

children have proper school supplies as fall comes into full swing. Yet the House is set to leave Washington today with many items on its to-do list.

While Congress finishes up the work to pass a budget to fund the Federal Government, catastrophic cuts loom on the horizon, set to hit in January of 2013. Leaving these cuts unresolved is unconscionable. Not only is this the wrong message to send to the American people, it's simply not the right thing to do. Our all-volunteer force is at war, and these cuts threaten our national security. Furthermore, they threaten over 200,000 jobs in Virginia.

Nine days remain before the new fiscal year begins. Congress should do the right thing and stay in Washington instead of ignoring the reality and delaying tough decisions. It's time to put governing over politics. Let's stay in Washington and finish the job that we were elected and expected to do.

#### CONGRESS MUST STAND UP AGAINST UTILITY CUTS ACROSS THE MIDWEST

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

Mr. KUCINICH. The Stop the War on Coal Act is up today. It is the coal industry which is waging war on our mountains by leveling them, war on our lungs by burning dirty fuel, war on healthy children by being the single largest source of mercury exposure, war on our rivers and streams by filling them with toxic waste, war on groundwater through poisonous ash fills, war on its workers through conditions which continue to kill, war on families by breaking unions and by relentlessly reducing jobs, war on our national debt by taking in billions of subsidies, and now war on ratepayers of municipal utilities across the Midwest. Time to stop this war.

Peabody Coal's Prairie State coal plant in southern Illinois has brokered a series of shady deals that puts 217 local utilities here, across the Midwest, on the hook for billions of dollars for energy they may never even get while paying twice the market price—a corrupt boondoggle that will raise utility rates and saddle many publicly owned utilities with crushing debt obligations.

Congress must stand up for the utility cuts in this areas.

#### HONORING OUTSTANDING ATHLETE STEVEN FOX

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

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding student athlete from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Competing at the U.S. Amateur Championship in Colorado, UTC student Steven Fox came from behind to win the first USGA Championship for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Down by two holes on the par 5 17th hole, Steven made a clutch birdie and managed to make a great par on the final hole, putting the match into sudden death after 36 grueling holes. At the first playoff hole, Steven sank a critical 18-foot putt to secure his victory. Steven's victory is an inspiration to the entire UTC community and, indeed, to all Tennesseans.

No mention of this victory is complete without mentioning the great UTC golf team, which has achieved national success under the leadership of Coach Mark Guhne. Thanks to his hard work and the support of former Athletic Director Steve Sloan and Chancellor Roger Brown, UTC qualified for this past year's NCAA championship in Los Angeles.

On behalf of all east Tennesseans, I extend my congratulations to Steven Fox. I look forward to watching him roam the fairways at Augusta National soon. I also look forward to many future successes at UTC.

Go Mocs!

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#### BIPARTISAN DEFICIT REDUCTION

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Our Nation is facing serious economic and fiscal challenges. We have seen economic recovery over the last 4 years, but we have work to do.

The fiscal policies that expire at the end of the year, known as the "fiscal cliff," present a rare opportunity to set aside politics and find common ground to reduce our Nation's deficit in a balanced and fiscally responsible manner.

Actions we take must be based on our priorities and our values. It means strengthening the middle class and building economic opportunity. It means spending cuts and new revenues.

We will need to make tough choices, but there is a path forward if we are fair, if we are committed to our obligations to our seniors and our children, and if we recognize the importance of strategic investments to grow our economy now and into the future.

I was proud to be one of just 38 Members to support a bipartisan proposal by Representatives COOPER and LATOURETTE that included tax reform and spending cuts to reduce the Nation's deficit.

Let's move our country forward by taking responsible, meaningful, and timely action.

#### HOLD THE IRS' FEET TO THE FIRE

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's time for Americans to know the truth about the abuse of

their hard-earned taxpayer dollars, especially at a time when the President is calling for tax increases.

The issue I'm talking about is IRS action that puts billions of taxpayer dollars at risk. Currently, the IRS allows individuals without a Social Security number to get cash benefits—like the \$1,000 refundable child tax credit which is costing American taxpayers billions of dollars—by obtaining an individual taxpayer identification number, or ITIN.

A recent IG report revealed a shocking scandal within the IRS that encouraged employees to fast track ITIN approval without regard to preventing fraud. The ITIN has become a ticket to get cash from Uncle Sam, and this is wrong.

I'm introducing the ITIN Reform Act to hold the IRS' feet to the fire to better protect the American taxpayer, and I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

#### HONORING DR. DENTON A. COOLEY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on August 3, 1962, a life changing decision was made by Dr. Denton Cooley in the founding of the Texas Heart Institute.

As I listened to the words said this morning, he chose wisdom over ignorance with respect to diagnosing cardiovascular disease, the most devastating killer of Americans, killing a life every 33 seconds, 2,600 lives each day, and nearly 1 million lives each year.

Dr. Cooley was honored this past week with tributes from President George Bush and President William Jefferson Clinton, joined by his wife and extended family. Over the years, he has been able to help men and women and children. He has done a magnificent job with respect to the amount of surgeries that have been performed. He performed more than 118,000 open-heart operations, 258,000 cardiac catheterizations, and 1,270 heart transplants.

The Texas Heart Institute, along with St. Luke's Hospital, continues to serve the world and continues to do research to improve the lives of those who suffer from heart disease. Dr. James Willerson is the new CEO. His demeanor and temperament, his research abilities, and his leadership has taken this great institution to the 21st century.

What a great honor to be with those who honor Dr. Denton Cooley for his wisdom and his ability to challenge medical profession science to be able to save lives. Today, children live, families are reunited, and we are stronger in our health because of the existence of the Texas Heart Institute. It is my privilege to congratulate them for 50 years of saving lives.