

thank Dr. Cooper for his work and congratulate him on this achievement.

DISAPPEARANCE OF MEXICAN STUDENTS NEEDS MORE INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago today, 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico, disappeared.

I recently traveled to Mexico where I spoke with many of their parents and the family members of the students who disappeared. I was humbled by the strength that they show. After a 3-year struggle, they have asked for answers to two simple questions: What happened that night when their children were taken; and where are they now?

On this third anniversary of their loss, I am repeating my past calls for the Mexican Government to prioritize their search for the students, to bring justice to those responsible for their disappearance, and to investigate any obstruction of justice.

If the Mexican Government cannot do this, I urge them to allow the independent panel of experts to expand on their initial investigation. The students, their parents, and the Mexican people deserve answers.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IS A CONCERNING TREND

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

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, September is the time when students return back to school, and it also marks Attendance Awareness Month.

Chronic absenteeism is a concerning trend in my district in southwest Washington State and across America. In the 2013–2014 school year, more than 6.8 million students missed enough class to be considered chronically absent.

My State of Washington has the second highest chronic absenteeism rate in the country, with 25 percent of students being chronically absent. We can do better.

To understand the challenges locally, I recently met with several superintendents in southwest Washington, and there are a myriad of issues that these students are facing.

We are trying to address some of these with H.R. 1864, the Chronic Absenteeism Reduction Act, which I have introduced with my Democratic colleague, TIM RYAN from Ohio.

This bill would empower schools to solve attendance problems locally, using such tactics as partnering with local health, transportation, and social service providers, and implementing school-based mentoring programs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.

HELP FELLOW AMERICANS IN PUERTO RICO

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, we are right now witnessing a humanitarian crisis—not in some far-flung corner of the world, but right here at home. Mr. Speaker, 3½ million of our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico, fellow U.S. citizens, are without water and without electricity, cut off from the rest of the world. These are our fellow Americans.

Puerto Ricans are just as American as we are. They have fought in every single one of our American wars. They need our help now. This is what we do best as Americans.

When there is a crisis, we come together and help our fellow Americans. We must act now. This should be the number one priority of Congress and the White House this week, and we should not leave here until we have let the millions of people in Puerto Rico know that we will be there for them.

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HONORING GOLD STAR MOTHERS

(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, Sunday marked a special kind of Mother's Day: Gold Star Mother's Day. Since 1936, the Nation has observed Gold Star Mother's Day on the last Sunday in September. The President humbly proclaimed Gold Star Mother's and Families' Day this Sunday, September 24.

Our Gold Star Mothers should be honored and offered respect and gratitude for their personal sacrifice. Gold Star Mother's Day is intended to pay tribute to women who have experienced tremendous personal loss on behalf of our country.

Mr. Speaker, our Gold Star Mothers serve as a strength and inspiration for this country. They are part of an exclusive group, one that no one ever hopes to belong to. One can hardly imagine the deep pain and anguish that a mother experiences when losing a child, particularly in military action.

May we always honor the Gold Star Mothers of America for their courage, their strength, and their sacrifice. They bear their cross with honor. The memory of their children lives on not only in their hearts, but in the heart of this Nation.

TRADE AND JOBS HEARING IN BROOK PARK, OHIO

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during the August recess, I organized a dis-

trict field hearing to hear firsthand accounts from America's workers, my constituents, on NAFTA's disastrous job impacts. These voices must be heard and listened to as our Nation renegotiates NAFTA. These real stories are the people who live the impacts of Washington's agreements.

I thank the Local United Auto Workers Chapter 1250 for graciously hosting us, a region that lost over 14,500 jobs after NAFTA's passage to Mexico and to Latin America.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the testimony of Amy Hanauer of Policy Matters Ohio, Donnie Blatt of the United Steelworkers, and Mark Payne of the United Auto Workers.

AMY HANAUER, POLICY MATTERS OHIO

Representative Kaptur and others, thank you for the opportunity to testify today alongside these strong community leaders. I'm Amy Hanauer and I run Policy Matters Ohio, a policy research institute dedicated to creating a more vibrant equitable, sustainable, and inclusive Ohio. Find us online at www.policymattersohio.org.

Trade and jobs in Ohio: Key principles to improve outcomes for workers

NAFTA and other trade agreements have eliminated jobs in Ohio and the United States. Manufacturing remains an essential part of Ohio's economy, despite its downturn. Smart policy can strengthen Ohio manufacturing while making our economy greener and stronger. Some key recommendations include:

- Invest in infrastructure, particularly clean energy

- Invest in solar panels and wind turbines
- Structure these projects carefully, prioritizing good jobs and diverse workers

- Support American manufacturing through proven programs

- Support manufacturing extension programs

- Buy American when spending public dollars

- Support smart worker training
- Improve trade agreements
- Increase worker protections
- Improve environmental standards
- Eliminate special courts

As we have long documented at Policy Matter, the North American Free Trade Agreement and other trade agreements have not accomplished what they were supposed to in Ohio. Our current trade rules favor multi-national corporations and their investor over workers and citizens. As a result, these policies have reduced the quantity and quality of domestic jobs, thereby exacerbating wealth inequality. Many multi-national corporations that once employed people here have instead located in places with lower wages, fewer environmental regulations, and weaker labor regulations. NAFTA rules made that shift easier.

One reason these deals have been so destructive is that they transfer power away from citizens and to international investors. They bar nations, states, and cities from enacting labor and environmental policies that protect the public. They block local governments from using policy to boost demand for domestic products, such as local sourcing.

NAFTA was promoted as being broadly helpful to Americans and our trading partners. But the economist Susan Helper recently testified that NAFTA slowed wage growth in U.S. industries and regions. This hurt not just manufacturing workers, but also service employees, as displaced manufacturing workers sought jobs in restaurants and retail and as laid-off workers had less to