

wells in the same oil patch that once produced over 80 percent of our Nation's oil. These small wells pump out several barrels a day, slowly churning day and night. Cline's well number one has been producing oil for over 140 years.

It is because of the tireless efforts and ingenuity of men like Bill Cline and his family that America has led the world in energy production and will continue to be a leader for generations to come.

Congratulations, Bill, on this very well-deserved award.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND GOING BROKE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the highway trust fund will be broke by the end of July. This is right in the middle of road construction season.

In Erie and Niagara counties, we have almost 400 bridges that are structurally deficient. This is unacceptable and just a small representation of the crumbling infrastructure nationwide.

Congress should be increasing our investment in nation-building right here at home, not cutting back; but, Mr. Speaker, doing this at the expense of the United States Postal Service by eliminating Saturday delivery is not the answer.

This is a one-time fix that does not actually provide a long-term solution to our Nation's transportation funding problem.

Furthermore, this hurts small businesses and other Americans who rely on the ability to receive paper mail on Saturday. It eliminates jobs for postal workers and would create a significant loss of mail volume and revenue for the Postal Service.

Reports today indicate this plan may be dropped, and I hope that is the case. I urge my colleagues to reject this misguided proposal and explore more reasonable and effective solutions to restore the highway trust fund.

□ 1215

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, more than 3 million Americans have been left behind by the failure to renew unemployment insurance. These individuals live in urban America, in suburban America, and in rural America. They live in blue States and they live in red States. They are simply Americans in need.

As a result of the callousness of some in this Chamber, they have been put in great economic jeopardy, and we have cost the economy more than \$5 billion.

We should be extending a helping hand to these individuals, but instead we have slapped them in the face in a manner that is disrespectful of the compassion of the American people.

It is time to do the right thing and to renew unemployment insurance so that we can rescue those Americans left behind on the battlefield of the Great Recession.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE EXTENSION

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I follow the gentleman from New York. I rise today because I think it is absolutely unconscionable that after more than 6 months the House Republicans continue to fail to act to extend unemployment benefits.

There are more than 3 million Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own who are waiting for Congress to do something for them. I have heard from many of them, my constituents, about their struggles because of Congress' failure to act.

Lily of Linden, New Jersey, has been out of work for 2 years. She and her husband have dipped into their entire savings just to get by. Because of her age and her illness, she has found it increasingly harder to find gainful employment. It has come to this sad point, Mr. Speaker, that Lily can no longer afford her medicine, and her family may soon be homeless.

By failing to act, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have coldly turned their backs on millions of Americans and people like Lily. Turning their backs on people who have elected them is simply unacceptable, and I will not stay silent.

TERRORIST GROUPS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a mother, as a senior member in the Homeland Security Committee which was created in the backdrop of the horrific tragedy of 9/11.

Today, the President and America confronts a heinous group in Iraq, ISIS, that is beheading persons and proclaiming one religion over another. And again, an op-ed appears in *The Wall Street Journal* from the former Vice President, who wants to blame everything on President Obama whose administration has just brought into justice one of those who perpetrated the violence and killed our Americans at Benghazi.

This is not an American issue in Iraq. We gave them that opportunity. We gave 4,000 in treasure. This is really an international issue that calls upon the United Nations and the nations surrounding Iraq and Maliki to be able to have a coalition government.

It is the same in Nigeria with Boko Haram that is beheading persons, kidnapping girls. We need a coalition that faces down these terrible, horrific, tragic terrorists—these are thugs—and it cannot be on the shoulders of Americans. We have given our treasure.

We can protect our Embassy and we should. Thank you, Mr. President. We can give resources, but there needs to be a strong coalition. Those who come back from the ghost of yesteryear and blame this administration should be silenced. America should stand united together, and others need to work together to stop this tragedy.

NATIONAL ASK DAY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, this week I will introduce a resolution to designate June 21 as National ASK Day, to raise awareness among parents to ask a simple lifesaving question: "Is there an unlocked gun where my child plays?" Those nine words could ultimately save your child's life.

I recently met Karen Reed from Cumberland, Rhode Island, whose youngest son was severely injured in 2011 when his older brother played with a loaded pellet gun at a friend's house on Christmas Eve. Karen had no idea there was an unlocked gun at the house where her son was playing. Her 9-year-old son mistakenly thought the pellet gun was a video game accessory and shot his younger brother in the eye.

1.7 million children live in a home with a loaded, unlocked gun, and every year thousands of kids are killed or injured as a result. Unfortunately, Karen's story is just one example of a tragic accident that can occur when a child gets hold of a loaded gun.

This isn't a partisan issue or an attempt to take guns away from anybody. This is about keeping our kids safe by asking a simple, lifesaving question. We owe it to our kids to provide them with safe areas to play and to pass the National ASK resolution and encourage parents to ask this simple question: "Is there a gun where my child plays?"

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 18, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 18, 2014 at 10:37 a.m.:

That the Senate concur in the House amendment S. 1254.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4870, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 628 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 628

Resolved, That (a) at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4870) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived.

(b) During consideration of the bill for amendment—

(1) each amendment, other than amendments provided for in paragraph (2), shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment except as provided in paragraph (2);

(2) no pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate; and

(3) the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read.

(c) When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a Government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, with the Senate amendments thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order or question of consideration, a single motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee that the House: (1) concur in the Senate amendment to the title; and (2) concur in the Senate

amendment to the text with the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. The Senate amendments and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question. If the motion is adopted, then it shall be in order for the chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or his designee to move that the House insist on its amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3230 and request a conference with the Senate thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 628 provides for the consideration of H.R. 4870, the Department of Defense Appropriation Act for FY 2015 under a modified open rule.

This resolution will give Members on both sides of the aisle the opportunity to offer as many amendments to the bill as they wish, provided they comply with the rules of the House. It ensures that all Members can be active participants in shaping this bill. I think my colleague on the Rules Committee from Georgia described it best when he called this process a "festival of democracy."

The underlying legislation will give the Department of Defense the resources it needs to protect our country at home and abroad. I am encouraged that both sides of the aisle can usually unite around this cause. This bill is another example of that bipartisanship, as it was reported out of the committee unanimously.

The DOD Appropriations Act will also provide support for our warfighters, the 1 percent who risk all in defense of this Nation. It is critical that we give our troops the tools they need to carry out their mission abroad and the resources they need to support their families here at home. This legislation will fully fund a 1.8 percent pay increase for the military instead of the 1 percent raise requested by the President.

Secondly, this rule allows us to begin ironing out the differences between the House and the Senate attempts to address the VA scandal. While we have yet to uncover the full scope of this

scandal, it is apparent the problems are systemic to that institution.

There have been secret wait lists, unacceptable patient wait times, inadequate care, backlogs, a culture of retaliating against whistleblowers, and a serious lack of leadership, to name only a few of the issues plaguing the VA.

Tragically—tragically—veterans have died because of these problems. Mr. Speaker, it is disgraceful. The fact that a veteran died waiting for care from this country that they fought for, it is just tough to come to grips with that reality, but it is a reality.

As a father of three sons serving in the military, I am appalled, I am horrified, and I believe the American people are, too, as to the treatment of our veterans. Our veterans deserve a whole lot more, a whole heck of a lot more from their government than to have the government turn their back on them. They deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and the House will make every effort to ensure that these problems never happen again.

One of the ways we can begin this effort is by giving the VA the authority to terminate employees for performing poorly, much like the private sector, much like I had as sheriff. It is what most employers have the ability to do. This will give the Secretary of the VA the ability to quickly remove bureaucrats who falsified, in this instance, wait times.

As we have come to find out with all other scandals this administration is engulfed in, it is difficult to hold people accountable in the executive branch, try as we might. Therefore, the provisions are sorely needed.

We can also require the VA to reimburse private health care for veterans who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility or those who have not received timely medical treatment at the VA.

□ 1230

This will allow our veterans to get the care that they need when they need it.

Finally, it is a bit discouraging that we even have to codify this into law, but we need to end the bonuses and awards at the VA for at least the next two fiscal years. Incredibly, the Phoenix VA—where veterans actually died waiting for care—felt it was appropriate to pay out \$10 million in bonuses over the last 3 years.

By prohibiting this practice, we can ensure that the funds we provide to the VA are going where they are needed: toward the care of our veterans and not to fatten bureaucrats' pockets.

I stand in strong support of this rule and the underlying legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, my friend Mr. NUGENT, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.