

Congratulations to both Prosser and Okanogan on well-played seasons.

HONORING OUR MILITARY

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor all the brave men and women who have served and are currently serving our country today in the Armed Forces.

Today over 70,000 servicemembers are overseas protecting America and Americans. These men and women sacrifice their lives fighting wars overseas so that the wars don't come to our shores. This year many American families have endured the tragedies of war through the loss of their family members. We must never forget their service.

As we celebrate this holiday season, let us remember all of our military servicemembers and their families as they continue to serve our country and fight for our security and freedoms. Too many American soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and airwomen will be away from their families at this holiday season. I would like to express my gratitude for their service and wish them all happy holidays.

QUESTIONS FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to warn my colleagues and my constituents about the latest in a string of White House distractions that will not make Americans safer.

This time the President is reportedly planning to unilaterally establish new restrictions on private gun transactions, and he may act while Congress is out of session.

Mr. Speaker, the President knows he was elected to lead all Americans, even the ones he disagrees with. Thus, I call on him to answer the questions my House colleagues and I are sending to the White House on Monday:

First, consider that Washington Post fact-checkers have confirmed their agreement with the sad truth that none of the recent months' and years' major shootings would have been prevented by stricter gun control laws. Why would the President think his proposal would be any different?

Second, if this is good policy, why wasn't it included in the executive actions announced by the President in January 2013?

Our remaining questions ask whether the President relied on appropriate data to choose this executive order and how it would be enforced.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of secretive, unilateral action is not just wrong; it

results in bad policy. I call on the President to answer our letter as quickly as possible.

PROUD MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this is the last day of the first session of the 114th Congress. I have served here for 9 years. I am proud to be a Member, and I look forward to continuing to be a Member in the future.

In the last 2 months of this year, we have gotten a lot accomplished by working together. The omnibus and tax extender bills weren't unanimous, but they got a majority of each caucus. I was proud to support each. We got a transportation and an education bill passed, which was very important.

This House does work. It worked under Speaker RYAN, working with Leader PELOSI. I thank all of the leaders and all of the people involved in getting these last two bills together and everyone who supported them.

I also thank the people for allowing me to be a Member of this House. I am proud to be a Member of the House of Representatives.

HUNTINGDON SALVATION ARMY FIRE/DONATIONS

(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, this is the season of giving. Today I rise in recognition of a community in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which banded together after a fire destroyed the home of a local charity.

On the evening of December 12, flames ripped through the Huntingdon Salvation Army Church, destroying everything inside. Toys and clothes donated for the holiday season were left ruined by smoke and water damage. These items would have made the holiday season a little better for around 300 local families. Meals would have been provided for more than 100.

Like so many of us know, small towns often come together in times of hardship. The people of Huntingdon and the surrounding area have risen to the task. In fact, Salvation Army Church officials say donations in the form of both monetary gifts and supplies have been coming in nonstop since last weekend's fire.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the people of Huntingdon for stepping up to the plate and brightening the holidays for their friends and neighbors.

RETURN CONFISCATED PROPERTY

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, at the height of the cold war, Ethiopia fell to the Communists in 1974. Shortly thereafter, an Ethiopian family—the Berhane family—ended up in Huntington Beach, California, and for a long time they have been proud Americans and good citizens.

After the Communist regime in Ethiopia collapsed in 1991, thanks to Ronald Reagan's global efforts to undue the Communist establishment, the government in Ethiopia, which was replaced in 1991, has refused to return the confiscated property the Communists took from the Berhane family.

I rise in support of my constituents. I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in opposing any aid or activities helping the Ethiopian Government until they have returned the property of American citizens confiscated by the Communists.

It is our job to stand up for American citizens, whether they come from Ethiopia or are born in Brooklyn. They are now proud Americans. We need to stick together and refuse to give support to regimes like Ethiopia that refuse to turn confiscated property.

EPA SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, recently the Government Accountability Office reported findings from their investigation of the EPA regarding their waters of the United States rule that drastically increases their authority at the expense of States. The GAO report is plain and simple: The EPA broke the law.

By using social media tactics the GAO called "covert propaganda," the EPA undermined the integrity of the rulemaking process and violated the trust of the American people. They conspired to influence and skew the public comments during the open rulemaking process to promote and justify an agenda that the majority of the States oppose and have sued to stop.

The EPA should be held accountable for their unlawful actions, and the people responsible should be dismissed and prosecuted.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY—CITY OF DAVID, JERUSALEM

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, for quite some time there has been an effort at the U.N. to delegitimize the Jewish State of Israel and to try to whitewash the Jewish people's historical and biblical connection to Israel.

Denying the historical connection of the people to Jerusalem is false, and

amazing archaeological discoveries are frequently made that prove the roots of the Jewish people are in Israel.

Earlier this month a Hebrew University archaeological team unearthed an unprecedented impression of a royal seal of King Hezekiah from the First Temple period. This marks the first time that a seal impression of an Israelite or Judean king has ever been discovered, and it proves that not only is Israel the religious center for Jews, but it is their ancestral and historic homeland.

I want to thank the Ir David Foundation's Director of International Affairs, Ze'ev Orenstein, for sharing this and many other amazing discoveries with me. I look forward to visiting the city of David in the near future to see firsthand the rich history of the Jewish people.

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REFLECTIONS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY OF 2015

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe that my first year in Congress has gone by so quickly. 2016 is just around the corner, and 1 year ago the folks of the 12th District of Georgia gave me the greatest honor of my life.

This year, the House took steps to strengthen our national security, repeal regulatory overreach, and restore local control.

With my support, Congress passed and the President signed legislation that reformed our education system, repealed the sustainable growth rate formula, and provided critical funding for our troops.

The House passed key homeland security legislation to establish a robust vetting system for refugees and reformed the Visa Waiver Program to ensure the safety of the American people.

Going into 2016, it is my hope that we can scale back the presence of Washington even more by gutting ObamaCare and providing relief for the American people from more burdensome EPA regulations.

When I came to Congress, national security, job growth, and the economy were my main priorities. I will head into 2016 with the same goals of creating jobs, growing this economy, and keeping the American people safe.

It has been an honor to serve the folks of the 12th District of Georgia. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, my first task, a wonderful task, is to wish

all the men and women of the United States military a happy holiday. For your unselfishness in putting on the uniform, without question, standing in the gap, protecting the American people, we thank you, we thank your families, and we are greatly appreciative.

We ask you to be safe during this holiday season as you put yourself on the front lines of defense.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE AND PRIVATE FIRST CLASS THOMAS WISSEMAN

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me also rise today, Mr. Speaker, to thank the United States Capitol Police, founded in 1828. We know how vital they were during the tragedy, horrific incident of 9/11, and, certainly, in 1998.

I come in contact with them every day, but I rise today to particularly thank an officer and a gentleman. Over the years, after initially greeting each other every day, the greeting became a genuine friendship of respect and kindness, and even a joke or two.

I am honored today to recognize one of our first responders, Capitol Police Private First Class Tommy Wissemann. Officer Wissemann exemplifies a model officer who takes his job very seriously, but finds the time to get to know Members of Congress on a more personal level.

Officer Wissemann has given the Capitol Police 29 years of service, all 29 at the Capitol building. He has worked every Presidential inauguration since 1989; was the lead officer for the construction of the Capitol Visitor Center; one of the head trainers for the Capitol Visitor Center officers; received multiple awards and citations.

He is the father of four daughters, and married to a lovely wife, who is with the Capitol Police.

Let me thank him and salute him as I salute all of the police.

Mr. Speaker, since 1828, the United States Capitol Police have provided protection for our Congress, ensuring a safe and open environment to facilitate the legislative process and the security of Congressional Members, staff and employees, and visitors and members of the public. This protection was magnified in 1998 when a shooter entered the Capitol killing Officer Gibson and Officer Chestnut who was protecting Majority Whip Tom DeLay and also in 2001 during the 9–11 attacks when our men and women in uniform literally moved our leadership and Members of Congress to safe havens away from the Capitol. We are grateful to all of them and the more than 2000 sworn and civilian employees who serve and protect the Congress.

As Members of Congress, we come in contact with Capitol Police every day and in the course of our days on this campus and years in Congress we get to know many of them on a first name basis. That is the case with an officer and a gentleman I have gotten to know and which started initially from just a simple greeting to each other. Over the years that initial greeting has evolved into a genuine friendship of respect and kindness and even a joke or two. I am honored today to recognize one of our first responders, Capitol Police, Private First Class Thomas Wissemann. Officer

Wissemann exemplifies a model officer who takes his job very seriously, but finds the time to get to know Members of Congress on a more personal level.

Officer Wissemann has given the Capitol Police 29 years of service—all 29 at the Capitol Building. He has worked every Presidential Inaugural since 1989, was the lead officer for the construction of the Capitol Visitors Center, one of the head trainers for Capitol Visitor Center officers, and has received multiple awards and citations for his leadership and tenure of service. He is the proud father of four daughters and is married to his lovely wife Amber who is also a Capitol Police officer here at the Capitol.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to recognize our first responders and men and women in uniform today. Officer Wissemann is an example of the dedicated men and women in uniform.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). The Chair will recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the possible resumption of legislative business.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MRS. REVA MAE JENNINGS

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time.

At 1:00 today, back home in Georgia, we are going to lay to rest Reva Mae Jennings.

Reva Jennings is an institution in my part of the world, Mr. Speaker. This photo here, you can see, is in the midst of a parade. She helped to found the Republican Party in Forsyth County back when it could meet in a telephone booth. She used to say that she never minded being the only one who was right in a room.

From the moment I decided to pursue this position, Mr. Speaker, Reva has been a fixture by my side. She passed away a week ago in a traffic accident.

She graduated from the University of North Carolina, Mr. Speaker. And even though she was passionate about Georgia, she was passionate about her Tar Heels. If I had a Tar Heel blue suit, I would have worn it down here to the floor today in tribute to her.

She defined her life by passion, Mr. Speaker. She has had every leadership position you can imagine in the Republican Party in our part of the world; president of the Georgia Federation of Republican Women, Mr. Speaker. She earned the title of Republican Woman of the Year. She traveled as a delegate from Georgia to the Republican National Convention.

She believed in our community. She believed in our party. She believed in America.