

PLAN B HURTS EVERYBODY

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, as if the Speaker's Plan B were not bad enough—not extending unemployment benefits or fixing the SGR so seniors would continue to have their doctors, killing jobs, again threatening the full faith and credit of our country, and leaving the sequester cuts in place—last night the Republicans dug up the horrible reconciliation bill that they pushed through this House in May. They should have left it over in the Senate where it went to die a timely death.

The reconciliation bill they will put up with it for a revote today is like Plan B, just worse. It will cut food stamps, eliminate the social services block grants, and weaken the consumer protections that we put in place. They can't help themselves. They'll make one more attempt to roll back much of the Affordable Care Act, including repealing the public health fund and funding for the exchanges, cutting the children's health insurance program, and taking away all of the Medicaid funding that was provided for the territories.

Either way, these bills would hurt many people—poor, middle class Americans, children and seniors, all to save tax cuts for the wealthy. On November 6, Americans voted for us to work together to strengthen our country, not weaken it. These highly partisan bills will hurt our country, and no one should vote for either of them.

AVOIDING THE FISCAL CLIFF

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if anybody is listening. The message from the American people is loud and clear: extend the middle class tax cuts now. Republican leadership is holding hostage tax cuts for 98 percent of Americans and 97 percent of small businesses to give more tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. Democratic Members of Congress have commonsense solutions, and we can't wait around any longer as real proposals languish while the House GOP gets its act together.

I, along with 181 of my colleagues, have signed the discharge petition to automatically bring to the House floor the Senate-passed middle class tax cuts which the President has said he will sign immediately. This could be an opportunity for us to work together, resolve some of our differences, and offer the American people the kind of Congress they want: working together.

TAXES

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my disappointment that House leadership is again playing political games instead of getting our work done. With time running short, they've decided to prohibit a vote on extending the middle class tax cuts for families making up to \$250,000 per year. Instead, we will only be voting on the so-called Republican Plan B.

Plan B is yet another giveaway to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans and at the expense of middle class families. It forces middle class families to pay \$1,000 more a year in taxes in order to give millionaires a \$50,000 break. That's not what the American people voted for in November. They sent a clear message that they wanted us to put aside our differences and work together to pass a balanced plan that protects middle class families and ensures that everyone pays their fair share.

We agree. We all agree that families making up to \$250,000 should not see their taxes go up on January 1. We could pass that bill today and give millions of families across this country peace of mind, but we're not even getting to vote on that bill. Instead, we're taking a symbolic vote that solves nothing. My constituents—all of our constituents—deserve better.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LEONILA VEGA

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

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today I come to the floor to honor Leonila Vega, a ferocious advocate for seniors and people with disabilities. In her role as the executive director of the Direct Care Alliance, I worked closely with her to improve the conditions of work for those who provide in-home care and, with it, the quality of care that they provide for others.

Although she lost her battle with cancer on November 19, the battle she waged for quality care and dignity for workers continues.

I cannot adequately describe all of her accomplishments in one short minute, so I'm submitting a longer statement for the RECORD. But I do hope that in honoring her today and talking about her passion, I hope that her passion for social justice is an inspiration to all of us.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SENATOR BARBARA A. MIKULSKI

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Today, I am incredibly pleased to congratulate my dear colleague, Senator BARBARA A. MIKUL-

SKI, for her ascension to the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Senator MIKULSKI's commitment to our great State is undeniable. She has worked tirelessly throughout her prestigious career to serve her fellow Marylanders, first as a social worker, and now as one of the most influential Members of the United States Senate.

Senator MIKULSKI is a leader that Maryland and, truly, our Nation, can be proud of. She was the first woman elected to the Senate who was not preceded by her husband or father and has continued breaking barriers ever since. This trend continued yesterday when she became the very first female Senator in the history of our Nation to become the chair of the powerful Appropriations Committee.

I'm honored and proud to serve alongside her here in the United States Congress, and I look forward to continuing to work together with her for the betterment of our Nation.

NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT, AND GUN SAFETY REFORMS

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, first of all, to express my deepest condolences to the families and friends of those killed in last week's tragic elementary school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut.

But this incomprehensible act of violence should compel us to address the larger context. It is a fact that over 10,000 Americans are murdered by gun violence each year. No other civilized nation on the planet experiences anything like this annual gun slaughter, but we have 5 percent of the population and own 50 percent of the world's guns.

Now, the needed reforms are not radical. Many, including closing the gun show loophole and requiring gun owners to report to police lost or stolen guns, are even supported by the vast majority of NRA members. It would be far too simplistic and self-serving, though, to lay the blame for this inaction on the most commonsense measures entirely at the feet of the NRA, which we're inclined to do because the truth is that we, as the representatives of the people, are the ones who are ultimately responsible for doing nothing to protect our constituents.

The fact is that if we don't take action now, we're all complicit in the next massacre of innocents.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 840 and ask for its immediate consideration.