

a level playing field for them and their children to succeed. Hardworking Americans deserve a Congress that will address the growing threat of the Zika virus, which we now know is becoming more of a threat and causes birth defects. We need to address it.

Democrats will continue to press for a budget that creates jobs, raises the paychecks of the American people, and keeps them safe, while reducing the budget in a balanced and responsible way.

RECOGNIZING FOR-BOTS ROBOTICS TEAM

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, I visited Forbush Elementary School in East Bend, North Carolina. While I was there, I had a chance to meet with the impressive students who are a part of the For-BOTS robotics team.

Although Forbush Elementary has only had a robotics team for 2 years, its students are already racking up awards. The For-BOTS team was named the grand champion of Yadkin County's First Lego League Robotics Tournament.

The team also placed first in the Robot Table Performance and Project Presentation categories in a regional tournament in Boone. Additionally, the For-BOTS placed first in Robot Programming in the North Carolina first Lego League Tournament, and they claimed a second place award in Robot Table Performance.

It is always a pleasure to visit Yadkin County Schools and witness the great things happening in classrooms across the county. It is clear the teachers and the administrators at Forbush Elementary are providing an educational experience that equips students for success.

SUPPORT THE TREAT ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, in 2014, 28,000 Americans died from an overdose of opioid drugs, an annual total that has quadrupled since 1999. In Erie County, 11 people die per week from suspected opioid overdoses. Yet one in nine Americans with substance abuse problems—less than one in nine—are currently receiving treatment for their disorder. One cause is a cap that limits the number of patients a doctor can treat with opioid treatment medications such as Suboxone.

I have introduced legislation to raise these caps and expand prescribing authority to physician assistants and nurse practitioners, which is especially important in medically underserved communities. When treatment was approved for use in France without patient caps, the opioid overdose death rate declined by 85 percent in 5 years.

I urge my colleagues to support the TREAT Act, to give professionals the tools they need to treat addiction and our families new hope for recovery.

WATER RESOURCES

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, this week I spoke to a group of civil engineers, local water utility managers, and others involved in the water infrastructure industry at their 2016 Water Week Conference.

While roads and bridges and airports and train tracks get a lot of attention, water infrastructure is just as critical to the health of our Nation's economy. Water transportation is the safest and most fuel-efficient, least polluting, and least expensive means of moving goods.

The public and private sectors must work together to deliver safe and affordable water to millions of Americans every day.

In 2014, we wrote a landmark Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which was signed into law. It reformed the way the Army Corps of Engineers studies and completes their projects; it shortened the nearly endless study and environmental review process; and, most importantly, it included no earmarks.

Our economy cannot afford to see the locks and dams of our Nation's inland waterways system fail, preventing cargo from reaching its destination. Our agriculture and energy industries depend on open and secure water transportation systems, and we hope to accomplish that in WRRDA 2016.

FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, there are more than 200,000 Filipino and Filipino American soldiers who responded to President Roosevelt's call to duty. They fought under our American flag during World War II.

These loyal and courageous soldiers suffered, fought, and gave up their lives alongside their American counterparts throughout the war; yet decades have gone by, and they are still waiting for their service to be recognized.

I have introduced H.R. 2737, legislation that is strongly supported by Members of both parties and in both Chambers, to award these deserving veterans the Congressional Gold Medal so that our country can show our appreciation and recognize them for their dedicated service and sacrifice in defeating the Imperial Japanese Army.

Today there are just 18,000 of these Filipino World War II veterans who are still alive. Time is of the essence. We cannot afford to wait. I urge my colleagues to quickly pass this legislation

so that these courageous men may be honored while they are still among us.

NATIONAL CORNBREAD FESTIVAL

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th annual National Cornbread Festival, which takes place in my hometown of South Pittsburg, Tennessee. This yearly event brings thousands of folks from around the country to experience the culture of southeast Tennessee.

South Pittsburg is also the home of the iconic American company Lodge Manufacturing, a major sponsor of the Cornbread Festival.

Growing up, almost all of us can remember a Lodge Cast Iron skillet playing a prominent role in home-cooked meals. The memories contained in those skillets and the family time with our loved ones are some of the most cherished.

Lodge truly embodies the spirit of American manufacturing and ingenuity. While the trend is for most companies to sell to large companies and move overseas, Lodge has continued to operate in Tennessee since 1896. In fact, many of my constituents have worked at Lodge Manufacturing for their entire lives, just like their parents and grandparents.

I appreciate Lodge Manufacturing for working to keep those American dreams alive, and I want to thank all those who play a role in hosting the National Cornbread Festival.

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BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, like many Americans, I spent last weekend struggling through my taxes, and I would like to know, like other Americans, that that money is going to be used in a responsible way and that we are going to move toward fiscal stability around here.

I am the lead Democratic sponsor of Mr. GOODLATTE's constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget. In my opinion, the only way you are going to get Congress to get serious is to have a constitutional requirement that the budget be balanced and that the President submit to Congress a balanced budget.

You can't pretend you are going to do it just by cutting the heck out of everything. It has to include revenues, has to close tax loopholes and overseas tax havens and a whole bunch of other things that are leading to revenue losses.

So I am introducing an improved amendment over and above that from

Representative GOODLATTE which deals with a few concerns I have about that one.

This one clearly protects Social Security and Medicare. This one clearly closes a loophole that we can't have off-budget spending for military operations. We must have a declaration of war if you are going to exceed a balanced budget. It would require the budget be balanced within 5 fiscal years of passing this.

We have been kicking this can down the road. It is not a can anymore. It is a mountain of debt that we are giving to our kids. We have got to get serious about solving this.

RECOGNIZING MORTON PLANT HOSPITAL

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Morton Plant Hospital, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

In 1912, Mr. Morton Plant was vacationing in Pinellas County, Florida, when his son, Henry, was seriously injured. He quickly realized the closest medical care was a day's drive, so he offered the community a \$100,000 endowment to open a local hospital. On January 1, 1916, the Morton F. Plant Endowed Hospital opened with 20 beds and 5 bassinets.

In the decades to come, Morton Plant Hospital would emerge at the forefront of cardiovascular health, orthopedics, neuroscience, emergency care, and neonatal health.

It has been awarded the baby-friendly hospital status by the United Nations Children's Fund. It has also been recognized by the Florida Hospital Association as the innovation of the year in patient care. Most notably, it is the only hospital in the United States to be awarded for 13 consecutive years the Top 100 Hospitals designation by Thomson Reuters.

Morton Plant was created out of a community effort, and the hospital continues to serve the Pinellas County community. I congratulate them on 100 years of service, and I offer the sincere gratitude of our Pinellas County community for Morton Plant's tireless work on behalf of patients and families.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, at 3:30 p.m., I am hosting a public discussion at the Community College of Rhode Island Lincoln campus to highlight financial aid opportunities for students and the work we need to do in Congress to address the crisis of student debt.

Our young people are drowning in student debt. It is projected that 65

percent of the job openings by 2020 will require postsecondary education or training beyond high school, so this will become even more urgent.

The cost of education in a 4-year university has increased 250 percent since 1979, while real wages have stayed about the same.

Compared to 1979, students pay \$26,000 more per year for a private university and \$11,000 more each year at a public university. The average Rhode Island college student has over \$31,000 in student loan debt, the fourth highest in the country.

We need to guarantee young people that they can graduate from college debt free. We need to allow students to refinance existing debt at lower rates, and we need to increase Pell grants and other investments in higher education. This needs to be a national priority. We need to do it now. Our future depends on it.

CONGRATULATING JUSTIN DEETS

(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 am proud to serve, along with my colleague from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), as co-chair of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus.

In that role, I am always excited to learn of students in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District who are excelling in their preparation for careers in growing technical education fields.

Today I want to congratulate Justin Deets, a student at Oil City High School who also studies welding at the Venango County Technology Center.

Last December Justin won first place in the annual Pittsburgh Section of the American Welding Society Competition.

On March 29, Justin was awarded \$100 for this accomplishment, a new welding helmet, jacket and gloves, along with a week at the Lincoln Electric Welding School and qualification in x-ray welding.

This is quite an achievement, which will undoubtedly open new doors for Justin. I wish him the best of success in his future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, career and technical education training transforms lives. America needs a robust reauthorization of the Perkins Act.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROCESS FAILS NATION

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is April 15, the deadline for passing a budget. It is clear that the Republicans are going to miss it. From the start, this process has been a travesty.

Before President Obama even released his budget, Republicans announced that they would refuse to hold a hearing on it. They rejected the President's budget out of hand even before it was printed, a move unprecedented in this modern era.

Then they passed out of committee a budget that would end the Medicare guarantee, take healthcare coverage away from 20 million Americans who received it under the Affordable Care Act, and make deep cuts that harm children, students, seniors, and hard-working Americans.

Then the Tea Party wing of the GOP insisted on walking away from the bipartisan budget agreement inked just last fall.

So that brings us to today. My Republican colleagues don't seem to have a budget or a plan to move forward. The process has collapsed.

I urge my colleagues to start over and to work with Democrats to craft a budget that invests in our future and meets the challenges facing our Nation.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Volunteer Week to thank all of our Nation's unsung heroes: the millions of volunteers helping our communities throughout the Nation.

This Monday we kicked off the week with our first annual Heroes Among Us event to recognize some incredible people in my district who go above and beyond to make a difference in our community.

This week and every week it is important that we honor and thank these individuals for their selflessness and recognize the tremendous impact that their collective actions have on others.

Thank you to all those who helped nominate the well-deserved award winners of our Heroes Among Us event and thank you to all the volunteers and unsung heroes of Florida's 12th Congressional District and throughout the Nation. Keep up the great work. Happy National Volunteer Week.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PROCESS

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, dire needs across this great Nation demand Congress' attention: Zika virus, the crisis in Flint, the opioid epidemic, not to mention the ongoing needs for education, infrastructure, jobs, and security. Yet, Republicans will miss tomorrow's statutory deadline to pass a budget.

The majority's "Road to Ruin" budget would devastate good jobs, end the Medicare guarantee, and increase poverty. Even this was not cruel enough