

across the country are still pushing to legalize recreational marijuana. Marijuana use increases the risk of cancer, hinders brain development in adolescents and young adults, and encourages experimentation with even more dangerous drugs, including opioids.

Mr. Speaker, with the opioid crisis our Nation is currently fighting, why on Earth should we increase access to an addictive gateway drug?

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I have grave concerns with the so-called tax plan Republicans are peddling. It should be called the Republican tax scam. Working Americans are being sold a bill of goods. Let me be crystal clear: this plan will not cut taxes for working middle class families. This is a tax cut for Wall Street and a tax hike for Main Street. And what does your family get? More cuts to children's education, deep cuts to your healthcare, and deep cuts to lifesaving emergency services.

Over 50 million taxpaying households will pay more taxes every April 15, due to this tax scam. Let me repeat that another way. This tax scam gets rid of credits and deductions for the middle class and keeps loopholes for corporations to ship your jobs overseas.

Mr. Speaker, I am completely opposed to this tax scam that cuts taxes for big corporations, and it forces big cuts to Medicare, education, and Social Security. This tax scam is wrong.

SUPPORT VETERANS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, the Nation celebrates Veterans Day. Originally called Armistice Day, November 11, 1919, marked the end of World War I.

In 1926, Congress passed a resolution for an annual observance, and November 11 became a national holiday in 1938. In 1954, the holiday was renamed Veterans Day.

Mr. Speaker, we all want to thank our veterans for their service to this Nation, and there is no better way to do so than to care for them when they return home. That is why I encourage my colleagues to support the Veterans E-Health and Telemedicine Support Act, or the VETS Act.

This bill will be on the floor this afternoon, and it will allow VA health professionals to practice telemedicine across State borders to care for more of America's veterans. This Nation has the technology available today to provide care for our veterans, no matter where they reside. This bill upholds our promise to be there for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the VETS Act and work to give our veterans access to the best care possible, no matter where they are or where they live.

RECOGNIZING DR. JOACHIM FRANK

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a constituent of mine, Dr. Joachim Frank. Dr. Frank is a faculty member at Columbia University who, earlier this month, along with his international research colleagues, was awarded the 2017 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Dr. Frank becomes the third constituent from New York's 13th Congressional District who has received this tremendous honor and crowning achievement from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Dr. Frank's work and success is the foundation for scientists to explore and illuminate an almost unimaginable world that exists much beyond what you and I can imagine.

We will see new medicines, curative therapies, and access to more information than we have ever seen before: the true product and potential of unrelenting intellectual curiosity.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to congratulate my constituent, Dr. Joachim Frank, and his research partners as the distinguished recipients of the 2017 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

RECOGNIZING DIWALI AND HINDU NEW YEAR

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Diwali, known as the Festival of Lights, and to recognize the Hindu New Year.

The Hindu community comes together wearing their finest clothing to celebrate this occasion. Families prepare for Goddess Lakshmi's arrival weeks in advance by decorating their porches with colorful designs, or rangoli; preparing sweets and savories; and lighting divos. On the night before Diwali, they light divos, symbolically asking Bhagwan to expel their ignorance and enlighten their souls. Lights, candles, and fireworks are an integral part of the festivities.

I was honored to be able to attend multiple celebrations at the BAPS mandirs in my district in Levittown, Warrington, and Souderton. As I traveled from celebration to celebration, I got to share in the absolute joy of my constituents as they celebrated with friends and with family. I was moved to be asked to participate in the lighting ceremonies, and I was in awe of the beauty of the festivals.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent a district that is so diverse and so rich in its culture.

OPPOSING RYAN-McCONNELL TAX PLAN

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, today, I come to the people's House floor in strong opposition to the Ryan-McConnell billionaires-first tax plan, a plan that overwhelmingly benefits the superrich and well-connected, and scams the middle class and our most vulnerable Americans.

But don't just take it from me. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, working families in my home State of Ohio would see their taxes increase by \$1,000 per year, while the wealthiest Americans, people like President Trump, would see their taxes decrease by as much as \$747,000, according to the Tax Policy Center.

Not to be overshadowed, the Tax Policy Center also concluded that nearly 80 percent of the bill's benefits pad the pockets of the wealthiest Americans. At the same time, it eliminates the medical expenses deduction, student loan deduction, and the new markets tax credit. That does not seem like fair taxes to me.

Instead of raising taxes on the middle class, what we should be doing is allowing for a better future, better opportunities, better jobs, and better wages for all Americans.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF JUDGE ROBERT LEE BYRD, JR.

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life and contributions of Judge Robert Lee Byrd, Jr.

Judge Byrd was born in Birmingham in 1932. He received his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University in 1954, before attending the University of Alabama School of Law.

He was in private practice in Mobile for over 20 years and was later appointed circuit judge in Mobile County. Judge Byrd was a dedicated member of the Mobile community. During my time as an attorney in Mobile, I had the privilege of practicing in his court where he conducted himself with immense dignity and professionalism. Judge Byrd recently passed away, but his impact will live on.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to share my deepest sympathies with his wife, Mary, and his three daughters. Judge Byrd will never be forgotten.

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: