

Service should focus their efforts on combating white-nose syndrome.

#### HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the Republican budget plan.

Budgets are not just numbers on a piece of paper; they are moral documents, moral documents that demonstrate our Nation's values, ideals, and our priorities.

The House Republican budget of "work harder and get less" is not where it is at. Their budget makes it harder for American families to pay for a home, to send their kids to college, and keeps paychecks in this country stagnant; and it is something that we should not tolerate.

Instead, Republicans should work with Democrats to end the sequestration so we can make it easier to send our kids to college, fix our roads that are crumbling every day, and also to make sure that we can keep good-paying jobs here in our country. That is the American Dream; that is the land of opportunity.

I urge the Republicans to work with us, not against us, so we can fix this problem for the American people.

#### HALABJA ATTACKS

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

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this week marks the 27th anniversary of the Halabja chemical attacks against the Kurdish people in Iraq.

On March 16, 1988, Saddam Hussein's regime created one of modern history's most barbaric crimes. He ordered his forces to drop chemical weapons, including mustard and sarin gas, on the Kurdish town of Halabja.

The brutal attack, which can only be described as a crime against humanity, resulted in painful, agonizing deaths of at least 5,000 innocent men, women, and children, while leaving thousands more maimed, blinded, and otherwise permanently debilitated.

More than two and a half decades later, the aftermath of this horrific atrocity is still apparent with the victims, many of whom have suffered long-term illnesses, paralysis, neurological effects, cancers, and even congenital malformations in children to this day.

Since these atrocities, the Kurds have done a remarkable job of rebuilding. Today, the Kurds are one of America's most steadfast allies. Peshmerga forces continue to shoulder immense burdens while seeking to defeat and destroy our mutual enemy ISIS.

As a uniquely democratic and stable haven amidst a region more often marked by instabil-

ity and authoritarian rule, Kurdistan also hosts almost 1.6 million Internally Displaced Persons and refugees, including Christians, Yezidis, and other religious minorities.

Today, we remember the unconscionable attack on Halabja, but we also celebrate the achievements and will of the Kurdish people to move forward.

#### STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of policies that will help more students and families afford college.

The cost of obtaining a college degree has increased more than 1,000 percent over the last three decades, and many more students need Federal loans to cover the costs.

After racking up a mountain of debt, graduates struggle to put money into savings, buy a house, or start a business, but many people are shocked to find out that the Federal Government is making billions of dollars in profits off these students by charging higher interest rates than necessary. This is not fair or right.

We should be rewarding our students for pursuing an education, not taxing them for it. Students should get the same low interest rates that the Federal Reserve gives the big banks on Wall Street.

I hope we can find bipartisan support in Congress for commonsense policies to make college more affordable.

#### NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Women's History Month.

Many famous women have shaped the course of our country's fate; however, there are also women of note in our local communities that have made a real impact. I would like to highlight a constituent of mine, Paula O'Neil, Ph.D.

Dr. O'Neil was elected as the first woman to serve as clerk of the circuit court and county comptroller in Pasco County's history. A true role model, Dr. O'Neil has a long history of exemplary public service in government and serves as a professor at Saint Leo College, now Saint Leo University.

She has also been a courageous voice for others as she bravely battles cancer, stressing the importance of early detection.

This National Women's History Month, I am happy to honor Dr. Paula O'Neil and recognize all women making a positive impact in our communities.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BALANCE AMERICA'S CHECKBOOK ON THE BACK OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, we saw encouraging news about our economy continuing to move back from the debilitating recession that we faced only a few years ago. While we still have a ways to go, we are certainly moving in the right direction.

However, if the GOP budget revealed today should come to pass, it would have devastating effects on America's middle class and undo the progress that we have made. This budget will force middle class families to work harder and get less.

The GOP has presented us with legislation that will keep paychecks stagnant, making it harder to buy a home; it would cut student loans, making it difficult for kids to afford college, and it would strip away the secure retirement by privatizing Medicare.

We cannot afford to balance America's checkbook on the backs of the middle class. In the district where I come from—California's Inland Empire—families are struggling from the recession and are fighting to catch up with the rest of the Nation.

I cannot and will not ask them to bear this burden because the GOP can't pass a budget.

#### CONFIRMATION OF LORETTA LYNCH

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, it has been 126 days since the President named Loretta Lynch as his nominee for the U.S. Attorney General position. It has been 46 days since the hearings began, and as we thought that there would soon be a full vote in the Senate, we are now facing another delay as Senate Republicans continue to drag their feet.

This is unprecedented. Loretta Lynch rightfully deserves to be the next Attorney General for the United States. She is a proven litigator who is well qualified. She has a reputation as an accomplished, knowledgeable attorney.

If confirmed, she will be the first African American woman to hold the position. This is a serious position, and it shouldn't fall victim to partisan gridlock.

There is no argument that Loretta Lynch is more than qualified; yet she has been scrutinized more than any other male that has come before her vying for the U.S. Attorney General role: 900 questions, 9 hours of testimony.

A fellow North Carolinian, Ms. Lynch is from a family of clergymen and civil rights community leaders. Throughout her career, she has served twice as U.S. attorney general for New York.