

unreported contact with Russian agents, who he also had business ties to.

Yesterday, you learned that the President had a contractor meet with Russian officials on his behalf to have a back channel to the Kremlin.

Where is the transparency from the White House? How is it that Meals on Wheels is the enemy, but you turn a blind eye to an attack on democracy by Vladimir Putin?

Russian spies have long attacked American businesses. Now they are attacking our freedom. You must investigate the Russian grip on our government. We must investigate swiftly and seriously.

Mr. Speaker, this is on your watch.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

CELEBRATING THE MASTERS

(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, as you know, I have the honor of representing the 12th Congressional District of Georgia and the good people who live and work there.

This week, thousands will gather in Augusta to take part in a tradition unlike any other.

Beginning in 1934, the Masters, hosted by the Augusta National Golf Club, has become the most prestigious golf tournament in the world. Known for its lightning-fast greens and gorgeous azaleas, this tournament captivates the world for both the talent of those playing and its beauty. Since its inception, many legends have conquered the greens to prove their skill and earn the coveted green jacket.

This year will be a little somber, as we will deeply miss another of the great legends, four-time Masters champion Arnold Palmer. His presence will certainly be missed on that first tee as an honorary starter and throughout this great week.

I wish the best to all those competing in this truly remarkable event and invite those who are traveling from far and wide to experience and enjoy the wonderful hospitality of the 12th Congressional District of Georgia and my home, Augusta.

REJECT THE NEW HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, word coming out of the White House and House Republicans is that there is a new healthcare bill, and this bill would obliterate the patient protections for preexisting conditions and eviscerate essential benefits and cost controls.

Under the new healthcare scam, insurance companies could opt out of all

consumer protections. In other words, insurance companies could write fake policies with big premiums and little or no coverage.

Mr. Speaker, under this plan, a parent of a kid who is struck with childhood cancer could still buy a policy, but the policy is worthless because the policy would not have to cover their children's cancer treatment.

This is how House Republicans and the insurance lobby plan to get out from under their obligation to cover preexisting conditions.

This means more power for the insurance companies and less protection for good people, the American people, who play by the rules. This plan should be rejected again. It is deceitful, cold, cruel, and wrong.

GORDIAN KNOT

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight legislation I recently introduced, the VA GORDIAN KNOT Act, which would help improve and reform the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In Greek mythology, the Gordian knot represents a complex problem that needs out-of-the-box thinking to solve, and that is exactly what we need.

The VA's Gordian knot is its repeated manipulation of key data and overall lack of accountability. The VA has been known to yield less-than-truthful information when it comes to collecting and reporting data about patient care, appointment wait times, and employee hiring and firing practices.

This behavior is an erosion of public trust and a disservice to our Nation's veterans, our true heroes. It also makes it difficult to properly address the VA's shortcomings and enhance its successes because there are successes as well.

The VA GORDIAN KNOT Act requires the VA to standardize its data collecting and reporting mechanisms and increases oversight of the integrity and accuracy of the information.

I believe this bill is absolutely necessary to reform the VA and assist in its mission to care for our true American heroes.

EQUAL PAY DAY

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, it is Equal Pay Day. I rise to support not only women but the American family and the economy.

Women drive our economy. We buy more goods. We own more small businesses, and we earn more degrees. Despite this, we still earn less than men. This should embarrass every lawmaker

in this Chamber and every person listening.

In 2017, Mr. Speaker, how can we justify underpaying women across this Nation? Women still earn 20 percent less than their male counterparts, and it is even worse for Black and Hispanic women.

Shortchanging women shortchanges our children and our economy. When women succeed, we all succeed. Women and our families demand paycheck fairness. We stand boldly united today embracing the words of Florynce Kennedy who said: We won't agonize. We will organize. We will show up and cut up until Molly earns the same pay as Billy.

As Susan B. Anthony said: "Men, their rights and nothing more. Women, their rights and nothing less."

I urge you to call your Representatives, demand that we support you by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act.

RECOGNIZING SERVICE ACADEMY APPOINTEES

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

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three outstanding young people from Florida's Second Congressional District who will be continuing their education serving our country next year at the Naval Academy and at West Point.

Sean Moriarty and Zachary Moser will be attending the United States Naval Academy. Sean plays football at Arnold High School, and Zac is on the swim team at Rutherford High School.

Shane Ferry will be attending the United States Military Academy, West Point. He attends Mosley High School and is a member of the wrestling team.

The bar is high and the competition is stiff to earn entry into our service academies, and it should be. I am confident that each of these young men possess the character, ability, and determination to excel at Annapolis and West Point and to earn the privilege to do extraordinary things for our Nation and for those who they will one day command.

As they join their Federal fellow cadets and midshipmen, they also have our support and our gratitude for choosing this life of service.

Thank you and good luck.

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INDEPENDENT COMMISSION NEEDED TO INVESTIGATE TRUMP'S TIES WITH RUSSIA

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are now joining Democrats in calling for Chairman NUNES to recuse himself from the House Intelligence Committee's current investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 election.