cannot be allowed to continue.

This makes no sense, and it effectively discriminates against municipal bonds and cities. A municipal bond that is just as liquid as the most liquid corporate bond would not be counted as a liquid asset under the rule just because it was issued by a municipality rather than a corporation.

The Federal Reserve has already recognized this error and has amended its rule to fix the problem. But the OCC, which regulates national banks, is still refusing to amend its rule and insists on favoring corporations over municipalities. So Mr. Messer and I introduced this bill because this kind of arbitrary discrimination against municipalities cannot be allowed to continue.

So in sum, this bill levels the playing field for cities and States in a way that maintains the safety and soundness of our banking system. The bill passed the Financial Services Committee 60–0 in July, and last Congress the bill passed the full House by a voice vote.

So I urge my colleagues to, once again, support this bipartisan legislation which is critically important for our States and our cities.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1624. I commend my ranking member from the Sub-committee on Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments, Mrs. Maloney, as well as the work from my colleague from Indiana.

This is a commonsense, no-nonsense, bipartisan solution to a mistake that was made by regulators. We need to grant clarity and harmony to those who are borrowing those dollars, those municipalities, States, and cities, as well as the investors and those who hold these bonds.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I am pleased that we can support H.R. 1624, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Huijzena) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1624, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: “A bill to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain municipal obligations as no lower than level 2b liquid assets, and for other purposes.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING RESOURCES, OFFICERS, AND TECHNOLOGY TO ERADICATE CYBER THREATS TO OUR CHILDREN ACT OF 2017

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 782) to reauthorize the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. Title I of the PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 17601 et seq.) is amended in section 107(a)(10) (42 U.S.C. 17617(a)(10)), by striking “fiscal year 2017” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2018 through 2022.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Goodlatte) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Jackson Lee) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 782, 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.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today that we are voting to reauthorize the Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to
end the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003, or the PROTECT Act.

The PROTECT Act authorizes local law enforcement task forces to combat crimes against children online. These internet crimes against children, or ICAC, task forces have been absent in every jurisdiction that deals with saving our children, and stopping the sexual exploitation on our children, to stopping the attack on our children, crimes against other victimization of children. We are all in agreement that we must eradicate this threat and letting them be strong in the knowledge of the love and affection the Nation has for them and protecting them as they grow and thrive.

Finally, this bill will provide the technological resources to detect online threats in real time and provide a platform on which law enforcement can operate in order to bring these perpetrators to justice.

Just this morning, the Judiciary Committee, as I indicated, held a hearing regarding online sex trafficking. We are all in agreement that we must eradicate this threat and letting them be strong in the knowledge of the love and affection the Nation has for them and protecting them as they grow and thrive.

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They provide law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies with guidance on victim support, forensic investigations, training and technical assistance, prevention and community education.

And finally, this bill will provide the technological resources needed to detect online threats in real-time and provide a platform on which law enforcement can operate in order to bring these perpetrators to justice.

Just this morning, the Judiciary Committee held a hearing regarding Online Sex Trafficking. We were all in agreement that we must stop this threat to our young people, as we must take action against other victimization of children that can occur online.

Although we still have work to do to address these problems, this bill is a good start, and for the foregoing reasons, I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the ranking member of the full committee.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 782, the Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act of 2017, and thank my colleague from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who has worked so diligently on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes appropriations for this program in the amount of $60 million for each fiscal year from 2018 through 2022. These figures are consistent with current appropriated levels.

We must continue to protect our children from the daily threats that endanger the well-being of our children.

Earlier this morning, as has been said, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations held a hearing addressing these very problems. As ranking member of that committee, I vow to continue my commitment toward eradicating this infectious poison that has claimed the innocence of so many of our youths.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and others on these very important issues. That is why I support the measures put forth in this bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), who has been a key supporter and advocate for this important legislation.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her commitment, for her work, and for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I spent 5 years as a proud member of the Judiciary Committee, as it is, and I hope to return one day to add on to my responsibilities as a member of the Appropriations Committee.

I also thank Mr. GOODLATTE for his leadership and solid, consistent support for this program over the last decade.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 782, Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act—or the PROTECT Our Children Act—because at this very moment there are thousands of children out there waiting to be saved.

Our children deserve, as we all agree, a future free from these prosperous, bright, secure, and, most of all, safe. That is, of course, what every parent cares about the most: the safety of their children. But, sadly, our children are vulnerable when they are online.

With the proliferation of the internet and wireless technology, online child pornography has become an epidemic, and I don’t use that term lightly. The ever-increasing reach of the modern internet has facilitated an exploding, multibillion-dollar market for child pornography.

Tragically, the demand for this criminal market can only be supplied by graphic new images, and these images can only be supplied through the sexual assault of more children. Let’s understand that these are not just heinous photos or images. They are, simply put, crime scene photos created by a thriving industry that uses children as sexual commodities.

Ten years ago, I introduced H.R. 3845, the Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act of 2007—or PROTECT Our Children Act of 2007.

At a House Judiciary hearing on that bill, my colleagues will remember we heard from a very brave young woman, Alicia Kozakiewicz. She had been abducted by an internet predator when she was just 13 years old. She was held captive in his dungeon basement and sexually tortured for 4 days.

The FBI found Alicia because the Virginia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force—or ICAC—had the technology to lift the digital fingerprints of this perpetrator’s crimes. They were able to discover the location where he held her captive, chained to the floor, connected to a collar around her neck. Internet crimes officers tracked the IP address back to his door and literally rescued Alicia from death.

I remember Alicia’s testimony like it was yesterday. She moved many of the members of that committee, including myself, to tears. Over the course of that next year, we learned a lot about these types of offenders: who they are, how they operate, and, most importantly, where they are.

We saw detailed law enforcement maps that showed the locations of hundreds of thousands of sexual predators, over half of whom had actual child victims waiting to be rescued.

That number might sound large to think: Come on, that has to be an exaggeration. It is not. I have seen the evidence before my eyes: hundreds of thousands of sexual predators, each on a computer uploading pictures of child victims that they are sexually assaulting. Those maps described the truly harrowing environment.

Congress did what it was supposed to do. We acted. We passed H.R. 3845 and, this year, its companion, S. 1738. This legislation established the National Internet Crimes Against Children—or ICAC—Task Force Program, a specialized group of law enforcement officials dedicated to the protection of our children.

In 2009 and 2010, Congress funded the ICAC Task Force at close to their full authorization levels of $50 million per year. The task forces grew from 42 to 61, and arrests and child rescues doubled.

Literally thousands more predators were apprehended and children rescued. An untold number of sexual assaults were prevented by virtue of the fact that law enforcement agencies were sitting behind bars, where they could no longer harm our children.

In 2011, however, the ICAC Task Force budget was slashed, cut from $50 million to where it stood at $27 million. So, with all due respect, I have to correct my colleagues. We are not funding the ICAC Task Force at authorized levels.

This cut remains intact, despite the fact that, as of August 2017, law enforcement has seen nearly a half million unique IP addresses trafficking in sexual abuse images in the U.S. That is hundreds of thousands of separate online sexual predators, and that number is only from January 2017 to August 31, 2017.

Even more heartbreaking, law enforcement officials tell us that the victims are getting younger, most under the age of 10, and the abuse is getting more heinous. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 44 percent of the images, Mr. Speaker, they viewed in 2016 depicted sexual torture.

Law enforcement also tells us that only 7 percent of the top 100 traders on peer-to-peer networks trading these types of images are even under investigation.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just unacceptable; it is tragic. We owe our children much better than that. They deserve our help and a Congress that will do whatever it can to ensure their health and safety.

S. 782, the Senate version of a bill that I introduced in March of this year with my colleague and friend, LAMAR SMITH, as the chairman kindly thanked us, reauthorizes the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

According to estimates, half of the adult offenders made by ICAC teams lead us to the door of a hands-on offender and, thus, a child waiting to be rescued.

The PROTECT Our Children reauthorization before us today will help us continue to provide the safety net we so desperately need. These highly successful ICAC Task Forces to continue to support State and local law enforcement agencies.
While I applaud House leadership for making sure this crucial child rescue program and funding is not allowed to expire, I beseech my colleagues to also make sure that the ICAC Task Forces are fully funded. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I press for that unyielding support.

We have to do better. We have to get as close to the authorization level as we can, because we actually rescue children with the more resources we put into this.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, we must give the protection of these children our full focus and efforts. Please think about these precious babies being victimized. If you are a parent—and many of us are—God forbid if it was your own child. It could be anyone's children, because of the prevalence of our children being online.

Let's give these ICAC teams the resources they need to rescue as many children as possible. If we do that, thousands more innocent children will be protected from these unspeakable crimes. There, but for the grace of God, go our families and children.

I thank my Republican lead cosponsor, Congressman LAMAR SMITH, for teaming up with me again to reauthorize this program for another 5 years. This is a critical issue. I urge my colleagues to support the PROTECT Our Children Act reauthorization.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the full committee and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ for very instructive and important statements, particularly the plea that Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ made that we must reauthorize and, more importantly, fund these task forces, because they do, in fact, save lives.

Let me acknowledge the chairman of this committee for the collaboration on this bill, and let me again emphasize that we must make sure that it is authorized at the amount of money needed.

If there is ever an unfortunate and tragic example, it is that of the story of Alicia. She represents the Johnnys and Marys and Shirleys and Quamis and Lateshas and others across the Nation who fall victim to this kind of cruel and almost inhumane attack on our children, innocent as they are, smart as they are, using the internet as they do online for any number of reasons, but then woled by a dastardly person who wants to do them harm.

The task forces that are now based upon knowledge, expertise, commitment, power, and with number of staffing that they need, can really be for not only prevention, but the intervention to stop our children from falling victim.

So I ask my colleagues to support S. 782, the Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act of 2017—or the PROTECT Our Children Act—as quickly as possible so that it can move to the President's desk and, as well, that we continue our pathway not only of intervention and prevention, but completely ceasing the online violence against our children because we have been able to ensure that these individuals, in large numbers, are brought to justice by that very point, they cease to survive and thrive on the internet.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for support of S. 782, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their strong bipartisan support and our staff on both sides of the aisle for their outstanding work on this very important legislation to reauthorize a program that I am very, very familiar with.

The sheriff of Bedford County, Virginia, has been a leading advocate for this program and has provided services in his sheriff's department that have protected thousands of children not just in our immediate region in southwest Virginia, but all across the country.

I am very, very familiar with the work that goes on, day in and day out, of training law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and others, as well as the detection and prosecution of individuals who would commit these heinous crimes. This bill has done as much as any I know to keep children safe on the internet.

This law and this bill are important to reauthorize for another 5 years. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows: S. 178

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—SUPPORTING FEDERAL CASES INVOLVING ELDER JUSTICE

Sec. 101. Supporting Federal cases involving elder justice.

TITLE II—IMPROVED DATA COLLECTION AND FEDERAL COORDINATION

Sec. 201. Establishment of best practices for local, State, and Federal data collection.

TITLE III—ENHANCED VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND ELDER ABUSE SURVIVORS

Sec. 301. Sense of the Senate.
Sec. 302. Report.

TITLE IV—ROBERT MATAVA ELDER ABUSE PROSECUTION ACT OF 2017

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Enhanced penalty for telemarketing and email marketing fraud directed at elders.
Sec. 403. Training and technical assistance for States.
Sec. 404. Interstate initiatives.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 502. GAO reports.
Sec. 503. Outreach to State and local law enforcement agencies.
Sec. 504. Model power of attorney legislation.
Sec. 505. Best practices and model legislation for guardianship proceedings.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the terms "abuse", "adult protective services", "elder", "elder justice", "exploitation", "law enforcement", and "victim" have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397);

(2) the term "elder abuse" includes abuse, neglect, and exploitation of an elder; and

(3) the term "State" means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

TITLE I—SUPPORTING FEDERAL CASES INVOLVING ELDER JUSTICE

Sec. 101. SUPPORTING FEDERAL CASES INVOLVING ELDER JUSTICE.

(a) SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE.—

(1) ELDER JUSTICE COORDINATORS.—The Attorney General shall designate, for each Federal judicial district not less than one Assistant United States Attorney to serve as the Elder Justice Coordinator for the district, who, in addition to any other responsibilities, shall be responsible for—

(A) serving as the legal counsel for the Federal judicial district on matters relating to elder abuse;

(B) prosecuting, or assisting in the prosecution of, elder abuse cases;
(C) conducting public outreach and awareness activities relating to elder abuse; and
(D) ensuring the collection of data required to be collected under section 202.

(2) Requirement.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall, with respect to crimes relating to elder abuse and financial exploitation, implement or expand a regular and comprehensive training program to train agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the investigation and prosecution of such crimes. Federal agencies on matters relating to the enforcement and consumer education efforts and policy activities of the Federal Trade Commission on elder justice issues.

(2) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and once every year thereafter, the Attorney General of the United States, or any successor thereto, for the purpose of advising the Attorney General on policies of the Department of Justice relating to elder abuse.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ELDER JUSTICE COORDINATOR.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall establish the Department of Justice Elder Justice Coordinator.

(c) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require or obligate any Federal agency to enforce laws related to elder abuse, which shall include—

(A) specialized strategies for communicating with and assisting elder abuse victims;
(B) relevant forensic training relating to elder abuse; and
(C) resource group.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall, with respect to crimes relating to elder abuse and financial exploitation, implement or expand a regular and comprehensive training program to train agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the investigation and prosecution of such crimes. Federal agencies on matters relating to the enforcement and consumer education efforts and policy activities of the Federal Trade Commission on elder justice issues.

(2) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report detailing the enforcement actions taken by the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice, respecting, over the preceding year in each case in which not less than one victim was an elder or that involved a financial scheme or scam that was either targeted directly toward or largely affected elders.

(A) the name of the district where the case originated;
(B) the style of the case, including the case number and name;
(C) a description of the scheme or scam; and
(D) the outcome of the case.

(d) USE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

TITLE II—IMPROVED DATA COLLECTION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL DATA COLLECTION.

(a) In General.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall—

(1) establish best practices for data collection to focus on elder abuse; and
(2) provide technical assistance to State, local, and tribal governments in adopting the best practices established under paragraph (1).

(b) Deadline.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall publish the best practices established under subsection (a) on the website of the Department of Justice in a publicly accessible manner.

(c) Limitation.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require or obligate compliance with the best practices established under subsection (a)(1).

SEC. 202. EFFECTIVE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND FEDERAL DATA COLLECTION.

(a) In General.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall, on an annual basis—

(1) collect from Federal law enforcement agencies, other agencies as appropriate, and Federal prosecutors’ offices statistical data related to elder abuse cases, including crimes or investigations where one or more victims were elders, or the case or investigation involved a financial scheme or scam. If such data exist, the Attorney General shall collect statistics including the number of cases with the victim being an elder; and
(2) publish on the website of the Department of Justice in a publicly accessible manner—

(A) a summary of the data collected under paragraph (1); and
(B) recommendations for collecting additional data relating to elder abuse, including recommendations for ways to improve data reporting across Federal, State, and local agencies.

(b) Requirement.—The data collected under subsection (a)(1) shall include—

(1) financial scheme or scam
(2) the total number of elder abuse cases filed in Federal courts; and
(3) for each case described in paragraph (1),—

(A) the name of the district where the case originated;
(B) the style of the case, including the case number and name;
(C) a description of the act or acts giving rise to the elder abuse; and
(D) in the case of a scheme or scam, a description of such scheme or scam giving rise to the elder abuse.

(c) HHS Requirement.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, on an annual basis, provide to the Attorney General statistical data collected by the Secretary relating to elder abuse cases investigated by adult protective services, which shall be included in the summary published under subsection (a)(1).

(d) Prohibition on Individual Data.—None of the information reported under this section shall include personally identifiable data.

TITLE III—ENHANCED VICTIM ASSISTANCE TO ELDER ABUSE SURVIVORS

SEC. 301. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

(a) Findings.—The Senate finds that—

(1) The vast majority of cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults in the United States go unidentified and unresolved.
(2) Not less than $2,900,000,000 is taken from older adults each year due to financial abuse and exploitation.
(3) Elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation have no boundaries and cross all racial, social, class, gender, and geographic lines.
(4) Older adults who are abused are 3 times more likely to die each year than the same age group.
(5) Up to half of all older adults with dementia will experience abuse.

(b) Sense of the Senate.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) elder abuse involves the exploitation of potentially vulnerable individuals with devastating physical, mental, emotional, and financial consequences to the victims and their loved ones;
(2) to combat this threat to America’s older adults, we must do everything possible to both support victims of elder abuse and prevent the abuse from occurring in the first place, and
(3) the Senate supports a multipronged approach to prevent elder abuse and exploitation, protect the victims of elder abuse and exploitation from further harm, and bring to justice the perpetrators of such crimes.

SEC. 302. REPORT.

(a) In General.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the collection of statistical data under section 202(a)(1) begins and once each year thereafter, the Director of the Office for Victims of Crime shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(b) Reformative justice.—The Secretary of the Office for Victims of Crime shall, on an annual basis, prepare a report detailing the number of cases with the victim being an elder.
(b) CONTENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an analysis of victims’ assistance, victims’ compensation, and discretionary grants under such elder abuse victims (including elder victims of financial abuse, financial exploitation, and fraud) received assistance; and

(2) (C) redemptions for improving services for victims of elder abuse.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS


Section 204(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397n-1(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “(and, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph (2)(E), to the highest courts of States)” after “States;”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(and the highest courts of States, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph (2)(E)” after “local units of government”; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “or” after the semicolon;

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F); and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (D), the following new subparagraph:

“(5) REQUIREMENTS FOR COURT-APPOINTED GUARDIANSHIP OVERSIGHT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.—

“(A) AWARD OF GRANTS.—In awarding grants to the highest courts of States for demonstration programs described in paragraph (4), the Secretary shall consider the recommendations of the Attorney General and the State Justice Institute, as established by section 203 of the State Justice Institute Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10702).

“(B) COLLABORATION.—The highest court of a State awarded a grant to conduct a demonstration program described in paragraph (4)(E) shall collaborate with the State Unit on Aging for the State and the Adult Protective Services agency for the State in conducting the demonstration program.”

(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR COURT-APPOINTED GUARDIANSHIP OVERSIGHT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.—

Section 204(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397n-1(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(and, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph” and inserting “(and, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(and the highest courts of States, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph (2)(E)” after “local units of government”; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “or” after the semicolon;

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F); and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (D), the following new subparagraph:

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“(B) COLLABORATION.—The highest court of a State awarded a grant to conduct a demonstration program described in paragraph (4)(E) shall collaborate with the State Unit on Aging for the State and the Adult Protective Services agency for the State in conducting the demonstration program.”

(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR COURT-APPOINTED GUARDIANSHIP OVERSIGHT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.—

Section 204(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397n-1(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(and, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph” and inserting “(and, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(and the highest courts of States, in the case of demonstration programs described in paragraph (2)(E)” after “local units of government”; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “or” after the semicolon;

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F); and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (D), the following new subparagraph:

“(5) REQUIREMENTS FOR COURT-APPOINTED GUARDIANSHIP OVERSIGHT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.—

“(A) AWARD OF GRANTS.—In awarding grants to the highest courts of States for demonstration programs described in paragraph (4), the Secretary shall consider the recommendations of the Attorney General and the State Justice Institute, as established by section 203 of the State Justice Institute Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10702).

“(B) COLLABORATION.—The highest court of a State awarded a grant to conduct a demonstration program described in paragraph (4)(E) shall collaborate with the State Unit on Aging for the State and the Adult Protective Services agency for the State in conducting the demonstration program.”

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(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “or” after the semicolon;
schemes and other international criminal enterprises; 
B) the extent to which exploitation of older adults of the United States by international criminal enterprises has resulted in the incarceration of these citizens of the United States in foreign countries; and 
(C) the total annual number of elder abuse cases filed in the United States. 
(2) the results of intervention by the United States with foreign officials on behalf of citizens of the United States who are elder abuse victims in international criminal enterprises.

SEC. 503. OUTREACH TO STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report on efforts by the Department of Justice to conduct outreach to State and local law enforcement agencies on the process for collaborating with the Federal Government for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting interstate and international elder financial exploitation cases.

SEC. 504. MODEL POWER OF ATTORNEY LEGISLATION

The Attorney General shall publish model power of attorney legislation for the purpose of preventing elder abuse.

SEC. 505. BEST PRACTICES AND MODEL LEGISLATION FOR GUARDIANSHIP PROCEEDINGS

The Attorney General shall publish best practices for improving guardianship proceedings and model legislation relating to guardianship proceedings for the purpose of preventing elder abuse.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONyers) each desires an extension of time to respond.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 178, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Mrs. HANDEL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 548, I call up
the bill (H.R. 36) to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect pain-capable unborn children, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk reads the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 36

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the “Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND DECLARATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY FOR ENACTMENT.

Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) Pain receptors (nociceptors) are present throughout the unborn child's entire body and nerves link these receptors to the brain's thalamus and subcortical plate by no later than 20 weeks after fertilization.

(2) By 8 weeks after fertilization, the unborn child reacts to touch. After 20 weeks, the unborn child reacts to stimuli that would be recognized as painful if applied to an adult human, for example, by recoiling.

(3) In the unborn child, application of such pain is associated with significant increases in stress hormones known as the stress response.

(4) Subjection to such painful stimuli is associated with long-term changes in neurodevelopmental effects, such as altered pain sensitivity and, possibly, emotional, behavioral, and learning disabilities later in life.

(5) For the purposes of surgery on unborn children, fetal anesthesia is routinely administered and is associated with a decrease in stress hormones compared to their levels when painful stimuli are applied without such anesthesia. In the United States, surgery on unborn children is being performed by 20 weeks after fertilization and earlier in specialized units affiliated with children's hospitals.

(6) The position, asserted by some physicians, that the unborn child is incapable of experiencing pain until a point later in pregnancy than 20 weeks after fertilization predates the significant evidence that the ability to experience pain depends on the cerebral cortex and requires nerve connections between the thalamus and the cortex. However, recent medical research and analysis, especially since 2007, provides strong evidence for the conclusion that a functioning cortex is not necessary to experience pain.

(7) Substantial evidence indicates that children born missing the bulk of the cerebral cortex, those with hydranencephaly, nevertheless experience pain.

(8) In adult humans and in animals, stimulation or ablation of the cerebral cortex does not alter pain perception, while stimulation or ablation of the subcortical plate, to fulfill the role of the thalamus, is 20 weeks or greater.

(9) Substantial evidence indicates that structures used for pain processing in early development differ from those of adults, using different neural elements available at specific times during development, such as the subcortical plate, to fulfill the role of pain processing.

(10) The position, asserted by some commentators, that the unborn child remains in a coma-like sleep state that precludes the unborn child experiencing pain is inconsistent with the accepted reaction of unborn children to painful stimuli and with the experience of fetal surgeons who have found it necessary to sedate the unborn child with anesthetics to prevent an otherwise engaged in vigorous movement in reaction to invasive surgery.

(11) Consequently, there is substantial medical evidence that an unborn child is capable of experiencing pain at least by 20 weeks after fertilization, if not earlier.

(12) It is the compelling and undeniable interest of the United States in protecting the lives of unborn children from the stage at which substantial medical evidence indicates that they are capable of feeling pain.

(13) The compelling governmental interest in protecting the lives of unborn children from the stage at which substantial medical evidence indicates that they are capable of feeling pain is intended to be separate from and independent of the compelling governmental interest in protecting the lives of unborn children from the stage of viability, and neither governmental interest is intended to replace the other.

(14) Congress has authority to extend protection to pain-capable unborn children under the Supreme Court’s Commerce Clause precedents and under the Constitution’s grants of power to Congress under the Equal Protection, Due Process, and Enforcement Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

SECTION 3. PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 74 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1531 the following:

"SEC. 1532. PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION.

(a) UNLAWFUL CONDUCT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, it shall be unlawful for any person to perform an abortion or attempt to do so, unless in conformity with the requirements set forth in subsection (b).

(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR ABORTIONS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT OF THE AGE OF THE UNBORN CHILD.—The physician performing or attempting the abortion shall first make a determination of the post-fertilization age of the unborn child, and reasonably rely upon such a determination made by another physician. In making such a determination, the physician shall make such inquiries of the pregnant woman and perform or cause to be performed such medical examinations and tests as a reasonably prudent physician would perform in the case and the medical conditions involved, would consider necessary to make an accurate determination of post-fertilization age.

(2) REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM HIGHEST DEGREE OF CARE REQUIRED.—Any health care practitioner or any other person who performs or attempts to perform an abortion shall, prior to the abortion, place in the patient medical file documentation from a hospital licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, a medical clinic licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, or a abortion licensed by the State, a counselor licensed by the State, or a victim's rights advocate provided by a law enforcement agency that the adult woman seeking the abortion obtained medical treatment or counseling for the rape or an injury related to the rape.

(3) DOCUMENTATION PERTAINING TO ADULTS.—A physician who performs or attempts to perform an abortion under an exception provided by subparagraph (B) or (C) shall, prior to the abortion, place in the patient medical file documentation from a hospital licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, a medical clinic licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, or a abortion licensed by the State, a counselor licensed by the State, or a victim's rights advocate provided by a law enforcement agency that the adult woman seeking the abortion obtained medical treatment or counseling for the rape or an injury related to the rape.

(4) REQUIREMENT TO APPROVE AN ABORPTION.—A physician who performs an abortion shall secure the approval of a responsible person, who is a licensed physician, who intends to perform or attempt to perform an abortion in accordance with this section, and the child is born alive, as defined in section 8 of title 1 (commonly known as the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act of 2002), shall have authority to provide care to the child born alive at the gestational age in the course of a natural birth.

(5) MANDATORY REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS.—A health care practitioner or any employee of a hospital, a physician's office, or an abortion clinic who has knowledge of a failure to comply with the requirements of this section, and the child is born alive, is required to report the violation to the appropriate State or Federal law enforcement agency or both.

(6) DEATH OF UNBORN CHILD.—A physician who performs or attemps to perform an abortion under an exception provided by subparagraph (B) or (C) shall, prior to the abortion, place in the patient medical file documentation from a hospital licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, a medical clinic licensed by the State or operated under authority of a Federal agency, or a abortion licensed by the State, a counselor licensed by the State, or a victim's rights advocate provided by a law enforcement agency that the adult woman seeking the abortion obtained medical treatment or counseling for the rape or an injury related to the rape.
(1) a statement by the physician indicating the probable post-fertilization age of the pain-capable unborn child;

(2) a statement that Federal law allows abortion after 20 weeks fetal age only if the mother’s life is endangered by a physical disorder, physical illness, or physical injury, when the pregnancy was the result of rape, or an act of incest against a minor;

(3) a statement that the abortion must be performed by the method most likely to allow the child to be born alive unless this would cause significant risk to the mother;

(4) a statement that in any case in which an abortion procedure results in a child born alive, Federal law requires that child to be given every form of medical assistance that is provided to children spontaneously born prematurely, including transportation and admittance to a hospital;

(5) a statement that those requirements are binding upon the physician and all other medical personnel who are subject to criminal and civil penalties and that a woman on whom an abortion has been performed may take civil action if these requirements are not followed; and

(6) an affirmation that each signer has filled out the informed consent form to the best of their knowledge and understands the information contained in the form.

(III) SIGNATURES REQUIRED.—The Informed Consent Authorization form shall be signed by the person seeking the abortion, the physician performing or attempting to perform the abortion, and a witness.

(IV) RETENTION OF CONSENT FORM.—The physician performing or attempting to perform an abortion must retain the signed informed consent form in the patient’s medical file.

(V) REQUIREMENT FOR DATA RETENTION.—Paragraph 164.590 of title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, shall apply to documentation required to be placed in a patient’s medical file pursuant to subparagraph (F) of this paragraph and a consent form required to be retained in a patient’s medical file pursuant to subparagraph (G) of such subsection in the same manner and to the same extent as such paragraph applies to documentation required by paragraph (j)(1) of such section.

(I) ADDITIONAL EXCEPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) In cases of risk of death or major injury to the mother.—Subparagraphs (C), (D), and (G) shall not apply if, in reasonable medical judgment, compliance with such paragraphs would pose a greater risk of—

(a) the death of the pregnant woman; or

(b) the substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function, not including psychological or emotional conditions, of the pregnant woman.

(II) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES.—Notwithstanding the definitions of the terms ‘medical treatment’ and ‘counseling’ in subsection (g), the counseling or medical treatment described in subparagraph (B)(ii) may not be performed at any facility that performs abortions (unless that facility is a hospital).

(III) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION IN CASES OF REPORTS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.—The requirements of subparagraph (B)(ii) do not apply to any abortion that the rape has been reported at any time prior to the abortion to a law enforcement agency or Department of Defense victim assistance personnel.

(IV) COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN STATE LAWS.—(A) State laws regarding reporting of rape and incest.—The physician who performs or attempts to perform an abortion under an exception provided by subparagraph (B) shall comply with any applicable State laws that are in effect as the State’s Attorney General may designate, regarding reporting requirements in cases of rape or incest.

(B) State laws regarding parental involvement.—The physician who intends to perform an abortion on a minor under an exception provided by subparagraph (B) shall comply with any applicable State laws requiring parental involvement in a minor’s decision to have an abortion.

(C) Criminal Penalty.—Whoever violates subsection (a) shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

(D) Bar to prosecution.—A woman upon whom an abortion in violation of subsection (a) is performed or attempted may not be subjected to any form of legal procurement under such law for an abortion performed or attempted in violation of any provision of this section or section 1507 of title 42, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (88 Stat. 255)."
"Abortions".

United States Code, is amended by striking chapters at the beginning of part I of title 18, item relating to chapter 74 in the table of a human spermatozoon with a human ovum.

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woman from Georgia.

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Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), my esteemed colleague, the Judiciary Committee chairman.

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Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), my esteemed colleague, the Judiciary Committee chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

In fact, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is so confident that, and, in doing so, it saves lives. The bill before us does just that, and, in doing so, it saves lives. Another serious flaw, in my view, of H.R. 36 is that its narrow rape exclusion completely misconstrues the difficult challenge to Roe.

Today, we understand so much more about a baby's development during a pregnancy. Voluntarily terminating the life of an innocent baby when we know that baby can feel pain can no longer be acceptable, and a majority of Americans agree.

Hearts and minds are changing. How many of us have marveled at the vivid sonogram images of a soon-to-be-born son, niece, or grandchild? How many of us have been amazed and so very grateful that babies born early, as early as 20 weeks, have a very real chance of survival?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 548, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. HANDEL) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Mrs. HANDEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 36.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, also known as Micah's Law.

This bill prohibits most elective abortions at 20 weeks after fertilization and thereafter. That is the beginning of the fifth month of pregnancy. That is the point in a pregnancy when a substantial body of medical evidence shows that a baby in the womb can feel pain.

H.R. 36 is humane legislation for innocent babies and for mothers. It in-
save over 2,000 lives each year, giving America the gift of thousands more children with all the wondrous human gifts they will bring to the world in so many amazing forms for generations to come.

Mr. COYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the time to speak on this important subject. While it is important, it is also embarrassing somewhat to us, because I listen to the other side, and the first thing that the chairman does over here is he shows a New York Times ad. And because of The New York Times ad at the time of Roe v. Wade, he suggests that we should turn over Roe v. Wade because it is antiquated.

Well, in 1791, the Second Amendment was written to protect us, and we had guns, and we had laws that you could shoot one bullet at a time; and yesterday, we had a man in Las Vegas with guns who could shoot "da da da da da da da da" and kill 59 people and wound 586.

If we look back to 1791, we find that those weapons were not in that ad, but do they talk about changing the Second Amendment, do they talk about protecting Americans from that type of violence? No. They come here and talk about protecting the unborn, forgetting about the rights of women guaranteed them by Roe v. Wade, the law of the land, which is the law of the land that says viability comes at 24 weeks.

They talk about what they say are medical reasons, and they cite a substantial body of medical evidence. What they don’t tell you is the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists are against this bill, and there is no medical group or medical society in this country that is for this bill, but they know more about medicine and about pain for the unborn than do the doctors and the scientists.

They bring this to us, an unconstitutional bill, an unconstitutional bill that produces a substantial body of medical evidence. What they don’t tell you is the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists are against this bill, and there is no medical group or medical society in this country that is for this bill, but they know more about medicine and about pain for the unborn than do the doctors and the scientists.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

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from Colorado (Ms. DeGETTE), the co-
chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I
thank the gentleman and also Ms.
JAYAPAL for allowing me to speak
today.

Madam Speaker, I rise for my former
district director Chris and his wife,
Bridget. This is their story.

Bridget was pregnant with their very
much-wanted second child. After the
20th week, they were stunned to learn
that the brain stem of the fetus was
not attached, and if the baby even sur-
vived, then the newborn would likely
die within hours. Doctors told the
family, if they wanted more children, it
would be a good idea to end the preg-
nancy. After consulting with their
minister, they decided to do so.

The happy ending is that a year or so
later another child was born, and she is
happy and healthy today.

As co-chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus,
I know that difficult circumstances al-
ways surround these highly personal
decisions, and I don’t think that the
U.S. Congress is the body that should
impose its opinion.

Just imagine the horrible choices
families would have to make if H.R. 36
became law. Ninety-nine percent of
abortions are conducted before the 20-
week mark. Virtually all the rest are
just like this situation.

Madam Speaker, I urge the body to
reject this bill and to move on to im-
portant issues that are facing this
country.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I
yield 1 minute to the gentleman from
Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN), the Speaker of
the House.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam
Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for
yielding, and I thank her for her lead-
ership.

I would also say to the last speaker,
this affects that 1 percent that she was
referring to.

Madam Speaker, life is precious. We
are reminded of this in ways wonderful;
we are reminded of this in ways dif-
ficult. Today, I rise in support of life. I
rise in support of Micah’s Law. I rise in
recognition that advancements in tech-
ology today both reveal more about
the stages of life as well as show us the
promise of preserving it.

As unpleasant as it may be, tech-
nology reveals something to us about
suffering. It now shows us that the un-
born can feel pain inside the womb.

The science is in and the science is
real. At 20 weeks old, ultrasound im-
gages reveal that unborn babies respond
to unwanted stimuli—to pain—the
same exact way adults do: they recoil;
they contract.

In cases of abortion, these unborn ba-
bies are feeling pain. They suffer. That
is really hard to hear, and it is really
hard to say. But now that we are seeing
scientific evidence and proof that these
babies feel pain, the question is: What do
we do about it?

We can’t claim ignorance. Their pain
is no longer invisible to us, and we can-
not say, as a society, with a good and
upright conscience, that we can just
continue to ignore it.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Pro-
tection Act, sponsored by our colleague
TRENT FRANKS, protects these babies
by restricting abortion to 20 weeks
after fertilization occurs, the point at
which science has proven a baby can feel
pain.

It is easy to turn a blind eye to the
pain of others. For a moment, you
think that if we just ignore it, it will go
away and it doesn’t exist. But our
hearts and our minds are always going
to remind us.

We cannot stop the pain of the world
by turning away from it. We must not
turn away from the pain of the most
vulnerable among us, the ones who
have nowhere to run to.

Madam Speaker, our humanity
shines brightest when we stand up for
those who are suffering, when we pro-
ect people from pain. I simply ask my
colleagues, let’s be moved by this suffering.
Let’s also be inspired by life.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I
yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman
from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL), a
member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, I
rise to strongly urge a “no” vote on
H.R. 36, and I rise today for Gina.

Gina, who lives in Seattle, found out
at her 20-week ultrasound that the
baby had multiple fetal anomalies,
both cardiac and brain, that were fatal.
The baby would either die before birth
or within the first few days or weeks of
life.

Gina decided to end the pregnancy,
herself, to make deci-
sions about her own body. If Gina were
in a different State with restrictive
laws, she would not have been able to
get the evidence-based and compas-
sionate care that she deserved. This
important decision was made between Gina and her
doctor.

The Supreme Court has made it clear
that it is her right, and yet our Repub-
lican colleagues continue to try to
take that right away from Gina and
other women in her position.

This bill not only takes healthcare
decisions out of the hands of patients,
but, Madam Speaker, it could penalize
doctors with up to 5 years in prison for
performing these abortions. This is un-
constitutional.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The
time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentle-
woman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker,
Gina and all women deserve to have ac-
cess to care that is comprehensive and
compassionate. Madam Speaker, on
their behalf, I urge my colleagues to
vote “no” on H.R. 36. We must stop
these bans and support women like
Gina to continue to have their con-
stitutional rights and to make deci-
sions about their own bodies.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I
yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman
from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), chair-
woman of the Education and the Work-
force Committee.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I thank
my colleague from Georgia for her
leadership on this issue.

Mr. CONYERS. I rise in support of
H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child
Protection Act.

The United States currently stands
alongside North Korea, China, and
Vietnam as one of only seven countries
that allow elective abortion to occur
after 20 weeks postfertilization.

At this point in their life, unborn ba-
bies have a well-developed brain and
nervous system as well as pain recep-
tors. This fetal development is ob-
served by surgeons who routinely see
these unborn children react to pain. In
fact, doctors administer anesthesia to
these children in the womb during fetal
surgeries.

I am proud to support this bill, also
known as Micah’s Law, because we must
protect these unborn children, not cruelly inflict pain and deny them
their inherent dignity by treating them
as objects.

One day, I hope that a cultural life
will take hold in the United States and
these vulnerable children and ensure
they are not subject to unimaginable
pain and to affirm life by voting in
favor of this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I
yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman
from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), a senior
member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, today
I rise for Phil and his wife, to tell their
story.

Phil and his wife tried to get preg-
nant for several years. After fertility
treatment, they were thrilled when his
wife finally became pregnant with
twin babies. Sadly, their twins were
diagnosed with twin-twin transfusion
syndrome, a deadly complication.

At week 21, Phil and his wife learned
the devastating and frightening news
that not only would both twins die, but
that without an abortion, his wife was
at serious risk of suffering a ruptured
uterus.

Their options were limited. Their
doctor could not perform an abortion
because he was affiliated with a Catho-
lic hospital, and Phil’s wife was unable
to fly due to her high-risk pregnancy.

Instead, they drove from their home in
Missouri to Kansas to terminate the
pregnancy by induced labor and deliv-
ery.

Phil and his wife were devastated.
After the twins’ deaths, Phil partici-
pated in a baptism and grieved their
loss.

Phil wants lawmakers to know: “De-
cisions about abortion need to be made
with the families and with the best medical information available." As he rightly puts it: "There is no one-size-fits-all situation for all pregnancies."

Placing government limitations on the constitutionally protected healthcare options available to women and their families will only add heartache and tragedy to these most difficult and painful decisions.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Phil and his family, I urge my colleagues to vote "no." (Mr. NADLER)

Mrs. McCRORIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Georgia for her leadership on this legislation, and I rise to support life.

Madam Speaker, this is about the values that define us as Americans. We see the potential in every life, and that includes the unborn. The Micah Act is life-affirming legislation that shows compassion for the baby and the mom.

Ten years ago, I received tough news that my nephew had Down syndrome, an extra 21st chromosome. The doctors told us it would be a long road ahead.

Today, I see more clearly. Too often others try to define a baby's future before they are even born. Part of being an American is not letting others define us.

I look at our son, Cole, and I see a healthy 10-year-old working his way through fifth grade. His life is different than we imagined—in a good way. He lights up a room. People are drawn to him. He plays sports and is in Cub Scouts. He is living a full life with huge potential.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to support this legislation that reflects our values and the sanctity of life, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. ROE).

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, as a proud cosponsor, I rise today in support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Before coming to Congress, I worked as an OB/GYN physician for over 30 years, where I had the tremendous privilege to see life at all stages of development. Today's technology, like 3-D and 4-D ultrasound, has given us a window into that miracle that shows the unborn child is a living, feeling human being.

Due to medical achievements, premature babies now are surviving and thriving after being born earlier and earlier, including babies born at or before 20 weeks, the 20-week cutoff by this bill. I can give you case after case. I have watched these children grow up in my hometown.

As a physician who has delivered almost 5,000 babies, it is unconscionable to me that our government allows innocent lives capable of feeling pain and enjoying life to be terminated. It is our responsibility as members of Congress to stand up and protect these lives who do not have a voice. This bill is an important step toward that goal, and I vote for it.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

Ms. DELBENE. Madam Speaker, today I rise for Stephanie from my district. This is her story.

Stephanie and her husband were building their family. They had one beautiful daughter when she got pregnant for the second time, a planned and wanted pregnancy.

But at 19 weeks, Stephanie got heart-breaking news. Her fetus had a devastating facial defect. Based on her age, medical history, and test results, she was strongly advised to terminate the pregnancy.

Stephanie ultimately decided not to carry the pregnancy to term. She told me, through tears, that her daughter needed her mother, and it wasn't worth the risk. It is a profoundly difficult situation for any family, but it was their decision.

H.R. 36 punishes women like Stephanie. It takes personal medical decisions out of families' hands and lets politicians decide. It also places a cruel burden on survivors of sexual assault and child abuse. It is unacceptable.

On behalf of Stephanie, I urge my colleagues to vote "no." We must stop the bans.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, is anecdotes on this side, in this debate that you hear here, Mr. Speaker, is anecdotes on this side, looking for exceptions that might sway, somehow, the people on the side that understand the rule is this: life begins at the moment of conception.

Human life is sacred in all of its forms and in these lives that are 20-weeks mature can and have and do survive outside the womb and they can feel pain inside the womb. And doctors that are doing surgery on pregnant mothers give anesthetic to those children because they don't want them flinching in the womb and suffering while they do the surgery.

How can we support a ghastly procedure of abortion on demand to end the life of the children that are born premature?

Sixty-five percent of the babies 22 to 26 weeks old survive that are born premature. As I said, we know they feel pain.

So I applaud everyone who has done the work on this, I stand solidly with the entire pro-life movement we have in this country. We have a long ways to go to get to where we need to be, but this is a step in the right direction.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to share Denise's story. Already a mom of two young children, Denise was expecting her third child. Until her 20-week scan, all her tests had come back perfectly. Her entire family was eagerly awaiting a baby boy.

The scan revealed that her son's brain had several severe deformities. He was also showing signs of other complications. It was the most painful and devastating day of Denise's life.
She spoke to numerous doctors and specialists. She spoke to her family and sought the guidance of counselors and professionals.

Ultimately, she and her husband decided to end the pregnancy. But finding a provider and arranging for the procedure was not easy. The doctors were not a single doctor in Virginia she could go to.

Denise, as a grieving mother in the middle of an absolutely emotional crisis, herself desperately calling doctors and hospitals all over the country to access the medical care she needed. Thanks to a family friend, she was ultimately able to find a provider in a major city within driving distance. H.R. 36 would have denied her that chance.

On behalf of Denise and others like her, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans.

Mrs. HANDEL. Mr. Speaker, today I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Mississippi (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because our family will welcome its first grandchild in the coming months. This is her 17-week ultrasound, and I cannot wait to meet her. This child is already known by her mother, Julia, quoting Psalm 139: "For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb."

Mr. Speaker, this child is a gift from God, a gift that we have far too often abandoned in this country.

Today, we know so much more. We know that, after 3 weeks, my granddaughter had a heartbeat. After 7 weeks, she began kicking her mother, like any good Wagner child would. By week 20, she could suck her thumb, and like any good Wagner child would.

By week 28, she began kicking her mother, or if he was still waiting for that expected date to be born, he could feel, and he wanted to live.

The fact is that children at 20 weeks feel pain; they are human. The European Journal of Anesthesiology describes how it is critical to administer anesthesia during fetal surgery procedures.

You know, a standard text on human development, Patten's Foundations of Embryology, shows how the basics of the nervous system are formed by week 4.

Dr. Ronald Brusseau, of Boston's Children's Hospital, wrote that by 20 weeks, children have developed sensory receptors for pain.

Two independent studies in 2006 used brain scans and showed unborn children respond to pain. These children have noses, eyes, and ears. You can hear their heartbeats and feel them move. They are human.

The Pain- Capable Unborn Child Protection Act— I like to call it Micah's Law— is called what it is because children like Micah feel pain. Those children are strong, just like Micah is strong, and those children should be protected.

Now, I have to admit, Madam Speaker, across the aisle I do hear some voices that said he doesn't have a right to live.

But what about Micah? What about the thousands of others like him, the same age he was born? What about the millions who were never given a chance?

Look into Micah's face—I think we all should—and tell me he isn't human. Look at him when he was born and tell me that child doesn’t have a right to live.

We should care for the voiceless, for those whose cries of pain are never heard. We should care for the defenseless, for those who will only be saved if we act to protect them.

We should care for the marginalized, for those who have their very humanity denied, even as their noses, eyes, ears, and heartbeats, every movement and visible testament of their lives. Their children need love. Their mothers need love. Let's end the pain. These children are suffering, so let's end the pain. These children want to live, so let's end their pain.

Micah is a beautiful kid, and there are millions of Micahs who will never smile; Micahs who will never walk; Micahs who will never scrape their knees and get into trouble; Micahs who will never learn to read; Micahs who will never fall in love and have children of their own; Micahs who will never have the chance to tell their mother and father: "I love you." We will never know those Micahs.

Our lives are poorer because their lives were cut short. But there are more. InSTEAD of pain— instead of pain—we should fill them with love.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise for Tori. This is her story.

Tori and her husband planned her pregnancy carefully to make sure that her maternity leave worked with her graduate studies, and they were thrilled that the plan right for their family came together and they were pregnant.

At 20 weeks, during a routine ultrasound, they were devastated to learn that the fetus carried a rare disorder that resulted either in the death of the infant shortly after delivery, or a very shortened lifespan wrought with profound disability. Their situation was now out of control. It is one decision that no parent ever wants to have to make.

Their decision was agonizing: end the pregnancy after 20 weeks or watch their child die or suffer.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Tori, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36. We must stop the bans.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, a former abortionist, Dr. Levatino testified before Congress and described how he and other abortionists actually kill helpless babies. He killed 1,200 of them. He said: "Imagine, if you can, that you are a pro-choice OB-GYN like I was. Using a Sopher 13-inch clamp with rows of ridges or teeth, grasp anything you can inside the womb. Once you grasp something solid, quiet the clamp, set the jaws and pull hard—really hard. You feel something let go, and out pops a fully formed leg about 6 inches long."

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Reach in again and grasp anything you can, and out pops an arm. Reach in again, and again, and again with the clamp, and tear out the spine, the intestines, the heart and lungs.

Even if pain wasn’t present, in the course of a natural birth. —Justice Kennedy

The human fetus possesses the ability to experience pain from 20 weeks gestation, if not earlier, and the pain perceived by the fetus is possibly more intense than that perceived by term newborns or older children . . .” Why? Dr. Anand points out that “the highest density of pain receptors per square inch of skin in human development occurs in utero from 20 to 30 weeks gestation and continues until 32 weeks gestation would experience a much more intense pain than older infants or children or adults.”

Dr. Colleen Malloy, assistant professor, Division of Neonatology at the Northwestern University, in her testimony before the House Judiciary Committee said: “When we speak of infants at 20 weeks post-fertilization we no longer have to rely on inferences or ultrasound imagery, because such premature patients are kicking, moving and reacting and developing right before our eyes in the neonatal intensive care unit.”

Dr. Malloy went on to say, “in today’s medical arena, we resuscitate patients at this age and are able to witness their ex-utero growth. I could never imagine subjecting my tiny patients to horrific procedures such as those that involve limb detachment.”

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 36.

Overwhelming majorities of Americans—some 60–64% according to pollsters—support legal protection for pain-capable unborn children.

Today we know that unborn babies not only die but suffer excruciating pain during dismemberment abortion—a cruelty that rips arms and legs off a helpless child.

A former abortionist, Dr. Anthony Levatino, testified before Congress that he had performed at least 2,100 abortions—over 100 late-term abortions—to 24 weeks gestation.

Dr. Levatino described what the abortionist actually does to the helpless child. “Imagine if you can that you are a pro-choice obstetrician/gynecologist like I was. Using a Sopher 13” clamp reach in again and again, and again, and again, and again, and again with the clamp and tear out the spine, the intestines, heart and lungs.”

Madam Speaker, even U.S. Supreme Court Justice Kennedy agrees. In his dissent to the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2000 Stenberg v. Carhart decision, Justice Kennedy observed that in D&amp;E dismemberment abortions, “The fetus, in many cases, dies just as a human adult or child would: It bleeds to death as it is torn limb from limb. The fetus can be alive at the beginning of the dismemberment process and can survive for a time while its limbs are being torn off.”

Justice Kennedy added in the Court’s 2007 opinion in Gonzales v. Carhart that D&amp;E abortions are “laden with the power to devolve into the most cruel and wanton of abortions.”

Even if pain wasn’t present, dismembering a child is violence against children and inhumane. But these babies actually suffer.

Dr. Robert White, professor of neurosurgery at Case Western Reserve University said an unborn baby at 20 weeks gestation “is fully capable of experiencing pain . . . without question, (abortion) is a dreadfully painful experience . . .”

An expert report prepared for the U.S. Justice Department, Dr. Kanvaljeet S. Anand, a pediatrician specializing in the care of critically ill newborns who have endured intensive research of pain and stress in the human newborn and fetus said: “. . .the human fetus possesses the ability to experience pain from 20 weeks gestation, if not earlier, and the pain perceived by the fetus is possibly more intense than that perceived by term newborns or older children . . .” Why? Dr. Anand points out that “the highest density of pain receptors per square inch of skin in human development occurs in utero from 20 to 30 weeks gestation and continues until 32 weeks gestation would experience a much more intense pain than older infants or children or adults.”

Dr. Colleen Malloy, assistant professor, Division of Neonatology at the Northwestern University, in her testimony before the House Judiciary Committee said: “When we speak of infants at 20 weeks post-fertilization we no longer have to rely on inferences or ultrasound imagery, because such premature patients are kicking, moving and reacting and developing right before our eyes in the neonatal intensive care unit.”

Dr. Malloy went on to say, “in today’s medical arena, we resuscitate patients at this age and are able to witness their ex-utero growth.”

She says “I could never imagine subjecting my tiny patients to horrific procedures such as those that involve limb detachment or cardiac injection”

In an undercover video released by David Daleiden, a Planned Parenthood Medical Director explains that before beginning a late abortion he initiates a protocol documentation form that says “I intend to utilize dismemberment techniques for this procedure.”

Notice the words—“dismemberment techniques”—“in order to extract the fetus in multiple parts.”

But seriously, we’ve known much of this for years. In 2006 I authored the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act that garnered 250 votes in favor—including 40 Democrats—to 162 against. I remember thinking on the day of the vote: “how can anyone vote to refuse to make child pain information part of informed consent?”

Congressman TRENT FRANKS has authored four extraordinarily important bills over the years to actually protect pain-capable babies in federal law from the violence of abortion including Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Acts that passed the House of Representatives in 2013 and again in 2015. Tragically, President Obama vetoed to veto this child protection legislation and the Senate failed to even pass it. However, should the House pass H.R. 36 today and if the Senate passes it as well, President Trump has said he would sign it.

Not only will babies be protected by federal law at five months and the pain suffered by these babies averted, but H.R. 36 requires that abortion be performed under limited circumstances provide the “best opportunity for the unborn child to survive” and that “a second physician trained in neonatal resuscitation” be “present and prepared to provide care to a child” to the same degree as the Born-Alive Infants’ Protection Act of 2002.

Thus, “any health care practitioner present at the time shall humanely exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious health care practitioner would render to a child born alive following the gestational age in the course of a natural birth.”

Moreover, “following the care required to be rendered . . . the child born alive shall be immediately transported and admitted to the hospital.”

Sixteen states have enacted pain-capable unborn child laws that closely parallel the bill before us today. These include Ohio, Texas, Nebraska, Idaho, Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Arizona, and Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky and Kansas.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that my colleagues respect unborn children as our nation’s littlest patients who like any other patient may need diagnosis and benign interventions to help them survive.

And preemies are surviving earlier and healthier as technology and medical science advance. Micah Pickering is a healthy 5 year old today. He was born prematurely at 20 weeks and was the size of this M&amp;M candy bag. Micah is the face of the pro-life movement. That is why the bill before us today is “Micah’s Law.”

A recent study of nearly 5,000 babies published in the New England Journal of Medicine confirmed that nearly a quarter of the premature babies born at 22 weeks survived. (Let me note that the 22 weeks gestational age referred to in the study was an infant born just before 20 weeks gestational age during the age dating system employed by H.R. 36).

Researchers at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) are developing a technology that they hope—in a decade—will be the new standard of care for extremely premature infants. Building a bridge between the mother’s womb and the outside world, the artificial wombs provide a soft, sterile, fluid filled environment for the child to continue to grow.

The babies we seek to protect from harm today may survive if treated humanely, with expertise and compassion—not the cruelty of the abortion.

Four years ago, Pennsylvania abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell was convicted of murder, conspiracy to kill and involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Even though the news of Gosnell’s child slaughter was largely suppressed by the mainstream media, many of my colleagues may remember that Dr. Gosnell operated a large Philadelphia abortion clinic where women died and countless babies were dismembered or chemically destroyed often by having their spinal cords snipped—all gruesome procedures causing excruciating pain to the victim.

The Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, Micah’s Law, is needed now more than ever because there are Gosnells all over America, dismembering and decapitating pain-capable babies for profit. The bill protects kids from preventable pain—and death.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, it is always hard for me to understand why our colleagues on the other side of the aisle embrace junk science, whether it is around global warming, where 99 percent of the scientists say, yes, it is happening, or in this case.

We have the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists from 2010 to 2012 stating that the periphery to the cortex is not intact until 24 weeks. The cortex is necessary for pain perception.”
In 2012, ACOG, in the Journal of American Medical Association, embraced that statement. So the vast majority of physicians and scientists say there is not pain perception at 20 weeks.

But let me talk about Dr. Jenn and Sammi. Sammi was 17, terrified, and pregnant when she went to a "clinic" that ended up being a crisis pregnancy center. The center gave Sammi a free, private ultrasound, which was actually broadcast throughout the clinic for all to see—a violation, I might say, of HIPAA. When Sammi said she wanted to end the pregnancy, the center called her almost daily saying she would die, get sick, and go to hell.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. Wagner). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman.

Ms. SPEIER. The center also lied about the due date, telling Sammi it was too late for an abortion. Finally, Sammi called her mom, who flew her to California to see Dr. Jenn.

On behalf of Dr. Jenn and Sammi, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to thegentlewoman from Nebraska (Mr. Fortenberry).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36. Republicans should stop playing politics with women's lives and focus on the real problems facing this government and this country, and stop interfering in the private lives of women. We must stop this ban.

Mrs. HANDLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, it is difficult to imagine what could be more important than establishing who is protected under the law and who is not; who is given a chance of life and who is denied it.

As technology continues to evolve, the more we can celebrate the ability we have to save a baby at just 20 weeks after conception is truly remarkable. I remember when I first became a nurse some 40 years ago. I vowed to devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care, whether they were born or unborn. I am still committed to that today. And 40 years later, the science tells us that after 20 weeks of pregnancy, unborn babies are able to feel pain instead of distress.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act protects those who cannot protect themselves when handed a death sentence.

Madam Speaker, there are currently seven countries in the world that allow elective late abortions, countries such as North Korea and China. Why in the world is the United States on a list of countries characterized as human rights abusers? Our Nation can do better than that.

I have seen how special care is given to that today. And 40 years later, the science tells us that after 20 weeks of pregnancy, unborn babies are able to feel pain instead of distress. The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act protects those who cannot protect themselves when handed a death sentence.

Madam Speaker, you are right. We don't put a price on life. We cherish it.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I rise for Donna. Ms. Clark of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, today I rise for Emilia. This is her story:

Eighteen years ago, Emilia was pregnant with her second child. She was happily married, financially secure, and looking forward to welcoming a new baby into her family. After Emilia's baby was diagnosed with Down syndrome, she was even more determined to raise her baby with love and compassion.

Imagine her devastation when, after a 20-week ultrasound, the baby was diagnosed with fetal hydrops and a battery of tests revealed her baby would not survive to term. Emilia made a wrenching decision to terminate her pregnancy.

Emilia's hospital didn't provide abortion services, so she went to Boston and had to pass through a wall of picketers that told her she was a murderer.

In the waiting room, she realized every other patient had the same accurate one was carrying a healthy baby. Every woman there was experiencing profound loss.

Under a 20-week ban, none of these moms can make a decision for their families with their doctors. We would urge that decision for them in Congress.

On behalf of Emilia, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36. We must stop the ban.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mr. Walker).

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative HANDEL for yielding.

As a former minister and as an American, even as a human being, I believe that every boy and girl is conceived with God-given potential and unique talents and abilities—abilities they will use to serve others and make a difference.

But let me put it this way: I know a young man named Luke. Luke's mother was in for a surprise when, at only 24 weeks into her pregnancy, her baby boy decided it was time to meet the world. To make a long story short, Luke worked through complications with his family, and he serves in our district office in North Carolina.

Every life is an opportunity. Every life is precious.

A little earlier we were challenged by the accusation that Republicans only care concerned about budget. It goes out the window when it comes to this issue.

You know what? You are right. We don't put a price on life. We cherish it.

Madam Speaker, I am a proud co-sponsor of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I rise for Donna. This is her story:
She said it was a miracle. At age 41, she was finally pregnant. Early blood tests and ultrasound showed a healthy fetus. Donna was filled with the joy of an expectant mother. Then tragedy struck. Her fetus stopped growing at 26 weeks. An ultrasound showed anencephaly, a fetus without a brain, a fetus that could not sustain life on its own.

Madam Speaker, this 20-week abortion bill is cruel punishment for women like Donna, forcing them to face weeks of painful agony with no hope for this life that they so wanted. This is a bill that inflicts pain, not stops it, and I urge my colleagues to vote “no.”

Mrs. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, as the father of 5 and the grandfather of 13, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, also known as Micah’s Law, named after Micah Pickering.

Micah was born prematurely at 22 weeks of age. In fact, the same age and exact stage of development that the current despicable policy permits for legal, on-demand abortion.

After receiving intensive care in his infancy, Micah is now an active, healthy, and happy kindergartner. Micah is living proof that we need to protect unborn children from pain after 20 weeks. It should pain us all that we fail to live that same camp as North Korea and China.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act will moderate our extreme position and ensure we protect the most vulnerable, like Micah Pickering, a lively 5-year-old I met last week.

Micah was born prematurely at the same age children would be protected under H.R. 36. Micah was able to survive and thrive after spending nearly 4 months in the neonatal intensive care unit. He is now in kindergarten, and I found out when talking to him that we share a love of Legos.

The bottom line is this: 20 weeks is halfway through a pregnancy. It is too late to end the life of an unborn baby. It violates what science wants, it violates science, and it violates our country’s most enduring values.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of Micah’s Law, H.R. 36.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, today I rise for Eva, an Oregon doctor who is one of the compassionate providers women turn to when facing an unintended or dangerous pregnancy.

Oregon has rejected restrictions on abortions, but because of bans or restrictions in other States, Dr. Eva provides healthcare services, including abortion, to women from around the country.

One patient was a high school senior who could not get an abortion in her home State. She spent weeks saving every penny she could to buy a plane ticket and pay for the procedure to fly cross-country. Instead of making women fly across the country, instead of debating this bill, and instead of cutting programs like the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program, which my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have done, we should be focused on preventing unintended pregnancies, and we should be expanding access to comprehensive reproductive care, something the Oregon Legislature did when they passed the landmark Reproductive Health Equity Act.

Madam Speaker, when abortion is banned, it does not go away. It drives women to unsafe back alleys and to dangerous self-induced abortions. We must work to shift our efforts to stand between women and their healthcare providers.

Please vote “no” on H.R. 36.

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN).

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Multiple scientific studies indicate that, by 20 weeks after fertilization, an unborn child’s nervous system has developed sufficiently for that child to feel pain. The United States stands among only a handful of nations that permit elective abortions after 20 weeks. It should pain us all that we fail to take a stand with that same camp as North Korea and China.

The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act will moderate our extreme position and ensure we protect the most vulnerable, like Micah Pickering, a lively 5-year-old I met last week. Micah was born prematurely at the same age children would be protected under H.R. 36. Micah was able to survive and thrive after spending nearly 4 months in the neonatal intensive care unit. He is now in kindergarten, and I found out when talking to him that we share a love of Legos.

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Madam Speaker, I urge passage of Micah’s Law, H.R. 36.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Multiple scientific studies indicate that, by 20 weeks after fertilization, an unborn child’s nervous system has developed sufficiently for that child to feel pain. The United States stands among only a handful of nations that permit elective abortions after 20 weeks. It should pain us all that we fail to take a stand with that same camp as North Korea and China.

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Madam Speaker, I urge passage of Micah’s Law, H.R. 36.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. HANDEL).

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Multiple scientific studies indicate that, by 20 weeks after fertilization, an unborn child’s nervous system has developed sufficiently for that child to feel pain. The United States stands among only a handful of nations that permit elective abortions after 20 weeks. It should pain us all that we fail to take a stand with that same camp as North Korea and China.

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Madam Speaker, I urge passage of Micah’s Law, H.R. 36.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. HANDEL).

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

Multiple scientific studies indicate that, by 20 weeks after fertilization, an unborn child’s nervous system has developed sufficiently for that child to feel pain. The United States stands among only a handful of nations that permit elective abortions after 20 weeks. It should pain us all that we fail to take a stand with that same camp as North Korea and China.

The bottom line is this: 20 weeks is halfway through a pregnancy. It is too late to end the life of an unborn baby. It violates what science wants, it violates science, and it violates our country’s most enduring values.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of Micah’s Law, H.R. 36.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL).

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman CONYERS for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, today I rise for Katie in California and in support of women everywhere who have relied on access to safe abortion procedures in their lifetime.

When Katie and her husband found out that their baby was conceived, they were overjoyed. Eighteen weeks later, they discovered that the fetus had multiple severe health problems, including spina bifida and a tethered spinal cord. This news was heartbreaking, and Katie and her husband made the decision to end the pregnancy at 22 weeks.

Katie wants lawmakers in Washington to know that it is not their
right to make this decision for her or other women. She says that it is a hor-
rific situation, and until you have been through it, you have no idea, and you
can't make that decision for someone else.

On behalf of Katie, I urge my col-
leagues to vote "no" on H.R. 36. We
must stop the bans.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I
yield 1 minute to the gentleman from
Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT).

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker. I
rise today in strong support of H.R. 36,
the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protec-
tion Act.

It is a long title for a bill; however,
we are talking about protecting unborn
children. As it has been obvious here
today, it is always difficult to talk
about this issue, but when we talk
about pain-capable unborn children, we
are referring to, in particular, children
who are still in the womb at 20 weeks.

As it has been pointed out by my col-
leagues, and time again, scientists
have proven that unborn children, even
at 20 weeks old, are capable of feeling
pain. The goal of this legislation is to
protect these children by ensuring that
they cannot be aborted.

Today, if a physician performs an in-
trauterine surgery on a 20-week-old
unborn child, the standard protocol for the
child is to be treated as a patient, not
just a blob of tissue. That child would
be given an injection of pain medica-
tion before the surgery, and this is
above and beyond the anesthesia given
to the mother before the surgery.

These babies have demonstrated to
medical experts that they respond to
painful stimuli because they flinch and
they recoil from sharp objects.

Madam Speaker, I urge my col-
leagues to vote "yes" on this legisla-
tion when it comes to the floor. Let's
do the right thing and protect unborn
children.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I
yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from
Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who is
a senior member on the Judiciary Com-
mitee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker,
I thank the gentleman for yielding......

Mr. CONYERS and I can remember
the same type of hearings and the same
type of legislation many years ago,
again denying women their constitu-
tional rights. I can see as clear as I can
see you, Mr. Speaker, the women who
were sitting and begging us not to
undermine them, their doctor, and
their faith.

So I rise today to say to my friends
on the other side of the aisle: You have
got it wrong. There are no mass abor-
tions. There is no call for mass abor-
tions. The women that are undergoing
these procedures are women who have
prayed and who have looked to their
faith, their doctor, and their family.

So I oppose this bill because it puts
the lives of women at risk, it interferes
with women's constitutionally guaran-
teed right of privacy, and it diverts at-
tention from the real problem facing
American women. Let us reauthorize
SCHIP. People are crying about that in
my district. How outrageous.

One of the most detestable aspects of
this bill is that it would curtail access
to care for women in the most desperate
circumstances. It is these women who
receive the 1.5 percent of abortions
that occur after 20 weeks.

What number did I say? 10? 20? 1.5,
and this is not diminishing the aspects
of this.

But it is those women who have
prayed. They have sought doctors'
help, and they, as well, have sought
their family's consultation.

We are making a mockery of these
women. These women are not standing
on the street corner saying, "I want to
have an abortion." They have a serious
situation, like April Salazar.

At 18 weeks, she and her husband
found out that their baby had a lethal
diagnosis, and if she carried the preg-
nancy to term and he was born alive,
he would die shortly from suffocation.
It is not pain of getting him out—he
would die. April hoped the news wasn't
true, so she requested more tests to
confirm the diagnosis. At 21 weeks she
had an abortion. This bill would have
stopped April.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The
time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I
yield the gentlewoman from Texas an
additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This would have
stopped April. Her husband, her family,
her God, and her doctor from making
the decision.

Even the exceptions are bogus be-
cause you frighten these women. The
idea of Jeni, in my home State, where
they had a 2-day waiting period listen-
ing to a mandatory script about abort-
ation and a sign-off from two separate
doctors. Once you start this, you are
taking it away from women who have
sought the faith leader, their doctor, and
their family.

This is a bad bill. We need to do some
important things. I would hope with
the carnage of Las Vegas, to save lives,
we would ban assault weapons and we
would not have that gentleman having
42 guns in his home and in his posses-
sion. That is what we need to fight to
save lives, not this bill that under-
mines the rights of women and their
faith and their doctor.

Madam Speaker, I stand in strong opposition
to H.R. 36, the "Pain Capable Unborn Child
Protection Act" and the underlying bill.

I opposed this irresponsible and reckless
legislation the last time it was brought to
the floor.

I oppose this bill because it is unneces-
sary, puts the lives of women at risk, interferes
with women's constitutionally guaranteed right
of privacy, and diverts our attention from the real
problems facing the American people.

A more accurate short title for this bill would be
the "Violating the Rights of Women Act of
2017."

Instead of resuming their annual War on
Women, our colleagues across the aisle
should be working with Democrats to help re-
buid the ravaged communities hit by hurri-
canes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

Madam Speaker, we could and should in-
stead be voting reauthorize the important
SCHIP program that has helped families get
on their feet for years.

The one thing we should not be doing is de-
bating irresponsible "messaging bills" that
abridge the constitutional rights of women for the umpteenth
time, we should bring to the floor for a first vote
comprehensive immigration reform legislation or
legislations repairing the harm to the Voting
Rights Act of 1965 by the Supreme Court's
decision in Shelby County v. Holder.

The one thing we should not be doing is de-
bating irresponsible "messaging bills" that
abridge the rights of women and poses a na-
tionwide threat to the health and wellbeing of
American women and a direct challenge to the
Supreme Court's ruling in Roe v. Wade.

Madam Speaker, one of the most detestable
aspects of this bill is that it would curb access
to care for women in the most desperate of
circumstances.

It is these women who receive the 1.5 per-
cent of abortions that occur after 20 weeks.

There is no way that the pregnancy would
end if she were a healthy baby.

Jeni and her husband chose to terminate
the pregnancy, but because they live in Texas,
they were forced to endure several cruel re-
strictions: a two-day waiting period, listening to
a mandatory script about abortion, and a sign-
off from two separate doctors.

Madam Speaker, every pregnancy is dif-
f erent.

No politician knows, or has the right to as-
sume he knows, what is best for a woman
and her family.

These are decisions that properly must be
left to women to make, in consultation with
their partners, doctors, and their God.

Madam Speaker, I also strongly oppose
H.R. 36 because it lacks the necessary excep-
tions to protect the health and life of the moth-
ern.

In Roe v. Wade, the Court held that a state
could not prohibit a woman from exercising
her right to terminate a pregnancy in order
to protect her health prior to viability.

While many factors go into determining fetal
viability, the consensus of the medical commu-
nity is that viability is acknowledged as not oc-
curring prior to 24 weeks gestation.

By prohibiting nearly all abortions beginning
at the "probable post-fertilization age" of 20
weeks, H.R. 36 violates this clear and long
standing constitutional rule.

Madam Speaker, the constitutionally pro-
ected right to privacy encompasses the right
of women to choose to terminate a pregnancy
before viability, and even later where con-
tinuing to term poses a threat to her health
and safety.

This right of privacy was hard won and must
be preserved inviolate.

I strongly oppose H.R. 36 and urge all
Members to join me in voting against this un-
wise measure that put the lives and health of
women at risk.

I would like to include in the Record stories
from two women:

April Salazar, New York: ‘‘It would have
been too hard for me to carry to term, and it

October 3, 2017
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE H7723
Today the House is taking a critical but seemingly uncontroversial step forward in protecting life by prohibiting abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, or put another way, when unborn children can feel pain.

Curiously, the United States is one of only seven countries worldwide, including North Korea, that still allow late-term abortions. This bill would end these horrific procedures.

I pray that one day our Nation will protect all unborn children, but this is an important beginning for a big step forward towards that goal.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

□ 1715

Mr. ENGEL. Today, I rise for Dr. Erica of New York. This is her story.

Dr. Erica’s patient was raped by an unknown assailant. The patient’s emotions surrounding the pregnancy were extremely complex. She desperately wanted to have a child but felt guilt, shame, and isolation after being raped.

She ultimately decided to continue the pregnancy. She believed it would help her to believe and grasp onto something positive after such a traumatic experience.

But then the patient went in for a scan at 20 weeks and was devastated to learn that the fetus had multiple lethal anomalies. She went to face yet another agonizing decision. Ultimately, she decided to end the pregnancy.

Thankfully, Dr. Erica was able to help this patient through the most difficult time in her life. I want to share her words: “As a physician, it is my job to guide the patient through the risks, benefits, and alternatives of all options available to her. It is not my job to place judgment on patients that only serve to punish women who are already suffering and it certainly is not the job of the legislature to interfere with the patient-physician relationship.”

On behalf of Dr. Erica and the women who made you.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

Mr. MESSER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Unborn Child Protection Act.

Our Nation has long recognized that we are all endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights, chief among them is the right to life. I am unapologetically pro-life because all human life has dignity and should be protected, especially the lives of defenseless unborn children.
family, doctors, and any others she chooses to involve, in keeping with her personal beliefs.

Madam Speaker, for these reasons, I urge my colleagues to please oppose this dangerous legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. HANDEL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, we have heard many impassioned stories this afternoon.

Much has changed since Roe v. Wade was upheld in the 1970s with have made extraordinary medical advances. Today, we know with great certainty that babies in the womb, starting at the fifth month of pregnancy, do indeed feel pain.

It is extraordinarily heartbreaking when an unborn baby is diagnosed with a severe and life-threatening abnormality, still that baby deserves a right to life and right to dignity.

My sister was born with no esophagus and given little hope to live. By the grace of God, she is a miracle, with just weeks of her birth, a new technology, a new treatment came forward. Today, she is the proud mother of my two nieces.

Madam Speaker, this is a good bill. It is a just bill. It is a moral bill to do what we are called to do, not just as Americans but as human beings: to protect lives of the most innocent.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support and urge every colleague to vote in support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.

H.R. 36 would prohibit the performance of any abortion after 20 weeks, and harshly punishes physicians who violate the law. This bill has narrow exemptions for the life of a mother (rape and incest) but there are no exemptions in the bill for conditions where the fetus has conditions or diagnoses that are incompatible with life.

We have spent the entirety of this Congress defending women’s reproductive rights and fighting against plans that would eliminate funding and access to the health care providers of a woman’s choosing. This bill is yet another attack on a woman’s right to decide what is best for her and her body. A woman, not a politician, must be able to make health decisions that are best for her own circumstances.

H.R. 36 ignores that every pregnancy is different and compromises a woman’s right to the health care she is legally entitled to. It punishes women who are already in difficult situations. The Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that neither a state nor the federal government can ban safe and legal abortion services pre-viability.

I support a woman’s legal right to opt for or against an abortion. The decision is private. It’s a matter of faith and it’s a matter of conscience, and our Constitution recognizes this.

What I do not support is a bill that takes away a woman’s constitutional right. The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act is a shameful attempt to impose a radical political agenda on women. It strips away their individual liberties and puts their health at serious risk. This bill is wrong, this bill is dangerous, and this House should reject it.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, the science is clear, as dismemberment abortion procedures pull children apart limb from limb, the baby feels pain. The baby recoils as the instruments get closer. The fight or flight instinct is there. If that isn’t proof of life, I don’t know what is. These late term abortions must end.

My position on this matter is well-known. It has long been my mission to protect the unborn.

A vast majority of Americans agree, late term abortions are wrong. Period. Full stop.

This bill isn’t just for the sake of the babies. This bill protects their mothers. At 20 weeks, this horrendous procedure is risky and subjects mothers to serious dangers.

Lives are at stake, both for mothers and their babies.

I support this bill, and urge my colleagues on the House floor to vote yes, and let me have just five minutes to do the same. Thank you Mr. FRANKS for introducing this important piece of legislation.

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, today, I rise for Dr. Liz. This is her story. Laura and Mark, a couple in Connecticut, sought prenatal care from Dr. Liz. When Laura was 20 weeks pregnant, they came in for an ultrasound.

The couple was devastated when the scan showed that their baby was affected by anencephaly, meaning absence of brain development. Dr. Liz remembers watching the joy and laughter leave Laura and Mark as they absorbed this news.

They sought refuge with their families and clergy, and jointly made the difficult decision to end the pregnancy rather than endure 20 more weeks, a delivery, and the certain death of the child soon thereafter.

Every family should be able to make their own decisions about reproductive health. Instead, this bill puts the federal government squarely between a woman and her doctor. It is time for Congress to stop interfering in the most personal, and sometimes medically necessary procedure.

H.R. 36 is nothing more than a cruel attempt to deny women their constitutional right to choose. That is why the state of Idaho’s 20-week ban in 2015, and also struck down a similar law from Arizona in 2013.

We must stop the attacks on women’s health. I urge my colleagues to vote no on H.R. 36.

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 36, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. This bill would prohibit late term abortions on unborn babies who can feel pain. As we now know, babies can feel pain as early as 20 weeks.

This means that dismemberment abortion and induction abortions, babies feel the pain from these procedures, while in the womb. We are one of seven countries that still allows late term abortions, putting us in the company with North Korea and China.

In fact, one of my staffers great niece was born at 26 weeks, weighing just 2 lbs, 11 oz. It’s unconscionable that we allow babies such as her nieces to be aborted. This bill is one step closer to achieving our goal of protecting these innocent lives. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and to protect the sanctity of life.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 548, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. I am in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows: Ms. Brownley of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 36 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 6, line 21, insert after “life” the following: “health”.

Page 6, beginning on line 22, strike “whose” and all that follows through “conditions” on page 7, ending in line 3.

Page 11, line 20, insert after “life” the following: “or health”.

Page 11, beginning on line 21, strike “by” and all that follows through “injury” on line 22 and insert “or”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, this is the final amendment to H.R. 36, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Madam Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, I am a mom. I have two wonderful children. I am so very proud of them because both of them have decided to pursue careers that will save lives. My daughter, Hannah, currently lives in Africa, working for an NGO to fight poverty and AIDS. My son, Fred, lives in Africa, working for an NGO to fight poverty and AIDS. My son, Fred, is a doctor at Northwestern.

Looking around this room, I see many other moms. We know the amazing joy that comes with parenthood. Most of us have been fortunate that our children were born without complications. Unfortunately, for some women, this is not always the case.

Throughout this debate, Members have been sharing the stories of women who want to be moms, but who found themselves in unimaginable situations and who were forced to make one of the most gut-wrenching decisions of their lives—whether to terminate her pregnancy due to health risks.

This is much like one woman from Michigan, who I will call Pam.

Pam was already raising children and was excited and proud to be pregnant with another child. But Pam’s pregnancy was causing her heart to fail. She consulted with multiple specialists, who all told her that her own health was in jeopardy if the pregnancy continued.

In fact, one of my staffers great niece was born at 26 weeks, weighing just 2 lbs, 11 oz. It’s unconscionable that we allow babies such as her nieces to be aborted. This bill is one step closer to achieving our goal of protecting these innocent lives. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and to protect the sanctity of life.

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This is much like one woman from Michigan, who I will call Pam.

Pam was already raising children and was excited and proud to be pregnant with another child. But Pam’s pregnancy was causing her heart to fail. She consulted with multiple specialists, who all told her that her own health was in jeopardy if the pregnancy continued.


Pam’s doctors advised her that the safest option was to terminate the pregnancy. But it was a very difficult decision for Pam and her family to make, as anyone in this room can surely imagine.

Pam, of course, had to think about her children, her family, and her own life. Imagine what that decision must be like. Just take a moment and think about that.

Now, imagine finding out that politicians in Washington, D.C., have told Pam for shame was not allowed to make that decision on her own, with her family. Imagine that: politicians putting her health in jeopardy, telling a woman and her family that the government was going to criminalize a doctor providing her care, that her children might not have a mother while growing up. That is what this bill would do.

As currently written, H.R. 36 shows no concern for the long-term health of the mother, her future ability to bear children, or her ability to care for her family. This bill would force women to carry pregnancies to term, even when their health is at risk. Even if the fetus has no chance of survival, this bill would require a woman to go to full term. That is what this bill would do.

Madam Speaker, my amendment simply adds the health of the mother to the existing exemptions in this bill.

Without my amendment, H.R. 36 devalues the health and well-being of women and puts their life at risk. It tells our mothers, our daughters, our nieces, and our granddaughters that decisions about their long-term health are not their own.

This is not the first bill that has been brought to the floor that shows disregard for women and their families. This bill fits a disturbing pattern.

This year, the House has considered legislation that tells women that they need to get their employer’s permission if they want affordable birth control.

The House has considered bills that would eliminate women’s essential health benefits, like maternity care and mammograms.

The House has considered legislation to cut funding for women’s healthcare centers.

The House has also considered legislation that would allow insurance companies to charge women higher premiums and label pregnancy as a pre-existing condition.

Tomorrow, we will consider a budget that decimates programs that are critical to the health and welfare of women and families so that we can give a massive tax cut to the wealthiest 1 percent.

Just take one moment to think about those priorities.

Madam Speaker, bills like this one disrespect and devalue women. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on the motion to recommit and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Alabama is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to share my strong support for the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, or Micah’s Law.

My colleagues who oppose this bill adamantly defend a mother’s ability to have a late-term abortion and a doctor’s ability to perform it. But, Madam Speaker, I have heard no mention of the third person in the room: the unborn baby.

I am astounded that the opposition chooses to focus solely on the two individuals who can speak for themselves, with no mention of the one who cannot. That is exactly what we are here to do today. We are here to speak up for those who can’t speak for themselves. We are here to defend those who cannot defend themselves.

Our bill seeks to do this by restricting abortions after 20 weeks, or at the 6th month of pregnancy, the point at which research shows the unborn baby can feel pain.

Last week, I, too, had the opportunity to meet the little boy this bill was named for: Micah. As many of you know, he was born at 22 weeks and spent 4 long months in intensive care.

Micah survived, and this year he is in kindergarten. You see, children like Micah, who are born prematurely, are treated as patients. Special care is given to reduce their pain and increase their chances for survival, just as it should be.

So, Madam Speaker, my question to those who would oppose this bill is this: What is the difference between a baby born at 6 months outside the womb and a baby at 6 months inside the womb? Or, what if we treated a miracle as they are created to be and the other be treated like medical waste? If a baby like Micah can survive outside the womb given the appropriate care, shouldn’t we give other babies like him the same protection and chance to live?

I have listened to my colleagues on the other side call this bill extreme. I say to oppose this bill is extreme. If we won’t stop abortions at 6 months of pregnancy when a baby feels pain, when will we stop them?

We have to draw a line somewhere. To say aborting a little baby who can actually feel the pain of the procedure being forced upon them crosses the line is a gross understatement.

Madam Speaker, I am unapologetically pro-life, and I oppose abortion at any stage. I will always fight to grant greater protections for life under the law. As a society, I pray that we will start assigning greater value to life at all stages in this country.

Madam Speaker, so often we get caught up in the policies of this issue and we forget that these are babies, for goodness’ sake. They feel pain, and we need to protect them. That is why I urge my colleagues to oppose this motion to recommit and join me in supporting this underlying bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit. The question was taken and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered, and suspending the rules and passing S. 762.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 187, nays 238, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 548]

YEAS—187

Adams
Aguilar
Amar
Armendariz
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Burtsfield
Capuano
Caraballo
Canseco
Carson (IN)
Carstensen
Carutcher
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cole
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
Costa
Cotugs
Court
Crowley
Cupps
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DeLauro
DeLon
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggert

NAYs—238

Adams
Aguilar
Amar
Armendariz
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Burtsfield
Capuano
Caraballo
Canseco
Carson (IN)
Carstensen
Carutcher
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cole
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
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Cotugs
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Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DeLauro
DeLon
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggert

[Continued on next page]
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

Thursday, October 3, 2013—113th Congress

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NAYS—238

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Batiz-Lazo
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blumenauer
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Buescher
Budd
Burges
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole (NY)
Cole (GA)
Cole (NY)
Comer
Cook
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Cullerton
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Enrlich
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Fox
Frelinghuysen
Gaat
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte

NOT VOTING—8

Bridgeite
Foster
Himes
Loudermilk

So the bill was passed.
The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 3, not voting 13, as follows: (Roll No. 550)

YEAS—417

Abraham Butterfield Davidson
Adams Byrne Davis (CA)
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Allen Carabajal DeFazio
Amodei Cardenas Delidet
Arrington Carson (IN) Delaney
Ash BARTLETT DeLauro
Baxton CARTER DelBene
Banks (IN) CARTWRIGHT Demings
Bartletta CASTOR Denham
Barr CASTOR (TX) Dent
Barragan CHABOT Desantis
Barton Cheney Desaulnier
Bass Chin, Judy DelArias
Beaty Cicilline Deutsch
Bera Clark (CA) Diaz-Balart
Bergman Clarke (NY) Dingell
Beyer Clay Doggett
Bilirakis Cleaver Donovan
Bishop (GA) Clyburn Doyle, Michael
Bishop (UT) COHEN Doyle, Michael
Bishop (MO) COFFMAN F
Bishop (GA) COYNE Duffy
Black Cline Duncan (SC)
Blackburn Collins (GA) Duncan (TN)
Bluemel Collins (NY) Dunn
Blumenauer CONNEXY Ellison
Blunt Rochester Comstock Emmer
Bonamici Connaway Engel
Boehlert Connolly Eshoo
Boyle, Brendan F Connors Espaillat
Bullock Cook Etes (KS)
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Brady (TX) Correa Evans
Braun CA COSTA Farrand
Brooks (AL) Castello (PA) Passo
Brooks (IN) Courter Ferguson
Brown (MD) Cromer Fitzpatrick
Brownley (CA) Crawford Fleischmann
Buchanan Crist Flores
Buck Crowley Fortenberry
Buchanon Cuelar Foster
Budd Calabroner Fox
Budshus Commins Frankel (FL)
Bustos Curbelo (FL) Frank (AZ)

PROVIDING RESOURCES, OFFICERS, AND TECHNOLOGY TO ERADICATE CYBER THREATS TO OUR CHILDREN ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now name all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now announce all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

On the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Goodlatte) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered to be printed, the SPEAKER pro tempore announced that a quorum of the House was present.

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. ROSEN. Madam Speaker, on October 3rd, on roll call votes 546, 547, 548, 549, and 550, I was not present because I was attending to my community in Las Vegas, in the aftermath of the deadliest mass shooting in United States history. Had I been present, I would have voted “Nay” on roll call vote 546, “Nay” on roll call vote 547, “Yea” on roll call vote 548, “Nay” on roll call vote 549, and “Yea” on roll call vote 550.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 71, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-339) on the resolution (H. Res. 553) providing for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

RESTRICING ABORTIONS AFTER 20 WEEKS

(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 in support of the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, a measure that will restrict abortions after 20 weeks.

Substantial scientific evidence has proven that abortions inflict pain on unborn children who have reached the age of 20 weeks. It has also been proven that, at 20 weeks, an unborn child is capable of surviving outside the womb. Just last week, I had the honor of meeting Micah Pickering, who was born prematurely at 20 weeks. Micah is now a vibrant 5-year-old boy who is living a full and healthy life.

Currently, the United States is one of only seven countries that allow abortions after 20 weeks. This bill is a common-sense measure that will protect our next generation and end the egregious practice of late-term abortions.

During my time as a member of the New York State Assembly, I was the...
WHAT A RENEGOTIATED NAFTA COULD MEAN FOR AMERICA’S WORKERS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during the August recess, I held a field hearing in Ohio to hear firsthand accounts from American workers and farmers and all our constituents on what a renegotiated NAFTA could mean for jobs in Ohio and America.

At the end of my remarks, I will include in the RECORD the testimony of Roger Wise, Ohio and National Farmers Union, and Nick “Sonny” Nardi, of the Teamsters Local 416 in Greater Cleveland.

Roger discussed the loss of American jobs to low-wage workers south of the border, which he emphasized the need to overhaul U.S. trade policy, including outlawing child labor, with stronger labor rights and true enforcement, calling for a tri-national Labor Secretariat to hear and resolve labor issues.

I am grateful for their contributions, as only by listening to those who have witnessed the effects of bad trade agreements can we move forward and bring jobs back to America and prevent exploitation of workers abroad.

TESTIMONY OF ROGER WISE, OHIO AND NATIONAL FARMERS UNION

Good afternoon. Thank you Rep. Kaptur, Elizabeth of the Citizens Trade Campaign and President Mark Payne, Local 1250 for hosting this very timely event about this very important topic.

My name is Roger Wise and I am a 4th generation full-time family farmer and have been so for more than 40 years. I am here today on behalf of the Ohio and National Farmers Union. NPU is the oldest active farm organization in the country, advocating since 1902. Ohio has been chartered since 1924.

Nationally we represent over 200,000 family farmers and ranchers and fishers. Here in Ohio we tout 2,500 of those members. Four of them are here with me today, Marge and Mardy Townsend from Ashtabula County, and of course Congresswoman Kaptur.

The Farmers Union organization works through grassroots driven policy to improve the well-being and quality of life for family farmers, ranchers, fishers and rural communities. Each year at our national fly-in we host on like-minded members of Congress an event that is our most prestigious award, the Golden Triangle. Rep. Kaptur has received it more than 25 years running, more than any other legislator—fulfilling her role as both a leader of our most prestigious award, the Golden Triangle. Rep. Kaptur has received it more than 25 years running, more than any other legislator—fulfilling her role as both a leader and a champion of this organization.

I remember vividly when the Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz declared the United States would plant “fence row to fence row” and we would export our nation to prosperity and feed the world along the way. That 70s expansion lasted only a few years because America faced wine, cheese, rice, citrus and even macaroni surpluses, interest rates, inflation ad input costs skyrocketed, prices plummeted and competing countries developed their own surpluses. In the 1960s the government paid for the relief of the 80s and lasted for the next 25 years. Farm program payments accounted for 50% of farm income. The mantra was that we would come in “economies of scale”; and we must “get big or get out”. Many family farmers and ranchers did exactly that, some by choice, many by the bank.

Trade agreement seeds were planted and gathered momentum in the 80’s. NAFTA was the poster child. Assurances were given that no jobs would be lost, in fact, many more would be created; and the economies of the United States, Mexico and Canada would explode for the benefit of the people in all 3 countries. President Clinton signed on to the agreement ensuring us this would be the economic model for the world. Now, 25 years later we know the revery assumptions and predictions did not play out in reality like they did on paper. American workers lost their manufacturing jobs to low wage Mexican workers, the once decimated product quality eroded, unions were decimated, family farmers either quit or were forced out of business, the middle class began to shrink and the trade deficit began to climb.

Agriculture, however, through it all was championed because the United States consistently enjoyed trade surpluses primarily form corn and soy exports. Unfortunately though, family farmers, ranchers, and consumers did not benefit from NAFTA. With the exception of the boom year 2008-2013, which were due to the Renewable Fuel Standard, not NAFTA, close inspection reveals virtually all of the multi-national companies reaped the profits while farmers in all 3 countries saw margins decline to the point of non-profitability; and all the while the trade deficits soared. Additionally, trade deals opened the door to consolidation and mega-mergers which led to less competition, non-competitive markets, higher costs, fewer choices research and development. An example of the latter is herbicide weed resistance.

For decades, the history of Origin Labelling, “COOL” has been the signature issue the Farmers Union. We pushed for its passage with great vigor because it benefits producers and 95% of consumers support it. Simply, it requires beef pork and poultry to be labeled with the country from which these products came. Rep. Kaptur has been indefatigable promoting this issue. In fact, she is more steadfast supporting and promoting COOL than any congressional person in D.C. and we are grateful for her efforts. This requirement is not unique and this virtually all of our trading partners have a form of COOL and all of them are WTO compliant.

Our coalition effort in 2002, when COOL was included in the Farm Bill. Unfortunately, special interests, uncaring about its popularity and practicality, lobbied to prevent full implementation and a lawsuit ensued. Our efforts continued and in the 2008 Farm Bill COOL was mandatory and it became law of the land.

Again special interests went to work to derail the law. They challenged it 3 times in Federal Court and lost each time. Unfortunately, state and federal courts in Ohio, Texas, and Mexico were coerced into filing suit with the WTO. Ironically, the tribunal was chaired by none other than Mexico. With the deck clearly stacked against us, our case was lost and none other than Mexico. With the deck clear-
trade" policies, than Ohio. And, on a personal note, as a longtime northern Ohio Teamster leader, there aren’t many Local unions that have been declawed, the way 416 have in the past.

And on another point of personal privilege, I want to say that American workers, not just here in Cleveland but all over the country, but also in my corner ally, than Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur.

Some folks here are probably too young to remember the NAFTA Accountability Act back in 1992, what was Marcy Kaptur shining a legislative light on the NAFTA disaster even as the jobs were starting to flow south.

That’s why this field hearing is so important and that’s why the renegotiation of NAFTA is an historic opportunity.

So in 180 minutes of how we can overhaul the NAFTA to begin to repair the damage. Specifically, I want to describe some things that must be included in a new NAFTA, new Chapters, as well as some old parts of NAFTA that must come out.

But let me be really clear at the outset; if the Trump trade team does not renegotiate NAFTA in a way that helps workers, then the US should quit the deal altogether.

I can’t speak for the other folks on this panel today, but the Teamsters demand a complete overhaul of the NAFTA model. No cut-and-paste of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, no tweaking around the edges. We want a NAFTA that puts in interests of working families first and foremost.

To achieve this goal, the top priority has to be on the new Labor Rights Chapter to replace the weak and unenforceable side agreement added to NAFTA to get Congress to support ratification in 1993.

What if it’s the North American worker rights, we’ve got to level the playing field, so Mexican workers and union organizers have the same rights we take for granted up here. That will reduce the incentive for corporations to relocate jobs down there, if they can’t oppress labor or avoid collective bargaining.

The new NAFTA must prohibit child labor and forced labor and protect the freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively through independent unions. Further, those and their American counterparts must be enforceable by the same or better trade sanctions that protect commercial interests.

Moreover, a truly modernized NAFTA should be put in place that protects domestic living wage rates in all regions of all free countries and an enforcement mechanism to guarantee a decent standard of living, including to save for retirement.

All these basic labor rights and the sanctions that protect them and the commitment to living wage must be enforced by an independent national labor secretariat that can hear labor cases and resolve them on behalf of all workers, including migrant workers.

Last point on labor: this new NAFTA chapter will serve as a template for future negotiations, so it is crucial that America get it right this time.

Another new chapter that must be part of the NAFTA replacement model is Currency. One of the reasons we could not support the TPP was the precision a mechanism to include enforceable disciplines against currency manipulation.

America has learned the hard way how our trading partners manipulate their currencies against the dollar to increase their exports to us (and limit imports from us), which increases their trade deficits, which costs America half of all workers, including migrant workers.

As well as being productive Americans, our country is currently manipulating their currencies. But we are saying that a replacement trade model that we will support must finally address the issue of currency misalignment.

Let me finish by mentioning a couple bad NAFTA provisions that must come out during renegotiation.

The first is Government Procurement, which is NAFTA chapter 10. It has undermined the ability for the Canadian government to buy from foreign suppliers.

The second is ISDS, which would be in Chapter 11. As for the ISDS, what we want is not the new NAFTA to weaken that economic policy, especially as we look forward to the infrastructure investment that this country needs so badly.

The second thing that must come out is the Sanctions, a system of private corporate arbitrations that protect foreign investors. NAFTA’s chapter 11 introduced so-called “investor-state dispute settlement” (ISDS) into our “free trade” deals, giving foreign companies super rights over U.S. firms.

ISDS undermines the rule of law and facilitates offshoring by creating unique privileges and secretive arbitration chambers in which foreign investors, but not American firms, can challenge laws the claim will cut profits.

A third bad provision, of particular interest to the Teamsters, is in Chapter 12, which deals with trade in services. The old NAFTA opened up American highways to unsafe Mexican-domiciled long-haul carriers.

We and our allies like Advocates for Highway Safety, the Sierra Club and the Owner-Operator Independent Truckers, have fought for many years, in the Congress and in the courts, to keep that provision from being fully implemented.

The original intent of the NAFTA negotiators was to keep US interstates closed to Mexican-domiciled long-haul carriers. The new NAFTA should require Mexican-domiciled trucks to transfer their loads to US trucks in the 20 mile wide commercial zone.

In conclusion, I have named two new chapters, but the Teamsters demand a complete overhaul of the NAFTA model. Now we are ready to finally fix it.
My heart goes out to Michelle Vo, her family and friends, and the other victims of the Las Vegas shooting. I am heartbroken and angry about the events in Las Vegas. These incidents are far too common in our country, and it is my sincere hope that Congress takes action to lessen these types of tragic events.

OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RUN TO DANGER, NOT AWAY FROM IT

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, the Nation stands in mourning over the tragedy in Las Vegas. No one ever wants to be in that situation. But it, once again, reminds us that, when there is danger, our law enforcement officers run to it, not away from it.

We are going to hear many stories from that tragedy in Las Vegas, but many of them will concern those brave law enforcement officers who, at the risk of their own life, protected and saved the lives of many, many others.

So, as we mourn the tragedy in Las Vegas, let us always remember and be thankful for those law enforcement officers who protect us each and every day.

DREAMERS ARE AMERICANS TOO

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

Mr. SCHRADE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the story of Leonardo Reyes, of Salem, Oregon, and urge Speaker RYAN to put forth a clean Dream Act bill.

Leo is an undocumented Oregonian. His mother brought Leo and his siblings to Oregon when he was 10 years old. His mother was a victim of domestic violence and felt she needed to get as far away from her husband as possible to keep Leo and his siblings safe. His mother left everything she knew in Mexico in order to pursue a better life for her children.

Leo has attended Davis Elementary School, Reynolds Middle School, McKay High School, graduated from Chemeketa Community College, and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies at Western Oregon University.

He works full-time helping senior citizens and individuals with disabilities access healthcare and food benefits. Additionally, Leo was a co-founder of the Oregon DACA Coalition, which raises awareness in the community by empowering Oregon youth to engage in our democratic process.

Leo considers himself an American, and I do too. He believes that being an American is a set of values and ideals which we all hold dear.

We need to pass a clean Dream Act bill that will recognize Leo and over 800,000 DREAMers as equal members in our community.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, it is time we go after the perpetrators of online sex trafficking. A recent investigation revealed what I have been saying for years, that websites like backpage.com knowingly facilitate human trafficking due to existing law which has been wrongly interpreted and allows these sites to get away without criminal liability.

That is why I am cosponsoring legislation to specifically allow States to investigate and prosecute websites that facilitate sex trafficking. H.R. 1855 is bipartisan legislation that will empower law enforcement to combat online sex trafficking more effectively.

This is an important step forward in the fight to end the suffering of 12-, 13-, and 14-year-olds—boys and girls—who are the victims of sex trafficking.

So, Mr. Speaker, law enforcement needs more tools to put an end to the heinous practice of exploitation and slavery, and clamping down on backpage.com's ability to advertise young girls for sex is crucial and critical to holding them accountable.

IT IS TIME TO REAUTHORIZE THE CHILDREN’S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in 1997, with a very, very bipartisan budget deal, we passed a magnificent statement about this Nation's commitment to children, and that was the Children's Health Insurance Program that all of us were so very proud of. It started in 1997 as the first real health reform since Medicare and Medicaid, and millions of children were able to get healthcare.

Maybe at that time their parents could not, but they could be covered: children with sickle cell disease, children with heart defects, children with various hereditary or genetic diseases who were impacted, children with cancer, leukemia, all of these children, or children injured on a playing field, children could be covered.

It is time to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program. In fact, I will upon the leadership to be able to establish martial law so that we can pass the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program coming this week before we go home.

The Democrats have been pushing. The leadership of the Democrats have been pushing. They have been asking for the passage of the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

I can tell you that those, Mr. Speaker, impacted by the hurricanes, they need that healthcare. I ask for its passage.

VIRGIN ISLANDERS ARE AMERICANS TOO

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, Hurricanes Irma and Maria have wreaked havoc on the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and numerous Caribbean nations. Although the full extent of the two hurricanes' impact has yet to be assessed, it is clear that the damage from these storms is unparalleled.

The people of the Virgin Islands have lost their homes and possessions. Business has been lost, along with hospital beds, schools, and markets.

In the coming months, I ask that all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle approve the full amount of funding and support needed for short- and long-term relief.

For example, tomorrow, the Energy and Commerce Committee will consider legislation to extend the Children’s Health Insurance Program for 5 years. I ask my colleagues to remember the people and children of the Virgin Islands.

Just over one-third of the children of the Virgin Islands lived below the poverty level even prior to Hurricanes Irma and Maria. After the hurricanes, our antipoverty needs will grow exponentially.

We need Medicaid and CHIP provisions to provide the Virgin Islands with additional funding and higher rates of Federal matching funds so that poor Americans and children in the Virgin Islands can remain covered. This, in addition to further changes to Federal program requirements, will help the Virgin Islands with the resources it needs to build.

So I urge my colleagues to please remember that Virgin Islanders are Americans too, just the same as constituents elsewhere across the country.

GOING FORWARD AS AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAST). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, there are so many things on the minds of Americans: three hurricanes in a month, natural disasters in Florida, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands. We just heard our colleague from the Virgin Islands speak of the problems that that island has. Millions of Americans harmed in so many ways, lives lost, just yesterday, the tragedy in Las Vegas.

It is hard not to focus only on those issues, but in many, many ways, Las
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We are very proud of the maritime industry. And in the State of Washington, and in my district, the Seventh Congressional District of Washington State, sometimes people know about us for Boeing airplanes, but they really should know us for our national deepwater port and all of the maritime that we have there.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, since Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico last month, residents have been without power. Many of them have not had access to food and clean and potable water. Many have lost their lives. It has been heartbreaking to watch. We all stand united in pushing this administration to do everything possible to ensure that the people of Puerto Rico have access to relief supplies and that the administration is doing everything it can to assist and rebuild.

These are American citizens, and we have an obligation to do everything we can to help after this devastating hurricane.

The reason I am here today is to join my colleague, the gentleman from California, because in the wake of Hurricane Maria, we did see a false narrative spreading through the media and social media about the Jones Act. It caused us to reflect on the fact that perhaps not everybody knows the history of the Jones Act. Not everybody understands exactly what it does and how it supports so strongly American jobs and a better future.

There are people who thought that perhaps the Jones Act was to blame for the fact that supplies were not making it out of the ports and into Puerto Rico, and so I am very grateful to the gentleman from California, and Republican colleague across the aisle, Representative Hunter, for holding an informal hearing on this very topic and inviting shipbuilders, shipping companies, as well as the maritime labor unions, to come together and tell us all about what was happening in Puerto Rico.

And so this is an opportunity, really, for us to talk about what the Jones Act means, because when you are talking about better wages, better jobs, and a better deal for the American public, then the Jones Act, in many ways, is the epitome of exactly that.

The Jones Act has been in effect for nearly 100 years and inspired by cabotage laws that were in place since the first session of Congress in 1789. The law requires that when goods are shipped via water between two points in the United States, they must be shipped on U.S.-建造 and operated by Americans.

This is where the critical industry comes in. In terms of Puerto Rico, the Jones Act is not the reason that the distribution of relief supplies has been slow to move in Puerto Rico. In fact, reports are that thousands of containers containing fuel, emergency housing, food, water, and other essentials are trapped at the Port of San
Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. Garamendi) for yielding. He has done a great job of really making Congress aware and the American public aware of just how important the Jones Act is to our country.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we have to invest in Puerto Rico by providing comprehensive relief, including water and food and housing and medical care, and we have to do everything we can to rebuild the infrastructure. But at the same time, we must make sure that we continue bipartisan support for this bedrock maritime law, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the State of Washington for very clearly laying out why the Jones Act is good for all of us.

We held a hearing today, an extensive hearing on the maritime industry and on the Jones Act in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, and it was laid out with facts and figures, many of those behind you on the chart. There has been a lot of talk about the Jones Act somehow harming Puerto Rico. The fact is, the truth is exactly the opposite.

The Jones Act allows for three American shipping companies using American ships with American mariners to deliver twice a week—each of those companies—twice a week on what amounts to a milk run from Jacksonville, Florida, to Puerto Rico, all the goods and services that they need.

With the hurricane having happened, these three companies are providing all of the FEMA, all of the emergency aid, and they have additional capacity that has not yet been used in delivering the goods and services that Puerto Rico needs in the wake of the hurricane.

In addition to that, the Jones Act is not just between the islands of Puerto Rico, Guam, or Hawaii. It is the inland waterways of America—the great Mississippi River system, all of the barges and tug services that they need.

With the Jones Act, we saw in the hearing that was had, there is nowhere to store those products, and there is no refrigeration.

So what we are seeing is that capacity at the docks continuing to increase. So over the next 2 weeks alone, Jones Act vessels will carry more than 3,300 FEMA loads full of relief cargo.

So despite these volumes, the residents of Puerto Rico are suffering, not because they are being able to deliver there, but because of the lack of infrastructure that I mentioned, lack of refrigeration, all of those things.

So currently, the point that is very important, I think, for everybody to understand is that American flags have the capacity to meet Puerto Rico’s relief cargo needs, and the emphasis needs to be on moving cargo from the Port of San Juan into the island, and focusing on rebuilding the infrastructure that has suffered because of this devastating hurricane.

Mr. Speaker, some have called for an outright repeal of the Jones Act despite these facts. Why should Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle support the Jones Act? Because it is incredibly important to our country’s economy and to the maritime industry, which supports nearly 500,000 jobs and is responsible for over $92 billion in gross economic output each year.

So the State of Washington, which ranks sixth in the country for Jones Act jobs, this law supports over 16,000 jobs and helps generate approximately $1.1 billion in labor income. More than 19 million tons of cargo originate from my home State of Washington every year, and the State imports more than 28 million tons annually. Without these jobs, our economy would suffer tremendously.

In my district, Washington’s Seventh Congressional District, the Jones Act directly supports nearly 2,000 jobs, and indirectly supports more than 6,500-related jobs. And to be clear, everywhere in the country where we have Jones Act jobs, they are better jobs, better wages, and a better future for our Americans across the country.

Shipyard jobs pay incredibly well. They earn workers about 45 percent more than the national average for private sector jobs. And this is an area, as the gentleman said, that was hit hard, this is an area where business and maritime labor, our merchant marines, are proud to work together to make sure that we provide for the national security of our country through the Jones Act, all of these things are going strong in America. I just really appreciate the gentleman doing that.

When we talk about middle class jobs in this country, there has been a lot of talk in this country about how we have lost a lot of middle class jobs over the last 20 years.

These jobs, because of the Jones Act, have been protected, and we need to make sure that we keep those jobs here in America going strong.

I am so glad that the gentleman also cleared up the confusion about what was really going on in relation to Puerto Rico, that American ships were doing what they were supposed to be doing, and that there were other issues on why people weren’t getting supplies. The American public needs to know that.

When the gentleman starts talking about minimum wage, middle class wages, obviously, the Merchant Marines, the mariners out there who work on these cargo and container ships, help keep that middle class strong in America.

One of the reasons why they are able to do that is because many of those jobs related to the Jones Act, as the gentleman knows, are union jobs. The people who run those unions work very hard to make sure that they have good wages and that they have good benefits so they can take care of their families and be able to send them to college.

As the gentleman knows, I have talked with the gentleman before, and he heard Representative Boyle earlier, who is also the co-chair of the Blue Collar Caucus, talk about how important these issues are to us, and I know as well as Mr. Garamendi and everyone else within our caucus.

I just want to point this out very briefly. According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, unionized workers are compared to their nonunionized counterparts in showing that their wages are 14 percent higher on average. Again, if you have jobs that are paying 14 percent higher on average, we need to protect those jobs because we want people to have more spending power to be able to make our economy strong and great, not less spending power.

The union wage premium is even lower for some demographic groups that, on average, receive lower pay, including workers of color and those without a college education. According
to the Center for American Progress Action Fund, unions increase workers' benefits really substantially. Ninety-four percent of union workers have access to retirement benefits while only 65 percent of nonunion workers do.

As members of the Progressive Caucus, we discuss Social Security in this Chamber quite often, and how we are going into our retirement years and whether or not we are going to be able to take care of ourselves when we are no longer able to perform certain physical functions is obviously something that is very important.

Union workers are 28 percent more likely to have health insurance and pay a lower share of premiums for it. They are also 54 percent more likely to have a retirement plan than nonunion workers at workplaces. Union women in the United States are more likely to take parental leave, which is also more likely to be paid.

Again, whether it is the Jones Act or Davis-Bacon, we need to make sure that in this country we keep these jobs going strong and that we keep the conversation going in that direction.

Again, I just want to thank the gentleman for the work that he has done to raise this issue. We need to continue to talk about this just so the American public understands just how important this is to our economy and to our society as we continue to grow our workforce into the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. VEASEY very much for bringing to our attention the role of the unions in maintaining wages throughout the United States. If we are looking for a better deal, better jobs, better wages, and a better future, certainly the union members in the maritime industry will—and have been able to—achieve that.

The great risk is legislation may be moving through the Senate and the House that would terminate the Jones Act and, along with it, some 400,000 jobs in the United States, 100,000 of those directly in the shipyards that are building these American-built ships for the intercoastal and for the brown water, the river transportation, as well as the open ocean transportation.

So we have got something here that is very important, and that is Make It In America. A better deal for Americans comes through the Jones Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. VEASEY very much for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I notice that my colleague from Chicago, Ms. CHAKOWSKY, is here once again to pick up on something we talked about earlier in our Make It In America agenda. If she would look here, number two on the Make It In America agenda is taxes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to just pick up on something that Congressman VEASEY said, but first let me just thank the gentleman from California for his relentless push to make sure that we have good jobs in America, that is part of our better deal. We are not just talking about jobs.

Wanted to just pick up that when it comes to women, if women want equal pay for equal work now, join a union. There aren't any union contracts that say: Oh, we are going to pay men up here and women over here, not 79 cents on the dollar for a woman in a labor union.

So I encourage my friends—my sisters—to join a union.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud member of that caucus because workers, as we know, are just not getting a fair deal right now in today's economy. The U.S. is the richest country in the world and the history of the world. We are richer than we have ever been. Now, most people don't actually feel that because the ordinary worker has not seen any wage growth in the last 2, maybe 2 1/2 or 3 decades. The income gap between top executives and the average worker is bigger than ever. At the same time, corporations are raking in record profits as they ship jobs overseas.

So, obviously, it is time for us to fix the economy that is rigged against America's working families. We can start with our Tax Code or end with our Tax Code or in the middle with our Tax Code. We need to do something about our Tax Code.

So today I am meeting with Congressmen BOYLE and VEASEY to introduce—we introduced just a few minutes ago—the Patriot Employer Act, and that is H.R. 3925. It is a first step toward fixing a broken tax system.

Instead of tax breaks to companies that offshore jobs and that pay poverty wages, our bill encourages businesses to create good jobs here at home.

Here is how the bill works. We reward patriots employers with a tax credit for each employee's wages. To qualify for the patriot employers tax credit, a business must fulfill the following checklist:

One, invest in American jobs, no offshoring or tax inversion schemes;

Two, pay living wages;

Three, contribute to workers' retirement security through a defined benefit or defined contribution plan;

Four, provide quality health insurance;

Five, provide paid leave;

Six, and lastly, have practices in place to support employment of our troops, our veterans, and people with disabilities.

There is a companion bill that was introduced by Senator BROWN, and I am sure he will get more cosponsors.

Small businesses, under 50 employees, can qualify for the tax credits by meeting only some of these criteria.

Unlike the Trump-GOP tax giveaway provisions, our bill is responsible. It pays for the new tax credits by closing existing tax loopholes that incentivize corporations to invest overseas. I think most Americans get that there is actually an advantage now for companies who decide to take their jobs out of the United States.

Under the current Tax Code, multinational corporations get to defer taxes on overseas earnings until they bring those profits back to the United States. Through creative accounting, corporations essentially get to avoid taxes in perpetuity. That is forever.

At the same time, those corporations can deduct interest expenses on investments overseas, such as building a new manufacturing plant somewhere. That is a backwards tax preference rewarding corporations that are avoiding U.S. taxes and offshoring American jobs.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, excurse me for a moment, forgive me for interrupting, but the gentlewoman said something that caught my attention.

American corporations that build a factory in China are able to deduct that cost of that factory against their American taxes?

Ms. CHAKOWSKY. That is exactly right, Mr. Speaker. If a corporation deducts interest expenses on investments overseas, and that would include building a new manufacturing plant offshore somewhere.

So we don't want to be rewarding corporations that are avoiding U.S. taxes and offshoring American jobs and giving them benefits. So the Patriot Employer Act fixes that. It raises taxes on corporations that offshore and reduces taxes on businesses that invest in good, American jobs.

The President talks about America first. This is exactly the kind of thing that we should be doing. Let's not create incentives to take those jobs away. But still, the Trump-GOP tax plan is a betrayal of American workers. I don't know if he knows that. It does nothing to raise wages. In fact, 80 percent of the plan's tax cuts would go to the top 1 percent of earners.

At the same time, 30 percent of middle-class families—$50,000 to $150,000—would actually see a tax increase under the plan.

As for corporate taxes, it doubles down on the problem in the current Tax Code. While our current Tax Code lets multinationals put off paying taxes on offshore profits, the new Republican plan would give permanent tax breaks for offshoring.

The Republican tax plan means less revenue for investments that grow the middle class, like education and infrastructure, which we need so badly, which he said he wanted to do. We want to do it with him. It means more
jobs shipped abroad. For many middle class families, it would mean a smaller paycheck.

So we are offering a different path. The Patriot Employer Act, together with stronger unions and greater pub-
lic investment, offers a real solution to the great insecurity in our country.

There are responsible businesses in our country. If a business pays fair wages and provides good benefits, we should support that. We shouldn’t make them compete with corporations that don’t.

In the end, it is a question of whose side are you on: the offshoring corporation or the American worker?

Mr. Speaker, I urge my House col-
leagues to reject tax cuts for million-
aire, billionaires, and multinational corporations, and to invest in Amer-
ican workers and not offshoring.

So I just want to thank the gentle-
man from California so much for letting
ting across the Nation that will be made less effective, then there are these
grams that are clearly going to be at risk. If the Jones Act somehow gets re-

So this is critically important. There are 100,000 jobs in the shipyards. If we
peal the Jones Act, they are gone and, along with it, the ability of the Amer-
ican shipbuilding industry to supply

The U.S. military is dependent on

Mr. GARAMENDI. As a proud mem-
er of the Blue Collar Caucus, I thank

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am going to come to the gentleman
right now and get his signature.

Mr. GARAMENDI. As a proud mem-
ber of the Blue Collar Caucus, I thank
the gentlewoman for both wearing blue and bringing a message from that
caucus. It is extremely important.

The Make It In America agenda, which we have been talking about here for at least the last 8 or 9 years, has all of
these pieces. The gentlewoman talked about trade, taxes, infrastruc-
iture, education, and labor—all the pieces of this puzzle.

As we discussed today, there are pro-
grams that are clearly going to be at risk. If the Jones Act somehow gets re-
pealed or gets waived or otherwise is made less effective, then there are
some 400,000 jobs in American ship-

San Diego has a major shipyard, the NASSCO shipyard. These are places
where the Jones Act allows for Amer-
can ships to be built not in China, but, rather, in America. Make It In Amer-
ica. The Jones Act does that.

Mr. Speaker, I will give you a couple of examples. One of the companies that
ships out of Jacksonville, Florida, to Puerto Rico is the TOTE shipping company. They recently spent nearly
$400 million on two of the most ad-
vanced clean energy ships anywhere in the world.

These ships were built in San Diego. They are LNG-powered, natural gas-powered ships, and they are now plying the Jacksonville-Puerto Rico trade twice a week, back and forth.

Crowley is another company operat-
ing in that same area, again, twice a
week. They together will soon have LNG-powered ships oper-
ating in that area—ships built in America with American workers and American steel, American engines, and the rest.

So this is critically important. There
are 100,000 jobs in the shipyards. If we repeal the Jones Act, they are gone and, along with it, the ability of the American shipbuilding industry to supply commercial ships to move critical national security men and equipment wherever it needs to go in the world.

The U.S. military is dependent on
American merchant marine system to move 90 percent of the personnel, equip-
ment, supplies, tanks, artillery, and all the rest around the world. We have huge ships that are essen-
tial. We see those operating in Puerto Rico now. But they are not supplying the great mass of goods and services that are needed.

So the plea from all of us who under-
stand the Jones Act is really about is to say don’t do away with this
critical piece of America’s infrastruc-

At the hearing today, I heard my Rep-

All too often, the free marketers of
the world read those paragraphs that serve their purposes, but if they were to read the next few paragraphs in Adam Smith’s work, “The Wealth of Nations”, I doubt that Adam Smith said very clearly at the period of time he was writing that it was abso-
lutely essential for the British Govern-
ment to protect the British merchant marine and the British maritime indus-

That same admonition should come
to the American Congress the same way: protect this vital industry, pro-
tect the merchant marines.

We do not want and we cannot have foreign ships, foreign tugboats, foreign barges operating up and down the Mis-
sissippi River.

What are they carrying? They are carrying gasoline, diesel oil, natural gas, volatile substances. They are carry-
ning cement. They are carrying grain.

Do you want to have Yemeni sailors on the Mississippi? Do you want to have ships owned by China, tugboats, barges owned by China on the Mis-
sissippi River?

If you do away with Yemeni sailors, if you do away with the Jones Act, because that is ex-
actly what would happen. If you want good American wages with good Amer-
can mariners operating on the inland waterways through the Gulf Coast and up the East Coast, if that is what you want, then you better keep the Jones Act.

If you do away with the Jones Act, it is guaranteed we will have the elimi-
nation of the American maritime indus-

Most of all, do you want to have the United States military phone China and say: We need to ship a few things
to the South China Sea to deal with your encroachment on the islands in the South China Sea; gee, Mr. China, would you please send us some ships so that we can put the military equip-
ment on those ships? Is that what we want?

For those men and women here in this Congress and the Senate that want
to do away with the Jones Act, think about it. If you do away with the Jones Act, you do away with the American merchant marine. Then this country relies upon China, the largest ship-

Is that strategic national asset on
American ships with American sailors? The answer is no. But if we passed a couple of paragraphs of law and re-
quired, as we once did with the North Slope oil when that opened up in the sixties, that that oil be transported on
American-built ships with American sailors, if we were to reinstitute that, it would be a small part of the strategic national asset, crude oil and natural gas, just a small percentage of that on American-built ships with American sailors, we could build ships in America. Not just a few ships, but over the course of the next 20 or 30 years, 50 or 60 ships, providing thou-
sands upon thousands of jobs in our American shipyards.

Right now, where are those ships built? China, Japan, and Korea, but not in America. We ought to pay attention to this Congress and the Senate that want to do away with the Jones Act, think about it. If you do away with the Jones Act, you do away with the American merchant marine. Then this country relies upon China, the largest ship-

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sands upon thousands of jobs in our American shipyards.
lasted for almost 40 years. Then slowly, slowly it was set aside. Now that oil is on ships that are built in China, Korea, and Japan.

If we want good-paying jobs in America, if we want a better future, if we want better-paying jobs, if we want an opportunity for Americans to earn a good middle class wage in the shipyards on the ships, then maintain the Jones Act and think seriously about a law that would create even more jobs in American shipyards.

We will soon be introducing a bill called the Energizing American Maritime Act. Using a strategic national asset that we are now able to export, natural gas and oil, we require that a small percentage of that—not 50 percent, not 70 percent, not even 40 percent—but maybe 20 percent—be on American ships with American sailors.

There are many, many things we can do to create good-paying jobs in America. The Jones Act is one such law that has been in place for nearly a century. It served America well and will continue to serve America well if we maintain it and if we don’t allow waivers that simply blow holes in that law, and if we take a strong Make It In America agenda, the President likes to talk about it, but talk is cheap. Legislation makes that talk real.

Trade policy, taxes: We just heard about the patriot tax encouraging American businesses with real tax incentives and discouraging American businesses that want to offshore the jobs.

Energy policy: I think I just talked about energy policy a moment ago. Put incentives and discouraging American businesses that want to offshore the jobs.

Infrastructure: Freight movement, the ports, channels deepening, maintaining the locks on the Mississippi and the Ohio. Infrastructure, again, good-paying jobs.

We can do a lot. It takes laws and it takes men and women on the Democratic side and the Republican side that come together and say: We can do this. We can do this for America and for America’s workers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WESTERN CAUCUS: WILDFIRES

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring this Chamber’s attention to the devastating wildfires that have ravaged the Nation this year.

The National Interagency Fire Center reports that there have been 49,563 fires that have burned 8,422,251 acres so far in 2017. Wow. Another 80 million throughout the country are at high risk status, including one-quarter of the 193 million-acre National Forest System.

Though the Forest Service has spent a record $2.3 billion to fight fires in 2017, these resources are being spent on the back end.

Mr. Speaker, the country has literally been on fire, particularly Western communities. It is far past time that this Chamber pass H.R. 2930 and get serious about combating catastrophic wildfires before they get started.

Mr. WESTERMAN’s bipartisan bill adopts a forward-thinking, active management strategy and also provides location reforms that would cease the practice of fire borrowing.

I will likely have more comments later, but we have a few folks pressed for time, so I am going to end my comments there.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), my friend.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the gentleman’s efforts to bring this Chamber’s attention to wildfires that are burning across the West and the impacts they are having on our communities, and also that we can work together to advance policies that better support forest management and fire prevention and suppression efforts and forest health.

Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, the aftermath of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have dominated our news cycles. Our hearts certainly go out to the people who have been impacted as they rebuild their lives and continue to work to ensure that they have the resources they need.

When we hear the term “natural disaster,” most of us probably think of hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes. Unless you come from the Western United States, you probably don’t think of wildfires as a natural disaster. But they are, and they have devastating effects.

Wildfire season is a part of life in the West, but this year’s fire season is shaping up to be the worst in history. Years of mismanagement of our national forests have led to conditions where fires are burning longer and hotter than ever before.

We need to address this problem on two fronts: one, through better forest management; and, two, by updating wildfire response so it is more in line with the Federal response to other natural disasters.

On the forest management front, we need to give the Forest Service the tools to engage in actual forest management. This means removing the dead and downed timber that serves as a fuel source for either man-made or naturally occurring fires, empowering local foresters and land managers to identify and designate areas of high risk, and supporting collaboration between all levels of government.

These principles are laid out in the Resilient Federal Forests Act by my colleague from Arkansas. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation.

We must also reform the Federal budgeting process for wildfire prevention and the suppression efforts. For too long, the process the Federal Government has used to allocate money to fight catastrophic wildfires has undermined forest management efforts that could prevent these types of fires from igniting in the first place.

Under current law, if firefighting costs exceed an agency’s budget, it must shift money from non-firefighting accounts to make up the difference. Last year, the Forest Service had to transfer $700 million from other budgets to line items to cover firefighting costs, which brought the agency’s total firefighting efforts to about 55 percent of the entire budget.

You would think that firefighting wouldn’t be the biggest line item in the budget for an agency tasked with maintaining healthy forests. It is critical that we treat wildfires like other natural disasters after an agency’s wildfire suppression funds are exhausted. The cost of any extraordinary firefighting that goes beyond the agency’s annual budget can be funded through a budget cap adjustment similar to what is used by FEMA for other natural disasters.

It is my hope that we can continue to bring more attention to wildfires that are burning across the West and the impacts they are having on our communities, and also that we can work together to advance policies that better support forest management and fire prevention and suppression efforts and forest health.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the vice chairman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Arizona, who I consider a friend and one of the great leaders in the Congress, for leading this Special Order and for bringing this important matter before the Chamber.

2017 will go down as the worst wildfire season in history. My home State of Utah has definitely felt the effects. In 2017, the Bundlow Fire burned more than 71,000 acres in my State. It burned for nearly a month, creating more than $36 million in damage. And that doesn’t count the millions—indeed tens of millions of dollars it took to fight the fire.

While the fire was burning through my district, I was able to meet with local, State, and Federal leaders to take a tour of the fire and to survey
the damage and to try to find a solution. The images I saw as I toured this fire were truly heartbreaking. Dozens of evacuated homes, burned homes, ruined forests, firefighters and volunteers who were working day and night to try to contain the fire, ash-filled lakes. I too, was able to fly in a helicopter to fly around the circumference of this fire. As I was flying around looking down, thinking about, among other things, the wildlife that had been devastated by this fire, I wondered: How long does it take for us to recover from this, for this beautiful landscape to recover?

And I can promise you this, it will not happen in my lifetime.

My family owns a ranch, and almost 70 years ago, we had a similar fire. You can still see the scars from that fire, which is several generations now.

One incident manager told me: “In 29 years of fighting fires, I have never seen a fire move so fast, burn so quickly and so extensively that it could not be controlled or fought head-on.”

You have to wonder: Why is that? The answer is very unfortunate. It is due to mismanagement.

Current mismanagement—and it is massive—has left our forests vulnerable to insects and disease that make for a ripe forest for catastrophic fires. These heavy-handed regulations paralyze forest managers so they can’t accomplish the critical tasks that are necessary for proper forest management.

This failure to treat high-risk areas and to remove hazardous buildup has left our land susceptible to fires that grow in size, severity, and cost.

So you have to ask yourself: What is the answer? How do we stop this? How do we stop it from happening again?

And the answer is really quite simple. Federal policies have contributed to recent catastrophic fires, and wildlife protections Order too often begins with proper land management.

That is why I support Representative WESTERMAN’s bipartisan Resilient Federal Forests Act, which allows agencies to do this work so that we can prevent these catastrophic wildfires.

I look forward to the House passing this important legislation. Let us bring back the beauty of our forests. Let us bring back the health of our forests. Let us prevent these catastrophic fires that we have seen from happening again.

I thank Mr. Gosar for bringing this again to the floor.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Utah, who has seen the challenging aspects and destruction from the fires, for his remarks.

I also now want to acknowledge my friend from Montana, who is actually still seeing the ravaging of the fires. In fact, Seeley Lake, Montana, set a record for the worst air quality ever recorded there, 18 times greater than the EPA safe particulate limit. Wow, that is a record that we have got to stop.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE).

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for bringing the attention of the House to this important matter.

This summer, we had catastrophic wildfires in Montana. We burned 1.2 million acres. That is the equivalent of the size of the State of Delaware. I have seen this destruction firsthand. I visited with incident commanders and firefighters on five separate wildfires this summer.

In Lincoln County, the air quality was so unhealthy that teachers provided masks to the kids in school so they could breathe.

In August, I had Secretary Zinke and Secretary Perdue come to Montana and tour the Lolo Peak fire, one of the most expensive fires that was fought this summer.

I have worked to bring relief to Montanans. In July, emergency relief for farmers and ranchers was provided by opening up the C.M. Russell recreation area to grazing. We had hungry cows left from pasture being consumed and grass available. It was a commonsense solution to put those two together.

Also in July, we successfully urged FEMA Director Brock Long to reconsider their denial of one of our fires and declare Montana eligible for emergency funds. For these two things, I am thankful.

So the negative impact has been severe. And while there has been some relief, including welcome rain and snow, we can’t rely on that. Again, this summer, over a million acres burned in Montana and two firefighters; livelihoods were threatened; wildlife habitats were destroyed; smoke hung in the air; and ash rained down on our homes and our cars.

Air quality reached dangerous levels in our communities. In fact, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana donated 150 air filters to our schools so our children could breathe.

I have also seen firsthand the positive results of managed forests. Just 2 weeks ago, I toured a BLM forest near Miles City, Montana, and showed the effect of treating and managing forests. A fire burned in 2015 through a forest without management, and 4 months later, a fire burned through the crowns, and when it reached a forest that had been managed, the fire quickly dropped into the undergrowth, burned through the grass, but none of the trees were lost.

In the untreated forest, there is just dead trees that won’t recover in our lifetime. In the treated area, all of the trees survived. In fact, when an overgrown forest is thinned, more surface water came back, there is better habitat for wildlife, and we just have a better result.

I saw that also on the Roaring Lion fire, which occurred in the Bitterroot Valley in 2016, where, there, private property owners had managed their private property. When the fire on public land reached there, it was quickly extinguished and hundreds of homes were saved.

So the benefits of properly managed forests are clear. We have healthier forests. There is more wildlife, more hunting, more recreational opportunities, more good-paying jobs, and wildfires are less severe.

One of the biggest problems we have is litigation. We need more collaborative projects, but litigation is one of the greatest problems. Parties come to the table in good faith, they work collaboratively only to be overturned by court action by radical environmental extremists.

The Stonewall Vegetation Project in Lincoln, Montana, is a good example. Here, the Forest Service worked together with local landowners over a 8-year period to develop a collaborative forest management project. Once it was approved a year ago, the lawyers swooped in, arguing the project would disrupt lynx habitat. The judge over-turned the decision. Fires raged this summer. Now there is no more habitat for lynx, and all that carbon has been released into atmosphere.

Benefits of forest management are clear. As I have mentioned, healthier forests, more wildlife, more hunting, jobs, and less severe fires. It is time to act. We can’t control the weather, but we can control how we manage our forests. It is time to modernize our forest management by passing BRUCE WESTERMAN’s Resilient Federal Forests Act, and we also must put commonsense guardrails on the Endangered Species Act to reduce frivolous lawsuits.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Montana, who I am sorry to see have such a hard time this year in forest management, for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), my friend and colleague.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman Gosar of the Western Caucus for arranging this Special Order tonight and especially for his exemplary leadership as chairman of the Western Caucus.

The wildfire crisis facing our forests across the West comes down to a very simple adage. Excess timber comes out of the forest one way or the other. It is either carried out or it burns out, but it comes out.

When we carried out our excess timber, we had healthy resilient forests and we had thriving, prosperous communities. Excess timber from Federal lands not only generated revenues for our mountain communities, but created thousands of jobs.

But in the 1970s, we adopted laws like the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act that have resulted in endlessly time-consuming and cost-prohibitive restrictions and requirements that have made the scientific management of our forests virtually impossible.

Timber sales from our Federal lands has dropped 80 percent in the intervening years, with a concomitant increase in forest fires. In California alone, the number of saw mills has
dropped from 149 in 1981 to just 27 today.

Timber that once had room to grow healthy and strong now fights for its life against other trees trying to occupy the same ground.

Average tree density in the Sierra Nevada is three to four times the density that the land can actually support. In this weakened condition, trees lose their natural defenses to drought and disease and pestilence, and they ultimately succumb to catastrophic wildfire.

Three years ago, an estimated 25 million trees in the Sierra fell victim to these stressors. Two years ago, that number doubled to 50 million trees. Last year, more than 100 million dead trees are now waiting to burn in the Sierra.

Well, after 45 years of experience with these environmental laws—all passed with the promise that they would improve our forest environment—we are entitled to ask: How’s the forest environment doing?

All around us the answer is damning. These laws have not only failed to improve our forest environment, but they are literally killing our forests.

There are two flaws responsible for these failed laws have recently conjured up two new excuses. One is climate change. The other is that we are putting out too many fires.

Putting out too many fires?

That invites an important question: Exactly which fires did they propose that we allow to burn?

Perhaps the King fire that almost wiped out the towns of Georgetown and Foresthill on its way to Lake Tahoe in 2014 or the Detwiler fire this year that almost wiped out the town of Mariposa on its way to the Yosemite Valley?

Or any one of the more than 1,000 fires in the Sierra that CAL FIRE has put out this year, any one of which could have grown into a megafire but for the vigilance and competence of our fire agencies?

Which of these fires would they allow to burn into a conflagration?

True, controlled burns play an important role in clearing out underbrush, but as firefighters bitterly complained to me at the command center at the Detwiler fire this year, these same laws make it impossible to get permits to do the controlled burns.

The other reason that we hear is climate change. Well, let’s put that to the smell test. Throughout our vast forests, it is often very easy to visually identify the property lines between well-managed private forests and the neglected Federal lands.

Now, I have seen it myself on aerial inspections. The private managed forests are green, healthy, and thriving. The neglected Federal forests are densely crowded and often scarred by fire because we can’t even salvage the fire-killed timber while it still has value. You can literally tell from the condition of the forest where the property line is. How clever of our clime to know exactly what is the boundary line between private and government lands.

And if carbon dioxide is the problem, doesn’t it make sense to mill fully grown trees to sequester the carbon and replace them with young, growing trees that absorb much higher levels of carbon?

But again, these same laws prevent this. This is not complicated. Our forests are catastrophically overgrown. Drought is a catalyst. It is not the cause. In overgrown forests, much snow evaporates in dense canopies and cannot reach the ground. The transpiration volume in an overgrown forest is a big problem in a normal rainy season; in a drought, it becomes lethal.

Pestilence is a catalyst; it is not a cause. Healthy trees can naturally resist bark beetles; stressed trees cannot.

A properly managed forest matches the tree density to the ability of the land to support it, but we cannot properly manage forests because of the laws now in place.

Mr. WESTERMAN’s Resilient Federal Forests Act and other measures will restore proper scientific management of our national forests, but we are running out of time to act because we are running out of forests to save.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman for yielding today, I thank him for his leadership, and I thank him for arranging this hour tonight.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his thoughts. He brought up some specific facts that need reiteration just because they are so plentiful.

The Forest Service only harvested 2.5 billion board feet in 2016, compared to over 10 billion board feet in 1990. To make matters worse, litigation and other challenges have caused a significant reduction in active sawmills nationwide from over 1,300 in 1985, to just over 220 today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN).

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for yielding and for his leadership on this, and to my other colleagues from the West, who understand what we face, the problems we face, and what has happened to our forests.

I stand united with all of you in the Western Caucus, because this is something we have done some work on in the past and then we have been stalled out, especially in the last 8 years. I know that President Trump stands with us, wanting to pass legislation, get down to his desk so he can sign it so we can begin to better steward our great public forests, these public forest lands important to all of us.

As we saw painfully this summer, smoke chokes our citizens, it chokes children. Literally, in my district, elementary school children had to be sent home because of the smoke in their schools because of forest fires.

In Oregon, we have seen some of the worst fires in our State’s history. It seemed as if every year we would hear reports of more fire, more smoke. While this year’s fire season has been particularly intense and devastating, images like these are nothing new for Oregonians. Each summer, smoke has filled our skies in Oregon year after year. We knew our land in our beautiful State are charred.

Unlike private forest owners, the State of Oregon, which I am very proud to be a resident of, and our forest policy and tribal lands and county lands, after a fire, they go in and clean it up, they replant, they get a new, healthy, young forest growing, which if you are concerned about reducing carbon emissions, you want healthy trees, because they actually sequester carbon.

But, again, we are literally killing our forests.

Smoke inhalation has become a health hazard for Oregonians in their communities. I can’t tell you how many in my communities, day after day after day, were given warnings by our health authority that the air was too dangerous to breathe, that it was unhealthy to breathe.

A recent study found that wildfires contribute three times as much fine particulate matter into the air as previously thought, and this definitely can cause respiratory problems and make it difficult to breathe, as the citizens of our great State found this summer.

Wildfires also pollute our atmosphere with carbon. In 2002, the Biscuit fire in southwest Oregon burned more than 500,000 acres, half a million acres. The carbon dioxide emitted during that fire amounted to almost one-quarter of the carbon dioxide emitted in the entire State of Oregon this year.

By the way, we have burned 678,000 acres this year in Oregon at a cost of more than $340 million to fight those fires, State, local, and Federal costs, mostly Federal.

Tomorrow, the Energy and Commerce Committee, which I chair, will hold a hearing to take a look at the air impact of fires, in part because I have constituents who have seen that, in some cases, fires are not aggressively fought if they are in certain federally designated areas, wilderness areas.

There is a temptation, apparently, to not use all our tools, and to instead let them burn. That doesn’t take into account what happens to air quality and the health of our citizens when fires are allowed to rage and burn.

So we will take a look at the issues involving air quality and pollutants emitted into the atmosphere and discuss how better management of our
forests could help prevent catastrophic fires and actually protect our airsheds and our health.

Each of us today faces a similar situation. Devastating fires ignite across the West as fuel loads build across our public lands. As we've just heard from Mr. McClintock, a great job laying that out—while broken Federal forest policy stands in the way of better management, healthier air, protection of our habitat and our watersheds and our streams and our forested communities.

8.2 million acres burned this year. By the way, my colleagues, that is an area larger than Maryland, it is three-and-a-half or so times the size of, I believe, Puerto Rico, which has been wiped out. We talk about the devastation and disaster there and in the Virgin Islands and every other place, but somehow we sort of overlook the fact that we lose this almost every year in our West and in our forested land.

Communities have watched their mills close, meanwhile, as Federal policy and lawsuits and litigation has prevented proper management of our forests. So we have lost our jobs, we have lost our infrastructure, we have lost the revenues for our schools, and, in some cases, for basic services like law enforcement.

Now, promises that somehow recreation and outdoor activities would replace those good family-wage jobs, tourism, they are falling short, because guess what, events are being canceled because now the fires are destroying the airshed.

Constituents of mine have been sending photos this year about some of the fires. This one right here is from Mike, who was returning from a hunting trip just a few weeks ago. This was the Eagle Creek fire burning in the scenic Columbia River Gorge area between Cascade Locks and where I live in Hood River.

We had an evacuation notice within a half a mile of where I live on Rand Road. It was level 1, but they had them higher than that as you got closer to the fire.

Meanwhile, events like Cycle Oregon, its 30th anniversary, canceled because of the smoke; Sisters Folk Festival canceled because of the smoke. Down in Ashland, the Oregon Shakespeare Theater, world-renowned festival, they had to cancel nine of their shows at a cost of $200,000 direct revenue loss, not to mention the concerns they have about indirect loss, people who didn’t show up for other performances, and might even affect their annual sales.

People are really tired of this. They expect this Congress to take action to try and protect and become good stewards of our national forest land, but this picture tells you what we faced. The Columbia Gorge, where I grew up right near here, I can’t remember a time the freeway was closed as long as it was this year. We had traffic backed up across the river to Washington to our good friends on Highway 14. All the freeway traffic was diverted there, and there is still one lane here that can’t pass, because now we are worried about mudslides and rocksides and trees coming down the hillsides.

We need to get back to positive, active management in our Federal forests.

Five years in a row, the U.S. House has enacted legislation, sent it over to the Senate, that would give our professional foresters, our scientists, the tools that they clamar for and need to better manage our forests and reduce the overloading of debris, of dead and dying trees, open up these stands to what they should be naturally, get back in balance with nature. Every year this goes over to the other body, and somehow it never comes back. That has to change.

So tonight, I thank my friend from Arizona who organized this. He knows what forest fires are like in Arizona. My colleague from Washington, my colleague from California, myself, our colleagues in Montana, we have dealt with this year after year after year. Now, more than half of the Forest Service budget is spent fighting fire. That is not what we should do as a matter of bad policy.

We need to change Federal policy. We need to let our scientists manage these forests, restore jobs to our forested communities, protect our airsheds, our watershed, and get back in balance. So I commend my colleagues in the Western Caucus for moving this forward.

I just finished a very positive meeting with the Speaker of the House, who is committed to helping us on this matter. I look forward to us having the opportunity to vote on the Resilient Federal Forests bill and get our Senate colleagues on board as well.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman so greatly for his indulgence in coming down and expressing the problems that have been faced in Oregon and thank him for the timely hearing tomorrow in Energy and Commerce. We certainly appreciate it.

We need to enlighten all Americans as to the tragedy that is going on in our public Western lands.

Mr. WALDEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I hope they will tune in tomorrow and watch the testimony at that hearing. I think they will get a better understanding of what the people in our districts have faced. For a month this summer, schools had to be closed, festivals canceled, people choking, going to the hospitals. This is serious stuff, and we need to address it.

Mr. GOSAR. I want to highlight one thing that the gentleman actually brought to attention. Catastrophic fires also cause significant damage to the environment. Robust data from NASA has concluded that one catastrophic wildfire can emit more carbon emissions in a few days than total vehicle emissions in an entire State over the course of the year. Phenomenal. We just have to make sure people understand.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. WALDEN. We appreciate it. Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), my dear friend.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Arizona, my good friend, Mr. GOSAR, for holding this Special Order and giving us the chance not only to address the House on this very important issue, but also to address our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this year alone, over 8 million acres have burned across our country. And get this; ten times that, another 80 million acres, are considered high risk to threat of catastrophic wildfires.

If this doesn’t amount to a national disaster, nothing does. If we don’t acknowledge that it does, this will only continue to devastate our rural communities across the Nation.

The previous speaker, my friend from Oregon, talked about the impact of the health to people living in these communities. I could attest to you myself, living in central Washington, we had smoke where the visibility was less than a quarter of a mile for weeks at a time. I knew people who had chronic coughs as a result of this smoke. Myself, get this: I had to come back to our Nation’s Capital for my cough to clear up over our August break. The air was that bad.

So, Mr. Speaker, this evening, as you have heard from my colleagues from across the Western United States, as we gather to draw attention to this devastation, to these catastrophic wildfires, what they pose to our communities, so States from Arkansas to Arizona, from Colorado to California, Montana to New Mexico, from Wyoming, from Oregon, to the great State of Washington, we are here to stress the importance of addressing the broken funding systems as well as the lack of resources that are necessary to adequately prevent and then suppress and fight these wildfires.

So we gather to highlight the dire need to reform the mismanagement of our Federal forests, which leads to the exacerbation of this devastation. Mr. Speaker, we gather to give voice to our often forgotten communities and our constituents.

Now, you have heard these Special Orders, therefore. We would like to thank Congress take these good opportunities to simply speak about a problem and bring light to its actuality, to let people know about it, but tonight is different, because my colleagues and I are here not just to talk about this, not just to highlight the problem of wildfires across the country, but, in fact, we bring good news as well. We offer solutions to this important issue.
So this evening, I rise in support and urge support of two provisions originating right here in Congress, the people's House, to address these issues.

First of all, H.R. 2936, the Resilient Federal Forests Act, which is sponsored by my good friend from the State of Arizona, Mr. WESTERMAN, which addresses the disastrous consequences of catastrophic wildfires by utilizing tools the Forest Service and other agencies can use to reduce the threats that are posed by wildfires, by insects, by disease, and dangers of forest overgrowth that serve as a tinderbox for wildfires.

This legislation would enable the necessary management techniques to address our forest health crises and significantly improve the resiliency of our Nation's forests.

On top of that, H.R. 167, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, which is sponsored by my good friend and colleague from Idaho, Mr. SIMPSON, fixes the way that we have got away from addressing wildfire suppression by treating these catastrophic wildfires like any other natural disaster, which they are.

Currently, agencies like the Forest Service are forced to borrow funding from accounts outside of their fire-fighting in order to address these fire suppression costs. This has become known as fire borrowing. This tool was intended to be an extraordinary measure, but in the past 8 of the last 12 years, the Forest Service has had to move funds from other operating accounts to fight these fires.

Mr. Speaker, this problem is systemic, it is dire, and we must address it.

The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act is a necessary solution to solve the crisis.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth district of the State of Washington, which I am proud to call my home, has been devastated by wildfires in recent years, from the Carlton Complex Fire of 2014, which at the time was the largest in State history, to the Okanogan Complex Fire, which only the next year surpassed that record. In addition to that, we lost three firefighters in the process.

Our communities know what it means to live with the overwhelming consequences of continual disastrous wildfires year after year after year, and it doesn’t have to be this way. We can solve this problem.

My colleagues and I gather tonight to shed light on this problem and to offer solutions and to let our constituents know that we will not give up in this effort.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. Speaker, the two speakers have now brought up the issue that the House has repeatedly passed resolutions and ideas in regards to funding and taking care and mitigating our forest tragedy. There is an old adage around here that the Democrats may be the opposition, but the Senate is always the enemy. What we are here to do is light a fire under the Senate. Their talk is cheap; their actions speak. So let's light a fire.

To do that, I now yield to the gentleman whose Resilient Federal Forests Act is the topic for this evening, H.R. 2936.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GOSAR) for his leadership in setting up this Special Order on the importance of proper forest management, proper forest management on our Nation's Federal lands. I would also like to thank him for his unwavering support of my bill, H.R. 2936, the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017.

It is my sincere hope that we see H.R. 2936 move off the floor of the House with strong bipartisan support and then move through the Senate and get it on the President’s desk so he can sign this and we can start the process of reversing something that has been going on for far too long.

As a person educated in forestry, I can tell you that forests grow slowly. We almost don’t recognize the change in the forest because it happens so slowly. But given enough years, we see what has happened to our timberland out West. I have a map here of all the forest fires that we have seen out West this summer.

We didn’t just get to this point overnight. It has happened over a series of years. It happened when, back in the 1990s, I believe, we had an overreaction to forest conditions. The pendulum swung way too far, and we got in a position where, what I say is, we were loving our trees to death, and we stopped managing our trees.

But we kept putting fires out, and fire is such a key part of managing overgrown forests. So what we have seen happen over time is we have seen more insects and disease infestations. As these trees grow closer together and fill the growing space, they start competing for sunlight; they compete for nutrients; they become weak, and they become susceptible to insect attacks; they become susceptible to disease; and then they die. We get lightning strikes or we get floods out, and then we are dealing with a catastrophic event.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. If we would employ sound forest management practices, we can do a lot to mitigate the intensity and the number of these fires.

As we look at issues that are created with these fires, we know that this has been the worst fire season on record, but it broke the record that was set in 2015 as the worst fire season on record. I predict that if we don't start managing our forests now, in the coming years we are going to see new worst fire seasons on record.

This is a process that will continue to get worse unless we address the problem. It is to the point where it is going to take time to reverse what has happened and to get the forest back into a healthy state.

I notified this week about a sheep farmer down here in southeast Wyoming, in Torrington, who was a young guy getting into the business, and he lost five sheep. He took them to the veterinarian to do a postmortem analysis and found out they died from smoke inhalation.

Now, the fire that was creating the smoke that was drifting down there was about 800 miles away in Montana. If it is causing that kind of health risk to sheep, what is it doing to the residents that live out here? I know that there have been schools closed, there have been people who have to stay indoors, but this creates a health risk. It is more than just a risk to healthy forests. It is a risk to healthy humans.

I urge support of two provisions originally from Arizona. It is a risk to healthy humans.

I have another map here, and this shows the smoke drift on a particular day. I believe this was September 14. This is a map that was produced by NOAA, and you can see where the fires were, and you can see how the winds carry the smoke, and this shows the most intense areas of smoke, the lighter green the intermediate, and then the darker green shows where the least smoke intensity was.

This map really illustrates how fires in certain areas, the smoke gets picked up by the wind and gets carried to different places across the country.

When I look at this map of the Western United States—and we being from Arizona, some might ask: How do these fires affect forestry in Arkansas?

Well, we have talked about forest borrowing. When we take money from one account in the Forest Service budget and put it in the firefighting account, that takes money away from management practices because we have no place on the forest in Arkansas and other places to the east where we don’t have as many catastrophic fires. On top of that, we see how the smoke drift affects many, many parts of the country.

When we think about the smoke, what is that smoke? It is mainly carbon. One of the main purposes of a healthy forest is to fulfill the cycle of photosynthesis, where it pulls carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, takes it through the leaves, converts it into sugars, and releases oxygen back into the air. The forests clean the air except when they are burning at the rate that they are burning right now, at 8.5 million acres of our Federal timberland that went up in smoke, putting hundreds of millions of tons of carbon into the atmosphere. If we want to talk about taking carbon out of the atmosphere, the solution to that is a healthy forest.

But not only do forests clean the atmosphere, they clean the water. The more ground cover we have, the more water gets filtered as it goes into the ground, as it goes into streams.
But overstocked forests can also prevent water from actually getting into the ground table and getting into streams. In areas in the West where we are having water shortage problems, proper management of forests can help to alleviate those problems.

We are not talking about clear-cutting. I get so tired of people saying, “All they want to do is clear-cut our Federal forests.” We don’t want to clear-cut the Federal forests. We want to manage them. We want to use practices from below, where we take out small stock, where we take out the smaller trees. Some of it is merchantable; some of it is not. We can produce timber that can be used in the rural areas where it is grown to help the economies out there.

But the end goal is to have a healthy forest with larger trees spaced further apart without all the fuel ladders going down to the ground so that, when a fire moves through these areas, it burns at a low level through the ground. And guess what. That creates great wildlife habitats when we do that.

There are so many benefits of having a healthy forest, and as a forester, a forester who was trained at a school that was started by Gifford Pinchot, who is the father, along with Teddy Roosevelt, of our Federal forests, it is embarrassing to me what has happened to our Federal lands across this country.

Roosevelt and Pinchot talked about conservation. They talked about leaving our resources in better shape than we found them in. Right now, we are not doing that. We are allowing the lack of management to destroy these resources for future generations. We are allowing the lack of management to emit hundreds of millions of tons of carbon into the atmosphere and also take that vegetation away that provides wildlife habitat, that provides a filter for our water, and that provides timber that is pulling carbon out of our atmosphere.

We can do better than this. We have provisions in the Resilient Federal Forests Act to allow the Forest Service to actually manage the timber. We require them to do a no-management analysis, because when you look at the dynamic nature of a forest, if you say, “We are not going to do anything.” well, you just made a management decision.

Again, the trees are living, growing organisms. Even though the Forest Service says, “We are not managing it,” they are going to continue to grow. They are going to fill the growing space. If we continue to suppress fire, the fuel load is going to get worse, and we are going to have more and more forests subject to catastrophic wildfires of, I believe it is, 192 million acres of Federal timberland in this country. About 80 million acres right now, according to the Forest Service, is subject to catastrophic wildfire.

It is time to act. We have waited too long, and the problem continues to get worse. It will continue to get more severe as time moves on if we don’t start intervening now.

Mr. GOSAR. I want to again thank you for putting this together, for the efforts that you are putting forth so that we can actually start to make not only our air cleaner by not having all these catastrophic wildfires, but to conserve our forests so that they are healthy, so that they are functioning the way that they should be.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank you for putting this together, for the efforts that you are putting forth so that we can actually start to make not only our air cleaner by not having all these catastrophic wildfires, but to conserve our forests so that they are healthy, so that they are functioning the way that they should be.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for his excellent leadership. He is very modest.

Listen, folks, I made a comment. Around here in Washington, D.C., we talk about the Democrats being the opposition and the Senate being the problem. Well, as you know, this is a very bipartisan bill. He is very modest.

Let’s get on with it. H.R. 2936, the Resilient Federal Forests Act, actually does.

It allows for the streamlined review of projects up to 30,000 acres if the management strategy is put forward by collaborative stakeholders. Imagine that, something so simple.

It also requires litigants opposing active management projects to propose an alternative proposal as opposed to just saying “no.” “No” isn’t a solution. It is what you are for.

It removes incentives for extreme special interest groups to file frivolous lawsuits—boy, once again, coming to the table with a solution.

It empowers local stakeholders and decisionmakers. So often we overlook the people on the ground, on Main Street, who have to live with the consequences for bad policy decisions.

It also empowers Tribal communities to be part of the solution and to help reduce the risk of wildfire. We see this time and again, that the Native Tribes that are in charge of their forests have pristine management practices.

H.R. 2936 also maintains current protections for our environmentally sensitive areas, including wilderness and roadless areas. A concession.

We need to be clear about larger risk areas and get to these in a more timely manner that we really want to handle. This bill is good for forest-dependent species as it allows for improvements to their habitat.

This bill adopts a forward-thinking, active management strategy that combats dangerous wildfires before they get started, which includes reforms that would end the practice of fire borrowing.

I want to thank the gentleman for his excellent piece of legislation. It is time that it moves forward.

Once again, it is not the House that is the problem, but our colleagues across the street. Once again, talk is cheap; actions speak. Americans need help.

The fact that these disasters are quite natural might lead one to think they are inevitable, but according to Forest Service officials and experts, it is our system that is broken.

Our system is broken. These fires start naturally and decimate our natural ecosystems, but the ultimate cause at the level of their severity and recurrence is manmade.

The facts about the relationship between management and wildfires speak for themselves. Forest Service data indicates that active forest management reduces wildfire intensity, while improving forest health. In spite of this, only 1 to 2 percent of high risk areas are actively treated and subject to forest management.

The United States Forest Service expends too many resources fighting fires after they break out to work to prevent them in any significant way before they start. By implementing better management projects, like thinning, culling hazardous fuels on the forest floors, and conducting controlled burns, they could accomplish exactly that, but such a course of action would require ample resources and willingness.

Mr. Speaker, I would guess, my professional diagnosis is that both of those are in short supply.

I hope my friends on the other side of the aisle are able to hear what I say next. If you care about carbon emissions, you should care deeply about this issue, no matter where you live in the country, no matter where you live.

NASA data shows that one wildfire can emit more carbon in a few days than total vehicle emissions in a State for the whole year. To put it in perspective, controlled burning reduces roughly 10 percent as much, and is only one part of an overall active management strategy.

So the correct choice in this situation is obvious: we spend a little more on the front end so that we can save ourselves much of the economic, environmental, and familial displacement costs on the back end. These costs are year after year, and they are catastrophic when they are left untreated.

Treatment is the right course of action, but it requires a little bit of planning, due diligence, and yes, action on our part. I know Congress is a big fan of the word, but when you look at the track record, Congress isn’t a big fan of actually acting.

In response to this dire situation, Members of Congress from across the country will be sharing their thoughts and experiences within their home States. They will be discussing this during the year, and this past year of terrible wildfires. These are stories that need to be recounted.

They will also be speaking about the solutions that we have come together
with, for forestry officials and stakeholders across the country. Tackling this problem has become a collaborative and holistic national policy effort, and the policy proposals we have produced are reflective of this fact. They are also bipartisan.

But Mr. Speaker, we can’t let this just be a rhetorical exercise. We are united in demanding Congress do something. This Chamber has the knowledge and aptitude to deliver policy solutions. Now we need the political will to turn that knowledge into congressional action. Only then will huge portions of the country finally see some relief from these disasters.

When your home is on fire, it is straightforward, it is a nonpartisan issue. You call the fire department, and after the problem is dealt with, you make sure that you eliminate what caused the fire so that you don’t see it again.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation was on fire this year, and I demand that we, as this Chamber, unite in the same spirit of decisive problem solving as we do for our natural disasters. Let’s put these fires out, and then let’s stop the brunt for next year’s fires before they start.

In my four terms as a Congressman from Arizona, I have had to witness the largest catastrophic fire in Arizona history, and also the most catastrophic life-taking, the Yarnell fire. The first was the Wild Well fire in northeast Arizona, and was the Yarnell fire that is now in the movie theaters that took the lives of 19 firefighters. That is a travesty.

This is something that gives when it is managed right. The people back home know the right answer. Let’s give them the tools, the working power, and the policy that allows them, instead of being victims, to be stalwart solutions for a policy that gives back.

As the gentleman from Arkansas said, as Teddy Roosevelt said: Leave our natural resources better than we found them.

Mr. Speaker, the speakers tonight shared their stories. We want America to hear those loud and clear. These are natural disasters no different than hurricanes, but these, in one case, are different. They are manmade.

Let’s bring this commonsense policy that Mr. Westerman has put forward. He is a true advocate and smart in regards to those reforms; that is why we want to make sure that H.R. 2966 gets moved through this Chamber, and then put the onus back on the Senate, so that we actually reward the people for good policy and making sure that the victims are turned upside down and made stalwart solution makers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

COMMENORATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF FANNIE LOU HAMER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. THOMPSON for 30 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I am privileged to rise in support of recognizing a true hero in not only the State of Mississippi, but the country as a whole. Her name is Fannie Lou Hamer. Fannie Lou Hamer will be 100 years old this week. I am happy to say that part of who I am can be attributed to my association with Ms. Hamer.

Mr. Speaker, when I got into my message, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague and my friend, Mr. BENNIE THOMPSON, for organizing this important Special Order hour honoring his fellow Mississippian, Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer.

Yesterday, Cosmopolitan published an article written by Zerlina Maxwell, aptly titled ‘‘Trust Black Women.’’ In that article, Maxwell, a fellow New Jerseyan, quoted her colleague, who said: ‘‘Black women have been a part of every great movement that has happened in this country. We always show up.’’

Tonight, we celebrate the birth of Fannie Lou Hamer, a black woman who, like many of us, always showed up. In 1964, Fannie Lou Hamer showed up at the Democratic National Convention on behalf of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and highlight the hurdles, both physical and political, that were preventing Blacks in the South from showing up at the ballot box.

During her testimony, she recounted her 26-mile journey to Indiana, Mississippi, to register to vote at the county courthouse where seven other men and women were looking to do the same. On the way, they encountered coordinated opposition from local and State law enforcement and men and women who sought to deter them from exercising their right to vote.

Upon returning home, Fannie Lou Hamer found that she had been fired from her job. According to The New York Times, she said: ‘‘They kicked me off the plantation; they set me free. It is the best thing that could happen. Now I can work for my people.’’

That same year, Fannie Lou Hamer ran for Congress as a candidate from Mississippi’s Second Congressional District. And even in her defeat, Ms. Hamer continued to show up and work for her people.

In 2014, 50 years after her testimony and her run for Congress, residents in New Jersey’s 12th Congressional District elected me, the State’s first ever African-American woman to represent them here in the House of Representatives.

During my freshman term, I joined my two amazing colleagues, Representative ROBIN KELLY of Illinois and Representative YVETTE CLARKE of New York, to form the first ever Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, a body of elected officials who work to ensure that Congress shows up for us.

And in 2016, I stood at the Democratic National Convention, standing on the shoulders of Ms. Hamer’s legacy, and proudly told America that this Nation is stronger when everyone has a chance to succeed.

Ms. Hamer would beam with pride knowing that my colleagues and I continue to beat back hurdles placed at the feet of minorities and the poor that restrict their access to the vote.

Ms. Hamer, however, would be very sad to know that, instead of being fired for trying to exercise the right to vote, they change polling places or amend requirements for valid identification. It is the same game, she would recognize, it is just different tactics.

I am honored to stand here to honor the birthday of Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer, walk alongside her footsteps of great women, and be the standard bearers we have been and continue to be. We have always and will continue to fight for what is right and what is necessary, even if we must do this alone.

As we battle back against the racism, the sexism, and the bigotry that runeth over in this administration, we must always be awake, alert, and to show up.

Tonight, in honoring the birthday of Fannie Lou Hamer, we simultaneously celebrate the strength of women, the ways we can encourage one another to be our sisters’ keepers, and continue to build a future for the next generation of women ready and waiting to show up and to lead.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I will tell the gentlewoman from New Jersey that I had the opportunity to meet Ms. Hamer as a young college student at college. Facts about it, one of the first campaigns I worked on as a college student was Ms. Hamer’s campaign for Congress, even though, as the gentlewoman indicated, she lost. But I now represent the Second District of Mississippi, and it was Ms. Hamer’s spirit that still lives on.

In Sunflower County, Mississippi, the majority of the population is African American. At the time she registered to vote, Ms. Hamer had no idea that she would be the first African American elected officials in Sunflower County. I am happy to report to you now that the sheriff is African American; the chancery clerk, the circuit clerk, four of the five county supervisors are African American; so Ms. Hamer’s work has not been in vain.

As you also indicated, the Devil is busy creating tricks to disenfranchise people—voter ID, closing voting polls, making it more difficult for people in rural areas to get to the polls to vote, especially in areas where you don’t have public transportation.

So, Ms. Hamer’s 100th birthday should be spent reeducating ourselves
to her legacy. One of the things that everyone loves to quote is Ms. Hamer’s words that she is “sick and tired of being sick and tired.” Well, that goes a long way, especially given the administration we are being challenged with here in Washington now. Hopefully, Ms. Hamer’s spirit will live on.

Congresswoman KAREN BASS and myself visited Ms. Hamer’s grave this past Saturday in Ruleville, Mississippi, and it was very touching. The community, in her death, has really embraced not only the, but her husband, Pat, and created a monument downtown Ruleville to her memory.

When I was a freshman Member of this body, I named the post office in Ruleville, Mississippi, after Ms. Hamer, and I am happy to say that the mayor of Ruleville, Mississippi, now is an African-American female.

So Ms. Hamer’s legacy, her involvement with SNCC, her involvement with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, all those things have made not just Mississippi, but this country a better place—affordable housing, all those things that she wanted, access to not only healthcare, but access to affordable healthcare, many of those items she talked about.

As a Christian woman, she believed in nonviolence, but she also believed in direct action. She was assaulted in the Winona, Mississippi, jail for advocating the right to vote.

In spite of what she encountered, she served as a shining example of what a truly committed individual can accomplish.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I did not ever have the pleasure and honor of meeting her in person, but I remember watching television during that Democratic National Convention, which was taking place in my home State in the great city of Atlantic City.

I remember the conscious bearing energy that evolved around all of that activity, and it made me very proud. And I would say that, indeed, Fannie Lou Hamer’s work has not gone, has not been in vain. But she also is smiling down knowing that what she started, you are continuing on, and that you are serving in the very district that she loved enough to fight for way back when.

It is my honor to know you, and to know that you have been touched by her. So that means that with less than 6 degrees of separation, I have been touched by her, and that is my blessing.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say to the gentlewoman that that 1964 Atlantic City Democratic National Convention set the tone for opening up the Democratic Party to people of all races and colors because Mrs. Hamer challenged the all-White makeup of the Mississippi delegation by saying Black people couldn’t participate. They were systematically excluded from the selection process, and she appealed to that convention to do better.

I am happy, as you know, to report that the convention heard Mrs. Hamer and decided that an all-White delegation from the State with the highest percentage of African Americans in the country could not be justified. So the delegation was not only integrated at the convention, but, for a time, we shared the chairmanships of the party. We had a co-chair that was White and a co-chair that was African American. So Mrs. Hamer’s spirit still lives on.

One of the real issues that really touches most of our hearts is that she was a very humble person. She had the kind of spirit in her delivery that you had to listen to. She had a aura when she walked in a room that whatever you were doing, you had to stop and pay attention to this very simple person who came in. But every time she opened her mouth, something very prophetical would come out.

So for a lot of individuals who think that Fannie Lou Hamer’s time has come and gone, I think it is fitting and proper that at this 100th birthday celebration we recommit ourselves to many of the things that Mrs. Hamer stood for: inclusion; not leaving people out because they don’t live in the big house on the hill; to make sure that our children receive the best education possible. All of those things Mrs. Hamer was noted for.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I think it is vitally important on this 100th anniversary of Ms. Hamer’s birth, to remember that what we are still fighting for the unfettered access to the vote, and that here in Congress, we have the opportunity to eliminate barriers and to fix the problems with the Civil Rights Act that just negatively impacts access and unfettered access to voting. There are just so many fundamental things that we could be doing today that honor the work that she did and that she gave her life’s work to.

In closing for me, I want to just say that I thank the gentleman so very much for doing this because I know that there are people who listen to these moments of Special Orders hours on C-SPAN, or catch it in some other form. It is important for our communities to recognize just how significant this woman’s role was in ensuring that they have the access to the things that they have access to today, and to demand their right to vote, and to exercise that right to vote every chance they get.

I am very grateful for the gentleman carrying this message this evening.
gentlewoman has some closing comments or something she would like to add. I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. Watson Coleman).

Mrs. Watson Coleman. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would just like to note that there was an amazing demonstration of people in front of the Supreme Court demanding that we do something about gerrymandering because that is another way of negatively impacting the impact of one man and one vote.

So it is, again, fitting to be honoring this woman who gave her life’s work to ensuring that everybody who was eligible to vote was given the right to vote; to eliminate any obstacles that were placed in their way so that we could open up opportunities to elect people who would be fair in the policies that are important; to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in this country for all people, provided upon their ability to work hard, to think, to be successful, to be their will to work hard, therefore, the content of their character versus the color of their skin. So it is indeed an honor to have shared this moment with you. Thank you for the invitation.

Mr. Thompson of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much Mrs. Watson Coleman for your participation.

The last point I would like to make is, in Mrs. Hamer’s day, it was poll tax. It was: How many bubbles are in a bar of soap? How many grains of sand are on the beach?

Now it is moving the polls in the interest of saving money, but you are disenfranchising people who don’t have the ability to go forward. It is the gerrymandering of districts so that you have the richest people in an area in the same district as the poorest people in that area. There are no real communities of interest.

If I am worried about paying the light bill, the cost of education, then there is a great possibility that I won’t go vote. But if I own a house and own a car and know where my next meal is coming from, I will go vote. So we have what we call communities of interest, and Mrs. Hamer talked about that.

So, again, we wanted to make sure that this week did not go by without giving Mrs. Hamer her due recognition for her 100th birthday. There will be a lot of other activities after this Special Order. While I attended Tougaloo College, while I attended Mississippi, while I went to the University of Mississippi, while I went to public education, while I went to American adults, while I went to Mississippi, I look forward to that.

Tonight, I recognize a civil rights hero whose work is no small part of the reason I and many other African-American members of Congress are able to stand before you today. Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer was born in 1917 in Montgomery County, Mississippi. During the civil rights era, Ms. Hamer, at the age of just 6-years-old joined her family picking cotton on the plantation of W.D. Marlow in Sunflower County, Mississippi.

Though, she began to pick cotton at a young age, Ms. Hamer was able to complete many years in school learning how to read and write, which helped her serve hundreds of African-Americans throughout her life.

In the 1960s, Ms. Hamer joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, an organization that provided the opportunity to register to vote. Ms. Hamer taught Black Mississippians how to read and write in order for them to pass discriminatory literacy tests designed to prevent Black Americans from registering to vote.

In 1962, Ms. Hamer along with 17 Black Mississippians traveled by bus from Ruleville, Mississippi to Indianola, Mississippi, to register to vote. Upon arrival, the group was blocked from entry by local law enforcement. But, Ms. Hamer and one of her fellow travelers were able to fill out a voter application and take the literacy test, but due to discrimination the two were unable to register. This did not deter Ms. Hamer’s passion and willingness to fight racism throughout Mississippi.

On the group’s way back to Ruleville, the bus was stopped by local police officers and the driver was arrested. In that very moment of racism and trial, Ms. Hamer began to sing Negro spirituals leaving a clear message to her oppressors that she would never give up.

Her leadership was a beacon of hope for so many Black Mississippians that in 1964, Ms. Hamer ran for Congress to represent Mississippi’s Second Congressional District as a Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party candidate, a party which she founded to promote equal rights for African-Americans in Mississippi.

During the 1960s, very few women especially women of color threw their hat into the ring for a Congressional bid. Her willingness to run in Mississippi at that time was and continues to be a powerful act in itself. Though she was unsuccessful, her speeches, messages and visits to African-Americans around the state resonated.

Ms. Hamer provided inspiration for me to work for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, while I attended Tougaloo College continuing Ms. Hamer’s work to get African-Americans across Mississippi registered to vote. I remember volunteering for Ms. Hamer’s Congressional campaign and getting inspired to serve the people of Mississippi. Today, I represent Mississippi’s Second Congressional District, and I cannot help but think that Ms. Hamer is smiling down on me. Her courage and brilliance is one of the reasons I stand on this floor today.

I am honored to be able to give time to honor a legend and civil rights icon. Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer’s legacy will forever live on, and I stand here today along with my colleagues to pay homage to a true hero.

General Leave

Mr. Thompson of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Fudge. Mr. Speaker, let me first begin by thanking my friend and colleague Rep. Bennie Thompson for leading today’s effort in honoring the life and legacy of Fannie Lou Hamer.

October 6th marks the 100th anniversary of her birth in Montgomery County, Mississippi. An honorary member of Delta Sigma Theta, Fannie Lou Hamer dedicated her life to the fight for civil rights. Born in 1917, she was the daughter of sharecroppers and the youngest of 20 siblings. By the age of six, she was helping her family in the cotton fields.

Fannie Lou Hamer was a woman of courage. She used her voice to raise awareness about the plight of African Americans in the Mississippi Delta. She was a woman of strength who was able to channel the injustices committed against her into activism.

Working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Hamer helped African Americans register to vote and worked to end segregation.

After attempting to register to vote herself in August 1962, Hamer lost her job and was kicked out of her home. The following year, she and fellow activists returning from a training workshop were unjustly jailed and severely beaten. While the beaten left permanent damage, the officers were later acquitted by an all-white jury.

Hamer was also a trailblazing political activist. She helped to found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and the National Women’s Political Caucus. She almost derailed the election of President Lyndon Johnson and changed the Democratic Party’s delegate selection process. In 1968, she would become the first African American to serve as an official delegate at a national-party convention since Reconstruction and the first woman ever from Mississippi.

Although unsuccessful in her bids for elected office, Hamer remained committed to voting rights and antipoverty efforts. She filed a lawsuit to push forward desegregation efforts in Mississippi schools, led the cotton pickers resistance movement and helped to bring a Head Start program to her community.

Fannie Lou Hamer’s contributions to the American Civil Rights movement and our nation are undeniable. As then UN Ambassador Andrew Young eulogized at her funeral, “None of us would be where we are now had she not been there then.” His words still ring true 40 years later.
HOUSE BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT

The President notified the Clerk of the House that on the following dates he had approved and signed bills and a joint resolution of the following titles:

August 2, 2017:
H.R. 3341. An Act to provide congressional review and to counter aggression by the Governments of Iran, the Russian Federation, and North Korea, and for other purposes.

August 3, 2017:
H.R. 3298. An Act to authorize the Capitol Police Board to make payments from the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund to employees of the United States Capitol Police who have sustained serious line-of-duty injuries, and for other purposes.

August 16, 2017:
H.R. 2210. An Act to designate the community living center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Butler Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Sergeant Joseph George Kusick VA Community Living Center".

H.R. 3218. An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 374. An Act to remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105-384, and for other purposes.

H.R. 310. An Act to establish a system for integration of Rapid DNA instruments for use by law enforcement to reduce violent crime and reduce the current DNA analysis backlog.

H.R. 873. An Act to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2430. An Act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and purposes for temporary assistance to United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2258. An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 601. An Act making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3732. An Act to amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to provide authority for increased fiscal year 2017 and 2018 payments for temporary assistance to United States citizens returned from foreign countries.

September 15, 2017:
S. 1616. An Act to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Bob Dole, in recognition for his service to the nation as a soldier, legislator, and statesman.

S. 1866. An Act to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the re-allocation and rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallot-icated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools, and for other purposes.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:
Ms. ROSEN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and tomorrow on account of work in district relating to tragic shooting in Las Vegas.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:
S. 396. An act to make technical amendments to certain marine fish conservation statutes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on September 28, 2017, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:
H.R. 3819. To amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, October 4, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the first, second, and third quarters of 2017, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO CANADA, EXPENDED BETWEEN SEPT. 14 AND SEPT. 16, 2017

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### REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE TO CANADA, EXPENDED BETWEEN SEPT. 14 AND SEPT. 16, 2017—Continued

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1 Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
2 If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended. 

### REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO CHILE, PERU, AND GUATEMALA, EXPENDED BETWEEN SEPT. 15 AND SEPT. 22, 2017

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1 Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
2 If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
3 Military air transportation.

### REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND MAR. 31, 2017

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Member or employee</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
<th>Departure</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Per diem</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
<th>Other purposes</th>
<th>Total</th>
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1 Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
2 If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

### REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN APR. 1 AND JUN. 30, 2017

<table>
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<th>Name of Member or employee</th>
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<th>Country</th>
<th>Per diem</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
<th>Other purposes</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Hon. Blake Farenthold</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Hon. Garrett Graves</td>
<td>4/7</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>449.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
2 If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, Sept. 15, 2017.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Member or employee</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
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<th>Country</th>
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1 Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
2 If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

2744. A letter from the Acting Director, Program Development and Regulation Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Water and Waste Loans and Grants (RIN: 0572-AC36), received September 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2747. A letter from the Alternate OSD FRLO, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department’s interim final rule — Establishments of TRICARE Select and Other TRICARE Reforms (Docket ID: DOD-2017-HA-0039) (RIN: 0720-AB70) received September 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2746. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2016 report on mining activities, pursuant to the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2749. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency’s direct final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Refrigerant Management Regulations for Small Cans of Motor Vehicle Refrigerant (EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0213; FRL-9968-68-OAR) (RIN: 2060-AT49) received September 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2750. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency’s final rule — Oxathiapiprolin; Pesticide Tolerance (EPA-HQ-OPP-2016-0049; FRL-9966-68) received September 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2751. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency’s final rule — Interstate Transport of Refrigerant (EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0218; FRL-9968-68-OAR) (RIN: 2060-AT49) received September 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, Sept. 15, 2017.
for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2018 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2019 through 2027 (Rept. 115–389). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and subsequently referred, as follows:

By Mr. McKinley (for himself, Mr. Welch, Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania, Mr. Thompson of Mississippi, Ms. Kaptur, Mr. Ryan of Ohio, Mr. Yarmuth, Mr. Michael F. Doyle of Pennsylvania, Mr. Scott of Virginia, Mr. Norcross, Mr. Mooney of West Virginia, Mr. Jenkins of West Virginia, Mr. Johnson of Ohio, and Mrs. Bustos):

H.R. 3913. A bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer certain funds to the 1974 United Mine Workers of America Pension Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Marshall, Ms. Jenkins of Kansas, and Mr. Yoder:

H.R. 3914. A bill to remove the limitation imposed on the receipt of funding under the Water and Land Conservation Fund on the conversion of Lake Atfon Park in Sedgwick County, Kansas, to a use other than public outdoor recreation; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. Lucas (for himself and Mr. Heck):

H.R. 3915. A bill to clarify membership requirements for the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. Davis (for himself, Ms. Laval, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Costa, and Mr. Valadao):

H.R. 3916. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to vest in the Secretary of the Interior functions under that Act with respect to species of fish that spawn in freshwater tributaries to the Atlantic Ocean, or of fish that spawn in ocean waters and migrate to these tributaries; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. Mullen (for himself and Mr. Bridenstine):

H.R. 3917. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to extend funding for the special diabetes program for Indians; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Courtney (for himself, Mr. Thompson of Pennsylvania, Ms. Blunt Rochester, Ms. Delauro, Mr. Donovan, Mr. Evans, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Himes, Mr. Lance, Mr. McKinley, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Pasculli, Mr. Payne, Mr. Ryan of Ohio, Ms. Spera, Mrs. Watson, Mr. Coleman, Mr. LoBiondo, Mr. Larson of Connecticut, Ms. Esty of Connecticut, and Mr. Soto):

H.R. 3918. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend public safety officers’ death benefits to fire police officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. Black (for herself and Mr. Thompson of California):

H.R. 3919. A bill to streamline the employer reporting process and strengthen the eligibility verification process for the premium assistance tax credit and cost-sharing subsidies under the Medicare program for beneficial veterans and, in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Doyle of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 3920. A bill to establish a Medicare demonstration program on the use of third-party interest-free payment arrangements to reduce Medicare hospital part A bad debt claims; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Burgess:

H.R. 3921. A bill to extend funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Smith of Washington (for himself, Ms. Blumenauer, Ms. Judy Chu of California, Mr. Cicilline, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Danny K. Davis of Illinois, Mr. Eäsong, Mr. Espaillat, Mr. Foster, Mr. Gallego, Mr. Gutiérrez, Ms. Hanabusa, Ms. Jackson Lee, Mr. Jeffries, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Mr. Kidder, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Ms. Lee, Mr. Lofgren, Mr. McGovern, Ms. Moore, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Norton, Mr. Payne, Mr. Quigley, Mr. Raskin, Ms. Schakowsky, Mr. Case, Mr. Schrier, Mr. Schakowsky, Mr. Veasey, Ms. Maxine Waters of California, Mr. Watson Coleman, Mr. Polis, Ms. DeBenedetti, Mr. Torres, Ms. Barragan, Miss Rice of New York, Mr. Gomez, Ms. Pingree, Mrs. Napolitano, Mr. Lewis of Georgia, Ms. McCollum, Mr. Doggett, Mr. Serrano, and Mr. Grijalva):

H.R. 3923. A bill to provide standards for facilities at which aliens in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security are detained; and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. Brooks of Indiana (for herself, Ms. DeGette, and Mr. Reed):

H.R. 3924. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend public safety officers’ death benefits to fire police officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. Black (for herself and Mr. Thompson of California):

H.R. 3925. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit to eligible individuals to purchase health coverage under the Children’s Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. Casada of Tennessee:

H.R. 3926. A bill to provide for an extension for community health centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Bilirakis:

H.R. 3927. A bill to amend title XXI to allow for the blending of risk pools of children’s health insurance buy-in programs with the risk pools of State child health funding under such title for purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Bucshon (for himself and Mr. Wilson):

H.R. 3928. A bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to carry out a program to provide payments to community organizations that own a nuclear power plant that has ceased generating electricity and that stores spent nuclear fuel on-site, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Courtney (for himself and Mr. Wrice):

H.R. 3929. A bill to establish a Hurricane Harvey Small Business Recovery Grants in the Small Business Administration to compensate certain small business concerns for substantial economic injury suffered as a result of Hurricane Harvey in August 2017; to the Committee on Small Business, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. Lance (for himself and Ms. Matsui):

H.R. 3931. A bill to increase the number of States that may conduct Medicaid demonstrations programs to improve access to community mental health services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Lance (for himself and Ms. Gonzalez-Colon of Puerto Rico):

H.R. 3932. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to provide for increased Puerto Rico Medicaid payments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Renacci (for himself and Mr. Kilmer):

H.R. 3933. A bill to establish and reinstate certain reporting requirements regarding efforts to recruit, hire, and retain health care professionals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. Brook of Rhode Island:

H.R. 3934. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to exclude from creditable...
wages and self-employment income wages earned for services by aliens illegally performed in the United States and self-employment income derived from a trade or business illegally conducted in the United States; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SHIMKUS (for himself and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 3935. A bill to provide for an extension of funding for the National Health Service Corps; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself and Mr. CAPUANO):

H.R. 3936. A bill to forgive the indebtedness of the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. NORTON:

H. Res. 554. A resolution recognizing the life and legacy of Richard (Dick) Gregory and honoring his contributions to the civil rights movement and to American comedy; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. McKinley:

H.R. 3913. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. ESTES of Kansas:

H.R. 3914. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 2

By Mr. LUCAS:

H.R. 3915. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution states that Congress shall have the power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution states the Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 3925. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BILIRIKIS:

H.R. 3926. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. BILIRIKIS:

H.R. 3927. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 1

By Mr. HUCSHON:

H.R. 3928. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. COURTNEY:

H.R. 3929. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 3930. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 3931. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the United States Constitution which states the Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 3932. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the United States Constitution which states the Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. RENacci:

H.R. 3933. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18. To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 3934. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:

H.R. 3936. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 and Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 102: Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 103: Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 113: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. PELMUTTER.
H.R. 173: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. BENRAY LUCIAN of New Mexico, and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 184: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 233: Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CRIST, and Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 392: Mrs. TORRES, Mr. POLIQUIN, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 331: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 445: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 502: Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. DEMINGS, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 535: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 564: Mr. GALLAGHER.
H.R. 638: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 673: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 714: Mr. GIANFORTE.
H.R. 747: Mr. BARBEY.
H.R. 788: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 792: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 807: Mr. MCNEESEY and Miss RICH of New York.
H.R. 810: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H. Res. 361: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3878: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3852: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3822: Mr. BROWN of Maryland and Mr. BROWN of Indiana.
H.R. 3827: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 3806: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 3784: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. JUDE CHU of California, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. McCAIN.
H.R. 3789: Mr. JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3788: Mr. KOCH, Mr. MCNALLY, Mr. DRUCKER, Mr. COWDEN, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3774: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 3772: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3767: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3762: Mr. HICK, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 3768: Ms. MICHELLE LIUAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CARDNALS, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. BLUMINAUER, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 3768: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. SCHAFER.
H.R. 3768: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. SCHAFER.
H.R. 3768: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. SCHAFER.
H.R. 3762: Mr. BROWN of Indiana.
H.R. 3758: Mr. HINES, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GOTTENDER, and Mr. FORSTER.
H.R. 3756: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. CLEAVES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. LANGOVIN, Ms. MING, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. KATKO, Mr. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 3757: Ms. GRAY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HILABRIS, and Mr. YODER.
H.R. 3756: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3755: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3754: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3753: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3752: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3751: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3750: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3749: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3748: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3747: Mr. SMITH.
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H.R. 3715: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3714: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3713: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3712: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3711: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3710: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3709: Mr. SMITH.
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H.R. 3706: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3705: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3704: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3703: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3702: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3701: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3700: Mr. SMITH.
H.R. 3699: Mr. SMITH.
H. Res. 370: Mr. KHANNA.
H. Res. 466: Mr. COLE and Ms. ESHOO.
H. Res. 490: Mr. LANCE.

H. Res. 529: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. VRESEY, and Mr. BERGMAN.

H. Res. 550: Mr. KENNEDY.