

native lands by not providing this authority to tribal nations.

I urge my Republican colleagues to work together with House Democrats to craft a truly bipartisan update of VAWA.

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 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN) at noon.

PRAYER

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

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Lead us this day in Your ways that our Nation might be guided along the roads of peace, justice, and goodwill.

Grant strength and wisdom to our Speaker and the Members of both the people's House and the Senate, to our President and his Cabinet, and to our Supreme Court.

Bless as well the moral and military leaders of our country, and may those who are the captains of business, industry, and unions learn to work together toward the mutual benefit of all, walking in the ways of righteousness and working for the highest good of our beloved land.

Grant us the courage to develop a sound energy program for the good of all, and may our people respond with willing hearts to make that program work.

Bless us this day and every day, and may all that is done within the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

S. 1789. An act to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 5 of title I of division H of Public Law 110-161, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the U.S.-Japan Interparliamentary Group conference for the One Hundred Twelfth Congress:

The Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

YUCCA REPOSITORY BILL

(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, in 2002, Yucca Mountain was approved as the location for our Nation's nuclear repository, which was previously authorized by Congress in 1987. In 2010, sadly, the President placed party politics over the interests of the American people and began the wasteful process of stopping the project.

Consumers in South Carolina have paid over \$1.3 billion for the establishment of a national nuclear repository at Yucca Mountain. In order to establish accountability and to protect the people living in the Second Congressional District of South Carolina, I have introduced the Yucca Utilization to Control Contamination Act. This bill gives the administration two options: first, certify the Yucca Mountain project or, second, face fines to reimburse consumers across the Nation who have paid for its opening.

The President constantly talks about fairness. It is only fair that the people of South Carolina receive the services they have already paid for with hard-working taxpayer dollars promoting jobs.

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

PATIENTS DESERVE CHOICE

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

Ms. CHU. Patients deserve choice when selecting the right prescriptions and pharmacies for them, but powerful, unregulated middlemen, known as pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs,

are limiting their options, and most people don't even know it.

These companies are telling doctors what drugs they can prescribe, limiting access to pharmacy patient care, and they're telling customers what pharmacies they can go to. That's not fair to patients. With the pending merger of two of the biggest PBMs, one company will control three-quarters of the private insurance market. This leaves us with even less competition, higher prices, and fewer choices.

That's why I support the Medicare Pharmacy Transparency and Fair Auditing Act. This bill will ensure that PBMs are transparent and fair when dealing with local pharmacies, and it will help make sure the Medicare part D prescription program works for seniors. It will be an important step in protecting pharmacy choice for patients.

SUGAR REFORM

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, last week, liberal MSNBC host Ed Schultz found himself agreeing with the Heritage Foundation and Mitt Romney. What issue could possibly unite liberals and conservatives? The answer is: sugar reform.

You see, sugar farmers and sugar processors benefit from a Federal sugar program that fixes prices and guarantees their profits. Indeed, Schultz noted that one of the biggest processors, American Crystal Sugar, makes \$1.5 billion in revenue and pays its CEO \$2.4 million a year in compensation.

While Schultz is, probably, mostly concerned about a labor dispute between American Crystal and its workers, I hope he will also consider the many other workers in sugar-using industries. The Federal program inflates the price of sugar in the U.S., placing American sugar users at a severe disadvantage to their foreign competition. In the last 15 years, more than 100,000 workers in sugar-using industries have lost their jobs.

I've been proud to work with Congressman DANNY DAVIS to reform this program and to make it fair for everyone. Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives agree that the government shouldn't be guaranteeing corporate profits at the expense of workers and consumers. I hope the Ag Committee will reform the sugar program as we deal with the farm bill.

HORSE SLAUGHTER

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today about a serious issue: horse slaughter.

A recent poll confirms what many of us already know: 80 percent of American voters are opposed to slaughtering

horses for human consumption. Regardless of gender, political affiliation, or whether they live in urban or rural areas, Americans oppose this awful practice.

The last U.S. horse slaughterhouses were closed in 2007 but, despite public opposition, Congress recently restarted horse meat inspections, paving the way for slaughterhouses to reopen. That's why we need to pass the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, which would prohibit the sale and transport of horses for slaughter in the United States, as well as prohibit their transport across the borders to Canada and Mexico. The passage of this critical bipartisan bill would save the lives of approximately 100,000 American horses exported for slaughter each year.

Horses have a special place in our Nation's history and folklore, and they are not raised for food. This bill would make sure that these majestic creatures are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. It should be passed now.

□ 1210

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today is Israel's independence day, Yom Ha'azmaut, and I recognize our great ally's many achievements over the past 64 years.

Israel has endured against all odds, against border attacks, against deniers of a right to exist, against international bias; and even in the face of the threats posed by Iran's nuclear ambitions, Israel valiantly strides forward.

Israel is a world hub for biotechnology, for medical research, green energy and innovation, and she is also a welcoming home to those seeking freedom and equal rights as the region's only true democracy.

So as we celebrate Israel's independence day, let's remember why our bonds run so deep. It's more than strategic cooperation or shared security. It's the values that Americans and Israelis share. For democracy and freedom, for basic human dignity, that's what forms the bond; and it's a bond that I will always work to protect and support.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, a few months ago I had the opportunity to visit the Children's Advocacy Center in my hometown of Rock Island, Illinois. The work that they do there to help children and their families that are

victims of crimes is truly amazing, and I am grateful for their commitment to helping the children that need it the most.

April is recognized as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Unfortunately, sexual abuse of children is still a serious problem in our country, and too many cases go unreported.

My colleague from California and I have introduced H.R. 3486, the Speak Out to Stop Child Abuse Act, which would require States that receive Federal funding under their Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to have a law on the books that makes it a criminal penalty for any adult who knowingly fails to report the sexual abuse of a child.

H.R. 3486 simply asks States to help by requiring adults who witness the sexual abuse of a child to report it. I want to thank Congresswoman BASS for introducing this legislation, and I also recommend all of my colleagues help support this, also.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

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

Ms. BASS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. During this month, it is important that we acknowledge the role that we all play in promoting the social and emotional well-being of children in our communities. Unfortunately, throughout this congressional term, we've been astonished by a few high-profile child sex abuse cases; and in some situations, the abuse was unreported for years, leaving dozens of youth vulnerable to further maltreatment for decades. This is unacceptable. Adults should never turn a blind eye after seeing sexual abuse firsthand.

Sadly, failing to report child sexual abuse is not new. In 1999, Sherrice Iverson, a 7-year-old girl from Los Angeles was attacked in a restroom. A witness didn't stop the attack or even call for help. She was ultimately murdered. Fortunately, California enacted a law in her name to help ensure this never happens again.

At the end of 2011, Representative BOBBY SCHILLING and I introduced a similar bill here in Congress. The bipartisan Speak Out to Stop Child Abuse Act requires all adult witnesses to report child sexual abuse to law enforcement or Child Protective Services. I ask my colleagues to cosponsor this bipartisan bill.

EPA

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, the EPA is out to get you and crucify you. That's the message from one of President Obama's EPA appointees to our country's oil and natural gas companies.

Yesterday, we learned that an official at the Environmental Protection Agency based in Dallas used the Roman Empire to illustrate the kind of philosophy that he's followed at the EPA. Here's what he said:

The Romans used to conquer little villages in the Mediterranean. They'd go into a little Turkish town somewhere, they'd find the first five guys they saw, and they would crucify them. And then you know that town was really easy to manage for the next few years.

That's exactly what he did as an EPA official, going after a company that was safely using hydraulic fracturing to drill for gas. He led the charge to crucify this company with no proof that the company had done anything wrong in a case that was finally dismissed last month by a Federal court.

This is enviro-fascism at its worst; and if someone needs to be made an example of, it's this EPA official who disregarded science and facts to radically and negligently pursue the Obama administration's war on energy.

VA DISABILITY CLAIMS

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss issues affecting veterans throughout California, particularly the VA disability claims backlog and inaccuracy rates at the Oakland regional office.

A Vietnam veteran from my district, like many others across the country, is suffering from stage 4 lung cancer caused by exposure to Agent Orange. He made great sacrifices to defend our country, but waited for more than a year for the Oakland office to process his claim.

My office was able to help him, but such delays are unacceptable. Unfortunately, long waits have become the norm for veterans in northern California. With more and more veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, it is imperative that the VA take action now to address the backlog in Oakland.

While I welcome the news that the entire staff at the facility will be retrained, much more is needed. I call on the VA to implement a concrete plan to address the inaccuracies and delays at the Oakland office. Our region's and Nation's veterans deserve no less.

STUDENT LOANS

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss an important issue to young America: that's access to affordable higher education.

Young Americans today are graduating college with a degree but also with \$25,000, \$50,000, and \$100,000 in student loan debt. Thirty-seven million people have outstanding student loan debt totaling over \$1 trillion. Two-