

Mr. Speaker, in my home state of Texas, a law that would have cut off access to 75 percent of reproductive healthcare clinics in the state was challenged before the U.S. Supreme Court in 2014 and 2015.

On October 2, 2014, the Supreme Court made unconstitutional a Texas law that required that all reproduction healthcare clinics that provided the full range of services would be required to have a hospital-style surgery center building and staffing requirements.

This requirement meant only 7 clinics would be allowed to continue to provide a full spectrum of reproductive healthcare to women.

In 2015, the State of Texas once again threatened women's access to reproductive health care when it attempted to shutter all but 10 healthcare providers in the state of Texas.

The Supreme Court once again intervened on behalf of Texas women to block the move to close clinics in my state.

New attacks on women are now being couched with renewed attacks against the Affordable Care Act, which the majority has attempted to overturn with over 50 votes since its enactment.

The attacks against Planned Parenthood is a social and economic statement that if you are a woman with money you have the right to think for yourself regarding your healthcare choices, but if you are poor or lack healthcare options you do not have that same right.

Millions of women now have free coverage for comprehensive women's preventive medical services.

The reality is women who face difficult health care decisions do not do so lightly.

Women in this nation have a right to self-determination.

It is fundamental human right and one that should be cherished.

The most important right is the ability of each person to determine their destiny and this right has to be freely exercised.

Healthcare has become a fundamental right for our nation's citizens with the best possible outcomes for the millions of people who had no healthcare due to pre-existing illnesses or were penalized with higher premiums for pre-existing conditions.

Because of the Affordable Healthcare Act:

1. 100 million Americans no longer have a life-time limit on healthcare coverage.

2. 17 million children with pre-existing conditions can no longer be denied coverage by insurers.

3. 6.6 million young-adults up to age 26 can stay on their parents' health insurance plans.

4. 6.3 million Seniors in the "donut hole" have saved \$6.1 billion on their prescription drugs.

5. 3.2 million Seniors have access to free annual wellness visits under Medicare, and

6. 360,000 Small Businesses are using the Health Care Tax Credit to help them provide health insurance to their workers.

Statistics on Texas and the Affordable Care Act reveal that:

1. 3.8 million Texas residents receive preventive care services.

2. 7 million Texans no longer have lifetime limits on their healthcare insurance.

3. 300,731 young adults can remain on their parents' health insurance until age 26.

4. 5 million Texas residents can receive a rebate check from their insurance company if it does not spend 80 percent of premium dollars on healthcare.

5. 4,029 people with pre-existing conditions now have health insurance.

This year for the first time insurance companies are banned from:

1. discriminating against anyone with a pre-existing condition;

2. charging higher rates based on gender or health status;

3. enforcing lifetime dollar limits; and

4. enforcing annual dollar limits on health benefits.

Few people knew that health insurers viewed pregnancy as a pre-existing condition.

Because of the Affordable Care Act women can no longer be charged a higher rate just because they are women.

Attempts to weaken or end the ACA are wrong.

A January 2015, Gallup poll revealed that nationally the uninsured rate in the United States was reduced to 12.9%.

The uninsured rate nationally dropped 4.2% points since the enactment of the Affordable Care Act.

We are becoming a nation of equals when it comes to access to affordable healthcare insurance.

I urge all Members to join me in voting to sustain President Obama's veto of this latest Republican effort to turn the clock back on women's rights and the healthcare safety-net that is assuring longer and healthier lives for millions of Americans.

SUPPORTING PRESIDENT MA OF TAIWAN AND THE PROPOSED SOUTH CHINA SEA PEACE INITIATIVE ROAD MAP

**HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, on January 28, President Ma Ying-jeou of the Republic of China (Taiwan) visited Taiping Island in the Nansha Islands ahead of the Lunar New Year to see the guards and medical staff stationed there. He unveiled "the South China Sea Peace Initiative Road Map" which could be applied as a reference to the parties concerned in the region. The content of the South China Sea Peace Initiative Road Map is stated as below:

"1. "Yes" to cooperation, "no" to confrontation: A cooperation and development mechanism that contributes to peace and prosperity in the South China Sea should first be established, and sovereignty disputes should be set aside for future resolution through peaceful means.

2. "Yes" to sharing, "no" to monopolizing: A cooperation and development mechanism should ensure equal participation and resource sharing among all parties concerned in the region in order to avoid undermining the rights and interests of any party.

3. "Yes" to pragmatism, "no" to intransigence: The initial focus should be on aspects which are beneficial to all parties concerned and on which consensus can be easily achieved; various cooperation items should be pragmatically and gradually promoted so as to avoid missing out on cooperation opportunities as a result of any party insisting on its position.

The viable path consists of shelving disputes, integrated planning, and zonal development. The two essential elaborations are: First, all parties concerned in the region should be included in the consultation mechanism for this initiative so that they can engage in cooperation and negotiations on integrated planning for the South China Sea. Second, the cooperation and consultation mechanism proposed in this initiative should be a provisional arrangement of a practical nature, and should not undermine the position of any party concerned or jeopardize or hamper the reaching of a final agreement on the South China Sea."

As a member of the Taiwan Congressional Caucus, I am glad to see that the national leader of Taiwan is willing to provide a peaceful approach to decrease the tension in this region.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT MATTHEW VANDERSLICE

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant Matt Vanderslice of the United States Coast Guard for his extraordinary actions on February 15, 2015.

Lieutenant Vanderslice, a native of Stonington, Connecticut, was accepted into the prestigious U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where he graduated in 2008 with a Bachelor of Science in Operations Research and Computer Analysis. While at the Academy, he was known to be an avid member of the rowing team and served as the team captain his senior year.

Following commissioning, Lieutenant Vanderslice served as a Deck Watch Officer aboard the USCGC *Hollyhock*, a 225-foot ice breaking buoy tender home ported near Detroit, Michigan. During his two year tenure, he sailed all five Great Lakes before being accepted to the flight training program.

Upon completion of helicopter pilot training, Lieutenant Vanderslice was stationed at Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod Massachusetts for three years as a duty standing helicopter pilot. It was during this time, assigned as the co-pilot of the helicopter CGNR 6033, that Lieutenant Vanderslice, along with three other crewmembers, were tasked with responding to a distress signal picked up by the Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center in Boston from the fishing vessel *Sedona*. The *Sedona* was stranded 200 nautical miles off the coast of Cape Cod.

Lieutenant Vanderslice and the aircraft commander, Lieutenant Hess, exhibited exceptional skill as they safely navigated through near-zero visibility, 55 knot winds, and unremitting snow and sleet. Even when extreme weather conditions caused equipment to malfunction and act erratically, Lieutenant Vanderslice was able to locate the vessel by manipulating the aircraft's avionics system and by making precise fuel calculations. His calm professionalism inspired the rest of the crew to remain confident and focused, which was essential to successful mission completion. In addition to his calm yet quick thinking, he managed to keep the operational commander apprised of mission progress, keep the aircraft

clear of the *Sedona* as it was tossed about in the violent seas, and carefully manage fuel burn rates—giving Lieutenant Hess the ability to focus all of his attention on keeping the aircraft in a safe hoisting position. As CGNR 6033 returned to base, Lieutenant Vanderslice communicated with air traffic control and the operational commander to coordinate arrival procedures and initiate medical treatment for the survivors. Lieutenant Vanderslice maintained exceptional composure for the entirety of the mission.

Lieutenant Vanderslice has since received orders to Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, Alaska, where he continues to fly the MH-60T on various Coast Guard missions. Lieutenant Vanderslice is married to Stephanie, his wife of 3 years. In his spare time, he is a passionate guitar player and roasts the best coffee in Sitka.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honor of Lieutenant Matthew Vanderslice, who perfectly exemplifies the highest standards of the United States Coast Guard. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this distinguished member of our Armed Services and wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING BRIANNA DUDA  
ON RECEIVING THE CITIZEN  
SCHOLAR AWARD FROM MISSOURI  
STATE UNIVERSITY

### HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brianna Duda, an outstanding student at Missouri State University, on her selection to receive the Citizen Scholar Award.

Each year, this prestigious award is given by Missouri State University's Board of Governors to students who have contributed to the university, furthered the university's public affairs mission, and have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments and/or in important service activities in the community. Since the award was created in 2007, only forty-seven students have been recognized for their stellar achievements.

Brianna, from St. Louis, Missouri, was one of six exceptional students to receive the award this year. She is currently a junior socio-political communication major with a minor in political science. Brianna has been recognized for her skills in identifying intersections of identities and historically excluded groups. She has navigated these issues with great maturity, while addressing the conflict and barriers surrounding them with grace.

Mr. Speaker, Brianna Duda's accomplishments have set a great example of what a Citizen Scholar should be, this award represents a great deal of her hard work and dedication. I am proud to represent students like her and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on this well-deserved achievement.

IN MEMORY OF LT. COL. MICHAEL  
MIERAU

### HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Lt. Col. Michael Mierau, who passed away just last week on January 29, 2016.

Lt. Col. Mierau served in the U.S. Army for 26 years. In 1956, he received a nomination to attend the United States Military Academy, where he later graduated in June of 1960, finishing ninth in rank of order of merit. Following his graduation, he was commissioned as an infantry officer and was deployed overseas several times, including tours in West Germany, Vietnam, and what is now South Korea. Lt. Col. Mierau had a decorated military career, earning the Parachute Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation Medal with V Device.

After Lt. Col. Mierau retired from the U.S. Army, he founded a consulting company and continued to use his experience in the military by serving as a volunteer member of the Washington State Army Advisory Board, working as a U.S. Military Academy Field Force member in the 17th Congressional District of Ohio, and joining the Board of Governors of the West Point Society of Washington and Puget Sound.

Lt. Col. Mierau is survived by his wife Julie Mierau and five children and stepchildren, several of whom have followed in his footsteps and joined the military.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Lt. Col. Mierau for his service to our community and country and for his friendship. My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND  
RETIREMENT OF KARY "BERNARD"  
EVANS, MILITARY AND  
VETERANS AFFAIRS DISTRICT  
FIELD REPRESENTATIVE FOR  
THE FIRST CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI

### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the career and retirement of Bernard Evans, who has served as the Military and Veterans Affairs Field Representative for the First Congressional District of Mississippi for the past five years. Bernard's work is personal for him. As a Vietnam Veteran, he served with the 173rd Petroleum Co. in Phu Bai, Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. After 28 years of military service, he retired from the Mississippi National Guard. Bernard had an impressive career with the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol. During his 25 years of service, he performed a multitude of roles before retiring with the rank of Lieutenant. He has also worked with the Department of Corrections as a probation officer, the Lee County Sheriff's Office as a deputy sheriff, and as the Lee County Veterans Service Officer.

A life-long resident of Mississippi, Bernard is also a man committed to his faith and family. He has been married to his wife, Gail White Evans, for 24 years and together they have five children, 14 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. He is a member of the Saltillo First United Methodist Church. In his spare time his hobbies include antique cars, motorcycles, and traveling. He is a lifetime member of the American Legion, Military Officers Association of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the National Rifle Association. He is also the President of the Tupelo Veterans Park Council.

Veterans in the First Congressional District of Mississippi were given invaluable guidance and support from Bernard Evans. I would like to take this time to thank Bernard for his continued commitment to providing assistance and care for our returning veterans. I know he will continue to accomplish great things for the state of Mississippi.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT  
JOHN D. HESS

### HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Lieutenant John D. Hess of the United States Coast Guard and his extraordinary actions on February 15, 2015.

Lieutenant Hess, a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard after completing Coast Guard basic training in 1997. He went on to prove himself extremely capable on assignments aboard the USCGC *Victorious* and at Coast Guard Stations Ashtabula and Chatham. Upon receiving his commission in 2004, Lieutenant Hess attended Officer Candidate School (OCS) in New London, Connecticut, and went on to receive his wings of gold in 2006.

As an aviator, Lieutenant Hess's first assignment was as an MH-60 Jayhawk pilot at Air Station Clearwater, Florida. There, he served as an Instructor Pilot and subsequently a Flight Examiner. He transferred to Air Station Cape Cod in Massachusetts where he served in the same role as well as Aircraft Commander aboard CGNR 6033.

It was during this time, on February 15, 2015, that Lieutenant Hess—along with the other three crewmembers aboard CGNR 6033—responded to a distress signal picked up by the Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center in Boston from the fishing vessel *Sedona*, which was floundering two hundred nautical miles off the coast of Cape Cod.

Lieutenant Hess and his copilot, Lieutenant Matthew Vanderslice, showed exemplary aeronautical skill as they navigated through extreme conditions, facing no overhead cover through ice, lightning, and unrelenting snow squalls, all of which resulted in very little visibility. After finding the *Sedona*, he directed the survivors to abandon ship and swim toward the awaiting rescue swimmer, Petty Officer Staph. Upon failure of the primary hoist system, he expertly maneuvered the aircraft to coordinate with Petty Officer Suba, the onboard flight mechanic, to successfully lift Petty Officer Staph and the survivors out of the frigid, stormy seas. He then safely brought everyone back to the airfield, landing the aircraft despite whiteout conditions and extremely low