

list that no community wants to join: Aurora, Newtown, Chattanooga, Charleston, and the list goes on. And that is the problem, the list goes on.

The only action Congress has taken to address the epidemic of gun violence has been to hold moments of silence in honor of their memory. As a father of two young boys and as San Bernardino's voice in Congress, I cannot be silent.

We owe it to our communities, from San Bernardino to Newtown, to do something. As one of the family members mentioned earlier in the week: "Congress has offered their thoughts and prayers, but thoughts and prayers are cheap when you have the power they have."

While one single law could not have prevented the horrific events in San Bernardino, that doesn't justify a refusal to take action to make our communities safer.

ISIS TROLL IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, terror has come to my hometown of Houston, Texas.

Yesterday, the FBI arrested 24-year-old Omar Saeed Al Hardan, a Palestinian born in Iraq who came to the U.S. as a refugee. He has been indicted for providing support to ISIS, a terrorist organization.

Al Hardan applied for full citizenship, and when he did, he lied on his application, saying he wasn't associated with terrorist organizations. The evidence shows that he is a troll for ISIS. Prior to coming to America, he had been trained to operate machine guns.

The administration says that the 31 State Governors who want to turn away unvetted refugees have no right to refuse them. That is why Senator CRUZ and I have introduced the State Refugee Security Act of 2015. This legislation will give State Governors the right, under the 10th Amendment, to deny the entrance of unvetted refugees to their State.

Congress must take immediate action to support those States that have refused to participate in the refugee resettlement program because of serious security concerns.

This case shows that the FBI Director was right. America cannot properly vet refugees. The interest of foreign refugees should not be more important than the safety of citizens in the United States.

And that is just the way it is.

DECEMBER JOBS REPORT

(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, the jobs numbers released this morning are excellent.

This is a very strong way to end 2015. The numbers are a reminder of just how far we have come since the long, dark days of the Bush-era recession.

The economy added 292,000 private sector jobs last month. Businesses now have added jobs for a record 70 straight months. The unemployment rate stands at 5 percent, half of what it was at the peak of the recession, and the gains are becoming more broadly shared. The unemployment rate for African Americans fell 1.1 percentage points last month. It now stands at the lowest level since 2007.

Of course, there is much more that needs to be done. We must make sure that every American family benefits from this recovery. Some of my colleagues across the aisle will continue their efforts to cast doubt on the Obama recovery. I urge them to look at the numbers.

COMMEMORATING THE RETIREMENT OF STU WITT

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

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commemorate the retirement of Stu Witt.

Stu is retiring from the commercial Mojave Air and Space Port in Mojave, California. He started his career at CSUN and went on to a naval career where he flew F-14s off the *John F. Kennedy* and F/A-18s. He then followed it up by flying B-1s, F-16s, and the YF-23. But I knew Stu as a person who took the Air and Space Port in Mojave and put it on the map.

He talked to me early in my legislative career in California and said: I have got a bill. This bill has never gone anywhere. It has never even gotten a committee hearing, but I want you to run it.

So we did.

That bill turned into the indemnification law in California, which allowed private spaceflight to happen in California. Without that leadership, California would not be on the map for private spaceflight. I believe that today, without Stu Witt, California would probably have lost out to other States in the Union.

I would like to say as to Stu Witt's retirement: We know we are going to have great things in the future; we know what you have done in the past; and we look forward to your exploits for the advancement of aerospace in America.

□ 1330

ABSURD COMMENTS ABOUT ABORTION

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

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, over the years, I have heard some rather absurd comments from my Republican col-

leagues about abortion. Some have compared Planned Parenthood to drug dealers, abortion factories, and the Ku Klux Klan. I have even heard grown men debate "legitimate rape" on live TV. I have even heard a Republican lawmaker put forth the claim that, if women are allowed to have abortions, men should be allowed to rape.

After nearly 30 years of public office, nothing really surprises me anymore, Mr. Speaker. So you can imagine my lack of astonishment when my dear friend and colleague from Wisconsin, SEAN DUFFY, rolled out abortion statistics among African American women to lecture Black legislators like myself about defending the welfare of our constituents.

Since the United States Supreme Court ruled in 1963 that women are guaranteed the privacy and power and right to make medical decisions concerning their own bodies, anti-choice legislators have been trying to end safe and legal abortion. A tactic that has been part of their strategy is to use inflammatory, racial arguments, and deceptive claims to stigmatize abortion in communities of color.

I don't expect Representative DUFFY to understand why his comments are offensive, but what he and so many of his Republican colleagues fail to acknowledge is the underlying context behind high abortion rates in African American communities.

High rates of abortion are related to poverty and lack of access to quality care. The war on women's health centers has resulted in multiple barriers to accessing quality, affordable health care, which could lead to higher rates of both unintended pregnancy and abortion.

Representative DUFFY's hypocrisy on this issue is as predictable as it is offensive. If he truly, truly wants to fight for the hopeless and voiceless, he should join us.

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

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. What is the rule on attacking personalities in the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. House rule XVII prohibits Members from engaging in personalities in debate.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Did the prior speech violate that rule?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot give an advisory opinion on that.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PUTTING THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS FIRST

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, for months Americans have been demanding stronger FBI background checks on Syrian and Middle Eastern refugees entering the United States, and just yesterday an ISIS-affiliated Syrian refugee was arrested in Houston, Texas.

Rather than taking action to address these national security vulnerabilities, President Obama shockingly believes that it is more important to increase FBI background checks on law-abiding American citizens.

This additional round of unconstitutional executive action is a new low for this administration. Their overreach on guns and law-abiding Americans shows how truly misplaced their priorities are. Sadly, it only confirms what we have already come to learn, that this is a failed President with a very distorted sense of the real world.

Mr. Speaker, putting the safety and security of the American people first means ending this administration's refusal to secure our borders, refusal to respect the right of law-abiding Americans to exercise their First and Second Amendment rights, and refusal to enhance background checks on immigrants and refugees from the safe havens of terrorism.

LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. I would like to take this time to thank all of the men and women who put their lives on the line each and every day to keep our communities safe.

As a former cop of 33 years, I know firsthand what it means to leave your home and not know if you are coming back. My family knows that feeling of: Is Deputy Dave going to come home tonight to his family?

Well, early in my career, that was a big question mark. I found myself in a fight for my life at 23 years old, being attacked by a man with a butcher knife. I came home that night with 45 stitches in my neck.

Years later, I lost a good friend and a partner who was ambushed, shot, and killed in 1982. Two years later, I lost a good friend—an academy colleague—who was stabbed to death in 1984. Sadly, deaths of police officers are occurring across this country each and every day.

I want to take this time to especially mention the last two in Washington State who have sacrificed their lives for the protection of our community: Officer Rick Silva of Chehalis Police Department and Detective Brent Hangar of the Washington State Patrol.

Mr. Speaker, we should take this time, especially tomorrow and in the coming weeks, to stop and say thank you to our law enforcement officials

across this country for putting their lives on the line each and every day to keep our families safe.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHARLES FRANCIS CLIFFORD, JR.

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I want to say goodbye to a good friend who died this week: Charles Francis Clifford, Jr.

Mr. Chuck was a World War II veteran who served in the Navy for 35 years, where he attained the rank of captain. He spent his professional career with State Farm. Along with his loving wife, Ann, they raised four children together.

Chuck lived an honorable and dutiful life. He served his country faithfully. He was devoted to his family and to his faith, and he saw his business career as an extension of the call to service. He was a kind man, always with a smile.

After Ann died 7 years ago, Chuck continued to be an ongoing presence in our community, volunteering at our church. He received frequent requests from the children at St. Joseph's School to tell his story about living through the Depression and his service during World War II.

Chuck Clifford was an example of manly steadiness and goodness. He was my friend, and I will miss him. Well done, good and faithful servant.

REQUEST FOR JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, one of the great honors this body can bestow upon a foreign leader is an invitation to address a joint meeting of Congress.

As co-chairman of the Friends of Egypt Caucus, TULSI GABBARD and I have delivered a letter today to the Speaker of the House, PAUL D. RYAN, urging him to invite Egyptian President el-Sisi to give such an address.

General el-Sisi came to power amidst chaos and restored order to his country. He was then democratically elected as President of Egypt. He is a pivotal figure in the Middle East during this time of great danger. He is a champion of the Egyptian people and a friend to the people of the United States.

Most importantly, he is a voice for respect and reconciliation between people of all faiths. Thus, he is a force for peace and stability in a region plagued with terrorism and religious persecution. He and the people of Egypt have earned our moral and strategic support.

I will include in the RECORD the official request that the Friends of Egypt Caucus have made to Speaker RYAN to

invite President el-Sisi to be invited to address a joint meeting of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, January 8, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: As co-chairs of the Friends for Egypt Caucus we request that Egyptian President Abdel Fattah elSisi be invited to address a Joint Meeting of Congress during the second session of the 114th Congress.

Egypt under President el-Sisi's leadership is playing a pivotal role in North Africa and the Middle East. Egypt is a bulwark against a barbaric and fanatic Islamic state and its ilk. El Sisi's courage and commitment to peace and stability is a dramatic and positive force that deserves to be recognized. His call for tolerance and respect of people of all religions has been a dramatic step towards reconciliation and stability in the Middle East. His visits to Christian gatherings have been historic and worthy of praise by all people of good will.

The United States and Egypt have had a long and mutually beneficial relationship. We need to bolster relations between our people now in this time of crisis and radical terrorist attacks in the region and throughout the world.

Having President el Sisi address the United States Congress would be a message to the world of our solidarity with moderate Muslim leaders who share our goal of a more peaceful and stable world. His appearance before a Joint Meeting of Congress will underscore our gratitude for his leadership in this time of turmoil.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

DANA ROHRABACHER,
Member of Congress.
TULSI GABBARD,
Member of Congress.

REGULATORY GRIDLOCK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY).

Mr. HARDY. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is our first week back in session after spending the holidays in our districts. While we were meeting with our constituents and enjoying the company of loved ones, the Federal bureaucracy was firing on all cylinders, cranking out thousands of pages of regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hand what our regulators were doing on Christmas Eve. In my other hand I am holding 298 pages of what our Federal regulators were doing on New Year's Eve.

This breakneck pace of activity, deep within the bowels of our executive branch, capped off a record year for the Federal Register, the official record of the government's regulatory and other actions.

The grand total for 2015 was 82,035 pages of regulations. This leaves the current administration with an annual