

CONGRATULATING ERIC COWDEN

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Eric Cowden, a resident of Pennsylvania Furnace, Pennsylvania, a constituent of mine. This past month, Eric, a graduate of Penn State University, was recognized by the National Future Farmers of America with the organization's highest honor, the FFA Honorary American Degree.

As a youngster growing up on the family farm in Washington County, Pennsylvania, Eric was involved with the FFA, like many students in rural communities, showing steer, heifers, and lambs from a young age. Upon graduating from Penn State with a degree in agricultural sciences and earning his master's in business from Delaware Valley College, Eric went on to work for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. There, he administered the Rural Youth grant program, led the county fair in the agri-tourism division, and eventually rose to director of the central region office for the department. Eric also holds several leadership roles with the Marcellus Shale Coalition, bringing together two of Pennsylvania's most historic and important industries: energy and agriculture.

Eric is well deserving of this honor, and we thank him for his leadership in the field of agriculture and agricultural education.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, on February 15, a small group of Democratic Members of the House joined together to form the Safe Climate Caucus. We vowed to come to the House floor every day to talk about the defining environmental challenge of our time: climate change. Today marks the 100th day we have spoken on the House floor.

The Safe Climate Caucus is composed of Representatives from across this country. We come from the west coast, the east coast, the North, the South, and the Midwest. We come from coastal regions, urban areas, and rural communities. We represent a cross-section of America.

We started the Safe Climate Caucus because of the enormous disconnect that exists between what scientists are telling us about the dangers of climate change and the conspiracy of silence and denial that exists in this House. There is a mountain of evidence that climate change is a real and dangerous threat to the future of our children and grandchildren. Yet this body refuses to accept the scientific reality.

I wish my Republican colleagues would open their eyes and escape their congressional bubble. Firefighters

across the West know that fires are getting bigger and more dangerous. Farmers in the Midwest know that droughts and floods are becoming more common and more intense. Coastal communities know that rising sea levels and extreme storms threaten their very existence. And just last month, a supertyphoon—perhaps the strongest ever recorded—demolished entire cities in the Philippines.

Extreme weather, sea level rise, heat waves, droughts, flooding, wildfires, pests—that is what climate change looks like. So what is this House doing? Denying, obstructing, and weakening the Clean Air Act.

In June, the International Energy Agency warned that, if we don't act now, avoiding catastrophic climate change will cost trillions of dollars. In October, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that the evidence that the Earth is warming is "unequivocal." This is the same level of confidence that scientists have that smoking causes cancer. Last month, the World Meteorological Association reported that the levels of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere set new records, reaching concentrations higher than any in the last 800,000 years. Yet this House endures it all.

We challenged the Republicans on the Energy and Commerce Committee to come to the floor and debate us, to defend their record of inaction. They never showed up. The committee won't even hold a hearing to listen to the scientists. Democrats are in the minority, so we can't call hearings. But we won't be muzzled.

Since February, the members of the Safe Climate Caucus reported on the alarms that the scientists are sounding.

□ 1045

In fact, today marks the 100th legislative day that members from the Safe Climate Caucus have spoken out. Except during the Republican shutdown of the government, our members have come to the floor every day we have been in session. It has not always been easy to keep this streak of speeches alive, but we have come because of the commitment of our 31 members to take action before it is too late.

We are speaking out because we know we have a duty to our neighbors, to our children, and to our grandchildren. We know that when future generations look back at these times, they won't remember the debates we have had on the deficit. They won't remember the debates we have had on boosting oil drilling. What they will want to know is whether we acted to protect the world from catastrophic climate change while we still had time, and they will want to know whether we made the investments we need to make the United States the world leader in the clean energy technologies of the future.

We are at a critical juncture. I urge all Members to join with the Safe Cli-

mate Caucus in ensuring we make the right choices for our future and for our economy.

OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, since ObamaCare implementation began on October 1, the President has spent much of his time talking about the malfunctioning Web site. However, I would remind the President of his own words several weeks ago: ObamaCare is more than just a Web site.

The Web site was supposed to be the easy part, and as more people sign onto it, they will be made aware of the real problems with ObamaCare. In fact, when the millions of Americans currently losing their health care plans try to log on to healthcare.gov, they will be met with drastically increased premiums, skyrocketing out-of-pocket costs, and reduced access to the doctors and hospitals they know. These problems are in direct contrast to the repeated promises made by the President.

My constituents are rightly concerned with these broken promises and are regularly contacting me and my office to voice their concerns. For instance, Jillian in Sparta, Tennessee, wrote to me:

Every year in the past, my health care insurance has increased by a small percentage—sometimes 5 percent, sometimes 7 percent. This past week, I received my new premiums for 2014. They increased by 250 percent. Same plan, same coverage, same insurance company.

And Jillian isn't alone. Nearly three times as many Americans say they have been hurt rather than helped by ObamaCare, according to a recent poll. This from a law that the President promised would lower insurance premiums by as much as \$2,500.

Mr. Speaker, ObamaCare is much more than a Web site. It is an unmitigated disaster. The effects of this law are wreaking havoc on our health care system and exposing the President's broken promises to Americans across this country.

My House Republican colleagues and I have tried repeatedly to protect Americans from this law, but the only way to do so is for Democrats to join us. For instance, the Senate can act right now to pass the Fairness for American Families Act that was passed out of the House this summer. This legislation would give fairness under ObamaCare by delaying the law's mandate for people, not just big businesses.

The President may be all in on his health care law, but that doesn't mean congressional Democrats need to follow him off of a cliff.

As disapproval of ObamaCare continues to rise, I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to distance themselves from ObamaCare and join us by trying to protect the American

people from this law's disastrous effects.

SEQUESTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD. Mr. Speaker, as budget negotiations move forward, Congress must remain committed to work in a bipartisan manner to find reasonable solutions to create jobs, expand the economy, and strengthen the middle class, while continuing to reduce the deficit in a responsible way.

To do so, Congress must lift the across-the-board sequester cuts that are inflicting damage to communities across the Nation. There is no question that we need to cut the deficit, but we should do so without cutting programs that seniors, veterans, small business owners, students, and our children rely on.

In California, it is estimated that, with sequestration, more than 15,000 children will not receive vaccinations for diseases such as measles, whooping cough, and influenza, and 8,200 children will be eliminated from federally funded early childhood education programs such as Head Start. This is unacceptable, and Congress must fix it.

After the extensive damage done by the government shutdown that cost the economy \$24 billion, according to an assessment by Standard & Poor's, we must avoid another shutdown and another crisis by passing a budget that does away with sequestration. Americans cannot afford budget policies that weaken our economy, squeeze the middle class, and cost hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Congress needs to come to a compromise on a real spending plan that will increase revenue rather than just slashing critical programs. Congress needs to make sure that Medicare and Medicaid are protected and strengthened.

Mr. Speaker, I stand ready to support a commonsense, job-creating budget.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As we face a new day, help us to discover the power of resting in You and receiving assurance and encouragement in Your amazing grace.

Send Your Spirit down upon the Members of the people's House. May they be reminded always of who they are. Grant them wisdom, insight, and vision, that the work they do will be for the betterment of our Nation during a time of struggle for so many Americans.

May they earn the trust and respect of those they represent, whether or not they had earned their vote, and make history that expands the great legacy of so many who have served in this Chamber before now—a legacy of noble service, sometimes political risk, but always great leadership.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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 I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

JULIA'S STORY PROVES PRESIDENT OBAMA'S EMPTY PROMISES

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened and angered by a recent email I received from a distraught constituent. Julia from Gurnee, Illinois, told me she is now one of the millions whose health insurance will be canceled because of ObamaCare. Buying a comparable plan means her out-of-pocket expenses will jump more than \$5,200 a year. Worse, the smaller network excludes her current doctor—the doctor she has seen for 33 years. Only doubling her premiums would allow her to keep the doctor who has known and cared for her for most of her adult life.

The President promised middle class families would pay \$2,500 less in annual health care costs under ObamaCare. He promised they would be able to keep their insurance plans and their doctors. Julia's story proves again how empty those promises were.

The Senate and the President must act, as the House has, to allow all Americans to keep their doctors. Americans can't afford more broken promises.

PROYECTO INMIGRANTE

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

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Proyecto Inmigrante on their 8-year anniversary on December 7. Proyecto Inmigrante is a nonprofit organization in Dallas and Fort Worth that, since 2005, has served our community by providing low-cost and reliable immigration counseling.

I admire the hard work and perseverance of its executive director, Douglas Interiano, and the entire staff and volunteers who work hard to help their clients navigate the immigration system to become permanent residents and citizens and to also help them apply for deferred action.

Proyecto also serves a very critical role in protecting a vulnerable immigrant community from fraud and abuse. These efforts take courage, conviction, and selflessness that, as the holiday season approaches, remind us that we should serve others and look beyond ourselves.

Respecting our immigrant community and working hard to enact comprehensive immigration reform should be an urgent national priority for the country. I look forward to continuing that fight, and I am honored that our Nation will have Proyecto Inmigrante as an ally in that effort. Keep up the good work, and good luck on future years of service.

J.W. HENDRIX WAS RIGHT

(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. Madam Speaker, constituents across South Carolina's Second Congressional District are hurting because of the President's failing government health care takeover. As millions of Americans continue to receive policy cancellations, it is increasingly clear that ObamaCare is destroying jobs.

Angela from Lexington writes:

ObamaCare has caused my son to lose his insurance that was provided through his employer. They said they could not afford the new requirements. My son finally got a job that provided medical insurance, and then the President takes it away. There's definitely something wrong here.

The President has broken multiple promises to the American people. As