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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 17, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2024, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

RECOGNIZING DEDICATED SERVICE OF RETIRING MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the dedicated service of several of my colleagues. Throughout my time in Congress, I have had the opportunity to work with many great minds on both sides of the aisle.

A life dedicated to public service isn't necessarily easy, but it is essential to ensuring the continued prosperity of our great Nation.

When I first entered Congress, I became friends with classmate Representative BILL POSEY, a gentleman from the great State of Florida. His leadership on issues like economic growth, space exploration, and government transparency has a lasting impact. As a steadfast advocate for fiscal responsibility, he has worked tirelessly to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and that the voices of everyday Americans are heard loud and clear.

We are incredibly grateful for his efforts to champion our space program and support the innovators who keep America at the forefront of exploration and discovery. His work has been instrumental in strengthening our leadership in space exploration, a source of pride for all Floridians and Americans alike.

As important is the fact that, from day one, Bill's wife, Katie, and my wife, Penny, became best friends. We wish them both all the best as they start their next chapter in sunny Florida, a chapter I am sure will include a few visits by the Thompsons.

During my first term in Congress, I had the pleasure of getting to know another classmate, BLAINE LUETKEMEYER of Missouri. His work on financial reform and advocacy for small businesses has been particularly impactful. He has championed the entrepreneurs and hardworking Americans who drive our economy forward, ensuring that they have the resources and opportunities to thrive.

Whether it was standing up for Main Street or leading efforts to cut necessary red tape, Representative LUETKEMEYER has always been a champion of commonsense legislation in Washington.

Best wishes to Blaine, his wife, Jackie, and all those grandchildren.

In addition to my previously mentioned colleagues, I have gotten to know Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS of Washington. Her leadership is undeniable.

Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS has served as both vice chair and chair of the House Republican Conference and was the first woman to chair the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Her commitment to energy independence, innovation, and economic growth has paved the way for a stronger and more secure future. Her dedication to improving access to healthcare, particularly for those living in rural areas, has made a real difference in the lives of countless families.

I also have to say that Cathy has been a prayer warrior in Washington, D.C., both in Bible studies and, quite frankly, even just circling the Capitol in prayer.

As the 118th Congress comes to a close, I reflect on my colleagues' dedication, hard work, and the positive changes that they have helped bring about.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representatives POSEY, LUETKEMEYER, and MCMORRIS RODGERS for their years of public service and commitment to improving our country.

They all will be missed.

BIDDING FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address my colleagues here on the House floor one last time and to express my heartfelt gratitude for what has been the greatest honor of my lifetime.

Twelve years ago, I was sent here to Washington to represent the people of northeastern Pennsylvania, a region defined by its natural beauty, rich industrial heritage, and honest, hardworking residents.

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When I was elected, I vowed to be an effective legislator, somebody who would put aside party politics and work across the aisle to pass legislation meaningful to the lives not just of my constituents back home but of all Americans, and I did that.

In my 12 years here, I have had fully 16 bills, pieces of substantive legislation passed into law by the past three Presidents. These are laws that are actively protecting our Nation's veterans, preserving our environment, reducing government waste, and helping government work more efficiently.

I have also worked to restore passenger rail between Scranton, Pennsylvania, and New York City. After more than 12 years of hard work, we are finally on the cusp of seeing that come true, thanks in large part to the passage of the bipartisan infrastructure law we passed last Congress.

I seek to give credit to my outstanding staff, including former members of Team Cartwright, who are amazing people who worked so hard.

To my district staff, former State Senator John Blake, Bob Morgan, April Niver, Tammy Aita, Colleen Gerrity, Jonas Crass, Christa Mecadon, Wendy Wilson, Lee Anne Pugliese, Len Namiotka, Tyler McAlpine, Michael Marsyada, Sabrina McLaughlin, Anne Lauritzen, and Chris Garza; and to my staff here in D.C., my formidable Chief of Staff Hunter Ridgway, Rachel Cohen, Kaylee Robinson, Jeremy Marcus, Stephen Coffey, Samuel Negatu, Karina Hull, RT Rogers, Laura Masterton, Lily Fortsch, Aliza Oppenheim, Daniela Amodei, Anna Mason, Jacob Feit, and Casey Wilson, your work has directly touched the lives of so many in our district and America.

A thank-you is also in order for the outstanding staff on the Appropriations Committee who worked for me. Clerk Bob Bonner and staff members Shannon McCully, Faye Cobb, Nora Faye, and Jamie Wise have been so valuable to me during my time as chair and ranking member of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee.

None of my work or success would have been possible without the unending support of my family: my sons, Jack and Matty, and their partners, Dr. Tim DeVita and Dr. Celeste Pallone; the wonderful support from the whole family; and my rock, my North Star, my wonderful wife, attorney Marion Munley Cartwright. I thank her for letting me go on this 12-year junket. It has been a real party.

Madam Speaker, this is the United States Congress. When you make it here, you have made it to the major leagues of world politics.

I have seen it all here in 12 years. I have seen stupendous skullduggery and treachery, and I have observed Olympic-caliber levels of obsequiousness, but I have also served with the best people I have ever met in my life.

These are people whom you look up to, people whom you admire, and men and women whom you would do anything for. Your only regret is that you didn't know them your entire life. It has been my honor to serve alongside them.

In the darkling predawn light of a spring day in May 1775, when Ethan Allen attacked the British garrison at Fort Ticonderoga at the beginning of the American Revolution, he demanded that the British surrender the fort in the name of the great God Jehovah and the Continental Congress.

I am here to say that I have gotten to know the latter. It has been my honor to serve in the latter and to get to know the latter, and now I am off in search of the former.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN JIM LEACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of former Congressman Jim Leach, who recently passed away.

Jim Leach represented southeast Iowa in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1977 to 2013, the district I now represent, leaving an indelible mark on our State and Nation.

As chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, he played a key role in shaping financial regulations that promoted stability and competition.

Known for his integrity and civility, Jim worked across the aisle to build bridges and promote bipartisan solutions. He was also a principled leader, notably voting against the Iraq war, reflecting his commitment to thoughtful, measured foreign policy.

Jim's legacy of public service, grounded in his deep love for Iowa and his country, continues to inspire. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and all who had the privilege of working alongside him.

RECOGNIZING PLEASANT VALLEY SPARTAN GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Pleasant Valley Spartan girls' volleyball team for their 2024 State volleyball championship. This valiant effort, spurred on by Coach Amber Hall and team captain Isabelle Kremer, led to the Spartans winning their second State title in 4 years. They finished the season with an astonishing 35–2 record.

This culture of excellence established in Pleasant Valley will serve as a springboard for these young women, compelling them to strive for that same excellence in their professional lives. The leadership imbued in them will shine through in all aspects of life.

The Pleasant Valley all-in mentality, which pushes students and teachers to give 100 percent effort in athletics and academics, was established in 2016 and has been a cornerstone of accomplishment ever since. The goal of this rallying cry is to instill a growth mindset that encourages everyone to learn together and push each other to always give their best.

Congratulations to the Pleasant Valley girls' volleyball team, which made us all proud.

HOLDING PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS ACCOUNTABLE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of President Trump's call to hold pharmacy benefit managers accountable for their role in driving up prescription drug prices.

Currently, six PBMs control over 90 percent of the U.S. prescription drug market, and they are destroying independent pharmacies, especially in rural areas like Iowa. In fact, 25 independent pharmacies have closed in Iowa this year alone.

The first legislation I passed on PBM reform and transparency was as a State senator in 2019.

PBMs use tactics like spread pricing, where they charge insurers more than they reimburse pharmacies, and they pocket the difference. As a result, PBM profits have increased over 300 percent, while prescription drug prices have surged nearly 40 percent, far outpacing inflation.

That is why I introduced the DRUG Act, bipartisan legislation that bans spread pricing, patient steering, and other harmful PBM practices.

It is time for transparency and fairness in our healthcare system. Let's get started on President Trump's agenda and pass PBM reform now.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO PEOPLE OF IOWA

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, as Christmas approaches, I want to take a moment to wish the people of Iowa a very merry Christmas. This is a time of year to reflect on the blessings we have received, to show gratitude for our loved ones, and to embrace the spirit of giving.

For me, Christmas is especially meaningful because it is a time to slow down and spend quality time with my family and friends and to deliver my well-known cinnamon rolls. In our busy lives, these moments together are precious, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to share them with those I love most.

Iowa is a place where community and family are at the heart of everything we do. As we celebrate this season, I encourage everyone to share these connections and spread kindness to those around you.

To my fellow Iowans, may your homes be filled with love, joy, and peace this Christmas. I am truly grateful for each of you. Merry Christmas and happy new year.

WARM WISHES DURING HANUKKAH

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, as Hanukkah begins, I want to wish the Jewish community in Iowa and across the country a happy and meaningful holiday.

Hanukkah is a time to celebrate light, tradition, and the strength of family and faith.

This season, as families gather to light the menorah and share their meals, I hope they find moments of peace, joy, and reflection. Hanukkah reminds us that even in challenging times, we can always find hope and light.

To all those who are celebrating, I send my warmest wishes for a wonderful Hanukkah filled with love and happiness. May your homes be filled with warmth, and may this season bring you closer to those you cherish most.

Happy Hanukkah.

□ 1015

CONGRATULATING IOWA LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CHRIS COURNOYER

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize my good friend, who I served with in the State senate, Senator Chris Cournoyer, for being named the Lieutenant Governor under Governor Reynolds. Once again, Iowa is trailblazing with this Lieutenant Governor selection.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Senator Cournoyer.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address this body for my final time as the sole Representative from the great and first State of Delaware.

I remember how I felt back in 1988 standing on the steps of the Capitol as an intern with our then-Congressman Tom Carper. From intern to caseworker, cabinet member, colleague, and now his successor, building on his incredible legacy fills me with great pride.

I thank Senator CARPER for everything he has done.

I also remember how I felt as I walked into this room as Delaware's Congresswoman, humbled, honored, and hopeful because, to borrow the words of the musical ''Hamilton,'' this is ''The Room Where It Happens.''

It is where legislators have convened to debate ideas and uphold ideals. It is where we have heard legendary speeches from Presidents, world leaders, and influential past and present Members of this body.

It is where Jeannette Rankin became the first woman Member of Congress, only after the House's monthlong debate on whether a woman was fit for the job. It is also where I got to serve with luminaries like John Lewis.

It is also where landmark legislation was passed, from the Civil Rights Act, to the Affordable Care Act, to the bipartisan infrastructure law. This is the room where we, the people, have forged America's future.

The first time the House of Representatives used this room was on December 16, 1857, 167 years ago, almost to this very day. It was also the year the Supreme Court ruled that Black Americans were not citizens under the law.

I stand here 167 years later, the first woman and Black person elected to Congress from Delaware, on the shoulders of our ancestors, delivering my final speech before being sworn in as a United States Senator.

My journey represents the promise and potential of America. When I decided to run for Congress, it was after the unexpected death of my husband, my love, Charles Rochester. His death shook me to the core, but then I ran into a father in front of me in the grocery store, who had to put back grapes because they were $9. In that moment, I realized I was still alive, and I had more to give.

I ran for office, having never run for anything in my life, and our small but mighty State made history in 2016 and sent me here, to the room where it happens, to deliver for Delaware.

It is their voices, their stories, and their concerns that have informed my work each and every day, from advocating for a strong farm bill, to protecting our coastal communities, to supporting the Dover Air Force Base and the Port of Wilmington, to bringing clean drinking water to communities like Ellendale, and to fighting for small businesses hit hard by a pandemic and broken supply chains.

I worked across the aisle. We passed bipartisan legislation to help support families, strengthen our communities, lower costs, and protect our national security.

However, not every day in this room has been filled with progress. People almost always ask me what my worst day as a Member of Congress was. Indelibly etched in my mind is that spot in the gallery where I was trapped on January 6, a day when insurrectionists attacked this temple of democracy, and I prayed for love over hate and hope over fear.

As terrible as that day was, it was also one of my proudest moments because we came back into this Chamber, and we fulfilled our constitutional duty and carried out the will of the people.

At that moment, I recommitted to this work, to our democracy, and a hope for a brighter future. Let me be clear: The race to liberty and justice is not over. In running it, we must remember the saying: ''The race is not given to the swift, nor to the strong, but to the one that endures.''

If we are to build a democracy, a planet, and a future that endures, it will take each and every one of us doing our part.

In closing, to all of my colleagues and friends, to the incredible staff in this room and in the Cloakroom and in the building, thank you so much for your friendship and support.

To my dedicated staff members who have been on this journey with me every step of the way, I could not have done it without you.

To my family, thank you for your unyielding love and support through it all.

To my late father, Ted Blunt, thank you for showing me the true meaning of service. Dad once said: You become what you see unless you see what you want to become.

Dad, in you, I still see what I want to become.

Finally, to the countless Delawareans who have entrusted me with the responsibility of this office and the next, I am honored, grateful, and ready to serve.

In the words of Hamilton: ''There's a million things I haven't done, but just you wait.''

FINAL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LATURNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address this body for the last time.

I have always felt immense gratitude for God's blessings in my life, but since deciding not to seek reelection last spring, that gratitude has only deepened.

As a son of Kansas, I am guided by our State motto, ''ad astra per aspera,'' ''to the stars through difficulties.''

It is a truth I have seen lived out in my own family, generation after generation. My grandmother dropped out of school in the ninth grade because she had only one dress and could no longer endure the ridicule of her classmates. Yet, after raising six children, she returned to school, earned her GED, and became a nurse. This was a testament to her resilience.

My grandfather, the eldest of the six siblings, faced his own struggles. After losing his father at the age of 18, he became the first in our family to graduate from high school. He served his country in Korea, where he lost sight in one eye. Unable to pass a physical, he worked odd jobs until he found his calling in public service, becoming a lay judge in our county.

My father continued this legacy of determination. As a single parent, he worked long hours managing the local Sonic while putting himself through college. He became the first in our family to earn a degree, going on to serve as an educator and later as the mayor of our hometown, Galena, Kansas.

I share these stories, Madam Speaker, because they remind me every day that I did not get here on my own.

To put a finer point on it, my grandfather's father was killed in the mines at the age of 41, leaving behind a widow and six hungry children. They endured hardships most of us cannot fathom. Yet, three short generations later, his great-grandson was called ''the gentleman from Kansas'' on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

What a country this is.

It is not just my story. It is the American story. It is the story of what is possible in this extraordinary country when opportunity is paired with sacrifice, when freedom is protected, and when institutions like this one work to preserve that dream for those yet to come.

This Chamber, at its best, exists to ensure that the ladder my family climbed remains sturdy and strong for future generations. I am confident that, in the 119th Congress, we will take up that charge, improving our economy, securing our border, making our streets safer, and showing true American leadership on the world stage.

I humbly offer two parting suggestions.

When I first arrived here, I visited then-dean of the House, Don Young. He told me that when he arrived in 1973, it was customary for freshman Members to wait 6 months before speaking on the House floor. To his surprise, I adopted this tradition.

I did so partly out of deference to the dean, but mostly because it showed respect for this institution, an institution and a system of government that our Founders painstakingly designed to safeguard against human nature. It is all of our responsibility to protect and preserve it.

My second suggestion concerns our role on the world stage. We must be thrifty, strategic, and we must never outsource our sovereignty, but we still have a critical role.

One small but impactful example is preventing children from dying of starvation. Ready-to-use therapeutic food, or RUTF, is an American-made, nutrient-dense paste that has saved millions of lives across the globe. The State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee increased funding by $300 million while reducing overall spending by over 10 percent, and this body passed it. That increase should be realized. It is the right thing to do.

I thank Tim Shallenburger; Mark Dugan; Sam Brownback; Lynn Jenkins; Jake Conard; and Braden Dreiling, my chief; and all of my staff, past and present, for serving both our district and this institution so ably.

I thank the people of Kansas from the bottom of my heart for trusting me to represent them in the State senate as State treasurer and in Congress.

Most importantly, I thank my friends, both at home and my colleagues here. They are my supporters who helped me get here.

I also thank my family. I especially thank my grandparents who helped raise me; my dad; my brother; my sister; my wife, Suzanne; and our four children, Ava, Joe, Maggie, and Gus, who are here with me today, for joining me on this journey and for their incredible sacrifices.

To my kids, the best title I have ever had is ''Dad,'' and that title is about to get my full attention.

Above all, I thank God for his blessings on my life, my family, and this Nation.

Madam Speaker, the future is bright, and for the last time I yield back.

RECOGNIZING FERNANDO ''FREDDIE'' SANCHEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Fernando ''Freddie'' Sanchez, born on October 9, 1946, in Mexico, D.F.

Freddie was raised in Mexico's border state of Baja, California, spending most of his early years in the cities of Mexicali, Ensenada, and Tijuana, before he made his way to the United States.

Freddie Sanchez is like many of the thousands of brave young Latino men and women who have answered the call when our country has needed them the most. Freddie Sanchez's military service spanned from 1968 to 1970. He spent 5 months training in the old U.S. Army post at Fort Ord, California.

Freddie saw military action in Vietnam, spending a year in the Army's Long Binh Post near Saigon. He served the remaining 7 months in Fort Carson, Colorado.

Freddie Sanchez was designated military occupational specialty 88. He was part of the transportation specialists. Freddie drove 10-ton Army trucks and had the honor of driving the company commander.

As Freddie often reminds us that nothing good comes easy, but thanks to the Army, he was well trained and was able to succeed.

Following his military service, Freddie worked 50 years for Lockheed Martin, first as a mechanic and machinist, and then as a foreman. Freddie enjoyed going to work every day. He felt his job was more like a hobby.

One of the impressive things he got to accomplish was working on the Pathfinder, where his name, along with his colleagues, is recorded forever on a tiny disc.

His career at Lockheed allowed him to buy a home in Panama City, California. In 1972, Freddie married his soulmate, Lerina, and they are celebrating 52 years of marriage.

Freddie and Lerina are blessed with three children, Fernando Jr., Nancy, and Sergio. Today, their family has grown to include 8 grandchildren, 12 stepgrandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren.

Norma and I have enjoyed the counsel of Freddie and his support throughout the years. It is now in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that I thank Freddie Sanchez for his service and love of country and for being an honorable family man and an upstanding citizen.

HONORING STEPHEN ''STEVE'' BOTSFORD

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a successful businessman, philanthropist, and a good friend, Stephen ''Steve'' Botsford. A midwesterner through and through, Steve Botsford was born in Des Moines, Iowa, and raised in Plymouth, Indiana.

Steve grew up just 29 miles from South Bend, Indiana, and he always dreamed of attending the University of Notre Dame. However, his father told him that school was for rich, smart, Catholic kids, and he was none of those things.

Steve never let that deter him. Steve believed in himself. His perseverance and hard work paid off. In 1972, Steve graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a B.A. in business management. He received his juris doctorate 3 years later from the University of Notre Dame Law School.

After his days in South Bend, Steve spent 2 years working for one of the Big 5 accounting firms of that time before realizing he wasn't meant to have a boss.

He then went out on his own, spending most of his early career helping small businesses finance equipment purchases after their local banks had denied them.

□ 1030

After a successful career as a CPA, Steve delved into real estate development and founded Laurel Canyon Holdings. Steve developed a project in the San Fernando Valley and that is where our paths would cross.

I have gotten to know Steve Botsford since my days on the Los Angeles City Council, and I have seen Steve's commitment to his business, philanthropy, and his beautiful, wonderful family.

In 1985, Steve Botsford married Kathleen Dickerson, and they are celebrating 39 years of marriage. They are blessed with three beautiful children: Alexandria, Steve, and Victoria.

Madam Speaker, I thank Steve Botsford for his integrity, love, and generosity. We all know the saying, ''to know you is to love you,'' and many blessings have come to many of us because we have gotten to know Steve Botsford, and we do love him. I thank him for everything that he has done for our country and for what he has done for our communities.

I will also point out that, although Steve Botsford has raised his family in Chicago and that has been his home for decades, Steve Botsford has adopted many, many programs around the country and has been a tremendous philanthropist.

I will mention one of them in particular. The Cardenas Foundation was founded after my mother and father, two humble people, came from Mexico and raised 11 children to go on to college and many other successful things. Steve Botsford has contributed over half a million dollars to give scholarships to mostly first-generation college students. That is just one example of Steve's generosity.

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF AMERICA'S ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LOPEZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOPEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to champion the heartbeat of America's economy, our small businesses.

These are not just storefronts or individuals who are looking to open a business for their own satisfaction; these are individuals who risk their daily lives trying to be successful. When you look at a small business owner, I would urge you to realize that they are on the front lines of our economy.

There are servicemen and -women in uniform, and we should always salute them because they are in harm's way in order for us to live the American Dream. I am here to tell you that there is a second army, and that is the small business community. Every day they get up not knowing whether they are going to have a successful day, not knowing whether they are going to be able to achieve those dreams, but they have families and friends and employees that they must provide for.

Madam Speaker, I am here to urge everyone to remember that small business is big business. Small business is the heart and soul of our Nation. Without small business, there would be no communities. There would be no quality of life.

Every single day, every American, when you walk around in your daily lives, you will touch anywhere from seven to eight small business owners. You will touch them and you will help them because that is the fabric of America.

Every major corporation started small. No one begins as a large company. I am here to remind you that you must always recognize that when small business is suffering, our communities are suffering.

I previously served as the mayor of Parker, Colorado, and I used to be the former director of the United States Small Business Administration in Colorado. I would remind people that when corporate America sneezes, small business catches pneumonia because they are the ones that are struggling the most.

I am also here to tell you that our farmers and our ranchers are small business owners. A lot of people forget that most of our farms are family owned. I have 21 counties in Colorado that I represent and it is rural Colorado. I have hundreds of families that are farmers and ranchers, and these are small businesses. We must protect them.

We are going to be talking about the continuing resolution and how we are going to fund government for the rest of the year going into the year 2025. I am glad to know that we are going to look at how we are going to support the small business community, specifically our farmers and ranchers.

One of the things that I always remind people is that in America you can live that American Dream by being that small business owner, by understanding that you can create your own destiny.

For those of you who believe a small business owner is rich, that for some reason, somehow they have hit the lottery, I am here to tell you that small business owners work long hours. They work 14, 16 hours a day just to be able to be successful.

At the end of the day, they will pay their employees before they will pay themselves. That is what America is all about. It is creating that strong foundation in every single community.

For those entrepreneurs out there, know that there is a voice in the Small Business Administration that will always champion your cause and know that there are people that understand the contributions that you make to this Nation.

Most importantly, you are the future. You are the entrepreneurs. You are what makes America great. You are the individuals who bring hope and prosperity to Main Street in every community.

Madam Speaker, I salute them, and I wish them the best. Let us all remember: Small business is big business.

GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE RISING TREND OF ANTI-SEMITISM AROUND THE WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MANNING. Madam Speaker, today, I rise with grave concerns about the disturbing rise of anti-Semitism, both here at home and around the world.

Since Hamas' brutal attack on our democratic ally, Israel, on October 7, 2023, the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust, anti-Semitism has soared to dangerous new heights.

We have witnessed it online, in our schools, at hospitals, at professional associations, at art exhibits, and in communities across the country where Jewish individuals and institutions have been targeted with hate and violence.

This recent surge, while shocking, should not blind us to the fact that anti-Semitic sentiments have been festering and intensifying for years. We have seen this hatred manifest in alarming ways from the neo-Nazi chants on the streets of Charlottesville to the horrific attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, where 11 American Jews were murdered during Shabbat services.

Just this morning, a synagogue in Minneapolis was defaced with swastikas. These incidents are a stark reminder that the Jewish community is facing a relentless wave of anti-Semitic vitriol. We know anti-Semitism is not new. It is an ancient, shape-shifting conspiracy theory that has endured throughout history, adapting and taking on new forms across the centuries and blaming the Jews for whatever ills a society experiences.

It is a deep-seated prejudice that has caused unimaginable suffering, whether during the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the expulsion of Jews from England and France, or the violent pogroms in Russia, which brought my family here.

Of course, there is the Holocaust, a tragic and incomprehensible period in which 6 million Jews, including over 1 million children, were systematically murdered.

Despite the unspeakable horrors committed during the Holocaust, this hatred has not disappeared. It has adapted, it has spread, and it continues to poison societies to this very day.

History has shown us a painful truth. When we allow anti-Semitism and Jew hatred to spread unchecked, it becomes a profound threat, not only to the Jewish community, but to the very foundations of democracy itself.

Anti-Semitism is a poison that corrodes societies from within. It is not merely a threat to the Jewish people; it is a threat to all minority groups, to the vulnerable, to the values of tolerance, equality, and justice that underpin our democratic institutions.

However, unlike in the past when governments themselves promoted, sponsored, and weaponized anti-Semitism to fuel discrimination and violence against the Jews, that is not the case today. Today, our government is engaged in the fight against anti-Semitism.

Indeed, in the United States, we understand that we have the power, the responsibility, and the moral obligation to take a stand against anti-Semitism.

That is why in response to this rising tide of hatred, I have introduced the Countering Antisemitism Act, the most comprehensive anti-Semitism legislation in the history of our country.

This bipartisan, bicameral legislation with more than 60 cosponsors would codify portions of President Biden's national strategy to counter anti-Semitism. It would establish the first-ever national coordinator to counter anti-Semitism. It would also require law enforcement to ensure robust threat assessment reporting, enhance education about the history of anti-Semitism, and appoint a senior official within the Department of Education to counter anti-Semitism on college campuses and in K–12 schools.

Come January, we will have a new administration and a new Congress, yet this issue is not going away. That is why I am calling on my colleagues to join me in taking a firm stand against rising anti-Semitism. Each of us in this body has a responsibility to ensure that the horrors of the past are never repeated.

This Congress must send a powerful message that there is no room in this

country for anti-Semitism or any kind of hatred. I ask my colleagues to continue this work after my time in Congress comes to an end.

While we may never eradicate anti-Semitism, we must make it clear that anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination are unacceptable and can never be normalized in this great country, the United States of America.

WASHINGTON'S OBSESSION WITH OVERREGULATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about how Washington's obsession with overregulation is making life unnecessarily difficult for everyday Americans.

Under the Biden administration, their energy efficiency standards have become weapons of control, driving up costs, limiting choices for households, and strangling economic growth.

Under Biden's anti-energy agenda, American families are feeling the pinch every time they turn on a light, heat their home, power their appliances, or fuel up their vehicle.

These so-called efficiency standards don't lower costs; they shift the burden onto people's wallets and purses.

In my home State of California, we have seen the impact firsthand. Between skyrocketing energy bills and blackouts caused by these misguided policies, families are paying more for less reliability. Indeed, the blackouts we see in California are for two chief reasons. First, on a hot day in July or August or September, you can see the grid actually having to shut down manufacturing and shut down businesses so the rest of the grid doesn't collapse when people are trying to air-condition their homes or other businesses.

Secondly, we have what are called public safety power shutoffs, which, when the wind blows in California, we actually have to shut off the power lines in some cases because the fear is that trees or branches or whatever might fall upon the power lines can cause a blackout and the failure of the equipment, or, worse, a wildfire.

Indeed, in my own district, we have suffered with enough wildfires to last eons. Just to name a few: a million-acre fire known as the Dixie fire just this year, the Park fire where hundreds of thousands of acres were destroyed and many homes damaged, and the Camp fire a few years ago where 85 people lost their lives.

It is all sorts of mismanagement by my Governor in that we are not managing our forests. We don't have the electrical grid to have 24-hour sustainability even in a tough time of year.

There are remedies for that. We could be building more nuclear power plants. We could be building more natural gas plants and not regulating them out of business. We should be building more pipelines to get natural gas, which is extremely efficient and low cost.

We cannot be doing dumb things like tearing out hydroelectric dams like is being forced upon us in my district in northern California where four hydroelectric dams have been removed.

What do you get with a hydroelectric dam? You get water storage, you get flood control, you get water for agriculture, you get the hydroelectric power, and you get recreation. That has been taken away.

When you are talking hydroelectric power, a lot of people are worried about CO_2 and carbon dioxide. Hydropower is a zero CO_2 emitter as is nuclear power. We seem to want to regulate these things out of business, regulate them to not be part of our grid. Instead, we opt for the idealism of a few solar panels and windmills, which have a very limited life and are very inefficient.

This is the future the Democrats want for the rest of America, like in California, where energy is neither affordable nor dependable.

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Soon gone will be the days when you can buy the appliance that best works for you. Bureaucrats now want to dictate what kind of washing machine you can have, what stovetop you can use, and even how long your dishwasher should run.

They even want to dictate what light bulbs you can use. A new mandate in California is talking about how State buildings, schools, things like that, have to start changing their light bulbs out by an arbitrary deadline. It doesn't matter if the bulbs have burned out or been used up or the ballasts have been used up. They just want to change them out.

This will cost schools, for example, hundreds of millions of dollars throughout the whole State to have to just arbitrarily change these out instead of attrition over time. I am doing that on my own farm, my own ranch, where when a ballast goes out or a set of bulbs goes out, let's change it over to LED at that time, and then you are saving the costs.

They don't care about that. They just have this mandate. We are limiting options, and the government is telling you that it is good enough for you, for your home.

Californians know this all too well. We have been forced to live with these policies that now Washington, D.C., tries to emulate. It just continues to strangle our economy. From manufacturers forced to spend millions complying with ever-changing rules to even small businesses struggling under higher energy costs, these regulations hurt all of them, large and small, as well as families.

The more we hamstring energy production and force businesses to conform to out-of-touch mandates, the less room we have for growth and prosperity. There are a couple of key drivers that are making things less affordable with inflation, the high cost of energy being one of them. The other is government overspending, as we are going to find out here pretty soon this week.

These policies are rooted in the same far-left ideology that has driven inflation. They have weakened our energy independence and have left America less competitive on the global stage. We need to do better.

U.S. OFFENSIVE MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL FOR WAR IN GAZA VIOLATES U.S. LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I come to the House floor to send one straightforward message to President Biden: Providing U.S. arms and military aid to the Netanyahu government for use in Gaza violates U.S. law.

The devastation, human suffering, and Palestinian civilian deaths and injuries are unmatched in scale by any other conflict. This is the conclusion reached last week by Airwars, the British NGO that documents civilian casualties in 21st century conflicts.

Before anybody rejects this detailed report, I would like to note that Airwars is known for its exacting, thorough research. Its referrals prompted more than 70 percent of the Pentagon's investigations into incidents of civilian harm during the U.S.-led air campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

Madam Speaker, this is just the latest in a series of reports from human rights, humanitarian, and defense reports documenting the civilian harm and deprivations in Gaza.

Israel, Madam Speaker, absolutely has a right to defend itself. I support military operations to dismantle and destroy Hamas' military capabilities and other terrorist organizations operating inside Gaza that have launched vicious attacks against Israeli civilians and have badly mistreated the Palestinian population, but Israeli air and ground campaigns must abide by U.S. law and international humanitarian law, also known as the Geneva Conventions and the laws of war.

States are required to take every precaution to minimize civilian harm, avoid destruction of lifesaving civilian infrastructure, guarantee unimpeded access and delivery of humanitarian aid, and ensure the life and security of humanitarian aid workers.

Specifically, I am talking about section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act, also known as the Humanitarian Corridor Act, which states: ''No assistance shall be furnished under this act or the Arms Export Control Act to any country when it is made known to the President that the government of such country prohibits or otherwise restricts, directly or indirectly, the transport or delivery of United States

humanitarian assistance.'' We all know that the Netanyahu government has frustrated the delivery of such aid to the people in Gaza.

The Netanyahu government has also violated its assurance under President Biden's own National Security Memorandum 20, which requires U.S. military assistance, arms sales, and arms transfers not to be used contrary to U.S. law and international humanitarian law. According to an October 30 Washington Post report: ''The Biden administration has received nearly 500 reports alleging that Israel used U.S.-supplied weapons for attacks that caused unnecessary harm to civilians in the Gaza Strip, but it has failed to comply with its own policies requiring swift investigation of such claims.''

The Biden administration already knew this. On October 13, Secretary of State Blinken and Defense Secretary Austin sent a detailed letter to the Netanyahu government describing Israel's arbitrary, deliberate, and consistent obstruction of humanitarian aid to the suffering Palestinian people in Gaza. They detailed how U.S. law and international law were being violated. They gave Netanyahu 30 days to deliver results.

The 30 days have come and gone with no change to U.S. arms transfers or military assistance. Once again, the Netanyahu government called the bluff of the Biden administration. Once again, the Netanyahu government frustrated U.S. efforts to get humanitarian aid delivered and safeguard innocent civilians.

It is not too late for the U.S. to use all of its leverage, including the suspension of U.S. offensive arms transfers to pressure the Netanyahu government to open up the humanitarian aid corridors and allow hundreds and hundreds of trucks to deliver lifesaving aid.

It is not too late for the U.S. to use all its leverage to press Israel to reach a cease-fire, secure the release of all the hostages, and create a viable path for a secure and dignified future for Gaza's Palestinians that guarantees Israel's security.

It is not too late for the Biden administration to comply with U.S. law. It is not too late for the Biden administration to stand up for America's own values and interests. It is not too late for all of us to reinforce our commitment to human rights and peace. It is not too late, Madam Speaker. It is not too late.

I include in the RECORD a Washington Post article titled: ''U.S. inundated with claims that American arms killed Gaza civilians.''

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 30, 2024

U.S. INUNDATED WITH CLAIMS THAT AMERICAN ARMS KILLED GAZA CIVILIANS

(By Abigail Hauslohner and Michael Birnbaum)

The Biden administration has received nearly 500 reports alleging that Israel used U.S.-supplied weapons for attacks that caused unnecessary harm to civilians in the Gaza Strip, but it has failed to comply with its own policies requiring swift investigations of such claims, according to people familiar with the matter.

At least some of these cases presented to the State Department over the past year probably amount to violations of U.S. and international law, these people said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to discuss internal deliberations.

The reports are received from across the U.S. government, international aid organizations, nonprofits, media reports and other eyewitnesses. Dozens include photo documentation of U.S.-made bomb fragments at sites where scores of children were killed, according to human rights advocates briefed on the process.

Yet despite the State Department's internal Civilian Harm Incident Response Guidance, which directs officials to complete an investigation and recommend action within two months of launching an inquiry, no single case has reached the ''action'' stage, current and former officials told The Washington Post, More than two-thirds of cases remain unresolved, they said, with many pending response from the Israeli government, which the State Department consults to verify each case's circumstances.

Critics of the Biden administration's consistent provision of arms to Israel, now about 13 months into a war that has killed at least 43,000 people, according to Gaza's health authorities, say the handling of these reports is another illustration of the administration's unwillingness to hold its close ally accountable for the conflict's staggering toll.

''They're ignoring evidence of widespread civilian harm and atrocities to maintain a policy of virtually unconditional weapons transfers to the Netanyahu government,'' said John Ramming Chappell, a legal and policy adviser focused on U.S. security assistance and arms sales at the Center for Civilians in Conflict. ''When it comes to the Biden administration's arms policies, everything looks good on paper but has turned out meaningless in practice when it comes to Israel.''

The State Department declined to detail the volume of incidents under investigation. A spokesman, Matthew Miller, confirmed on Wednesday during a news conference held after the publication of this report that officials are reviewing ''a number of incidents'' and that ''we have not yet gotten to the point with any of them that we've been able to make final determinations.''

Based on ''the overall scope of the damage and the number of civilian lives that have been lost,'' Miller said that it is ''reasonable'' to assess that Israel may have violated international law but that reaching such a conclusion is ''incredibly difficult.''

''It takes gathering facts. It takes gathering information. And it takes ultimately making legal judgments about those facts. And, often times, you have conflicting accounts of what happened, and it is our job to try to sort through that the best we can,'' he said.

On Tuesday, after an Israeli strike on an apartment building killed more than 90 people, including 25 children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, the State Department said Washington was seeking a ''full explanation'' from Israel. The Israeli military said it was ''aware of reports that civilians were harmed.''

Oren Marmorstein, a spokesman for Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declined to discuss the U.S. inquiries or Washington's efforts to limit civilian harm. ''As part of the close alliance between Israel and the United States, there is continuous and close contact with the American administration regarding Israel's struggle against terrorist attacks against its citizens,'' Marmorstein said in a statement.

The Israeli military says it makes ''significant efforts'' to avoid civilian harm but has cited the presence of Hamas fighters hiding among civilians as justification to carry out bombings on schools, hospitals, mosques and tent encampments. Gaza's Health Ministry says the majority of the dead have been women and children.

Earlier this month, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin sent a letter to the Israeli government threatening vague policy ''implications'' if Israel did not immediately allow more aid into Gaza, where doctors and analysts say thousands have starved to death. The warning was widely interpreted to mean Washington may consider withholding arms transfers unless the humanitarian situation markedly improves.

In their letter, Blinken and Austin also acknowledged the failure of U.S. efforts to mitigate Israel's civilian causalities. ''It is vitally important that our governments establish a new channel through which we can raise and discuss civilian harm incidents. Our engagements to date have not produced the necessary outcomes,'' they wrote. They gave Israel 30 days to deliver results, which would delay any action until after next week's U.S. presidential election.

The State Department's civilian harm guidance, unveiled by the Biden administration in August 2023 in response to congressional concerns about Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates' bombardment of Yemen, instructs the agency in how to assess whether a foreign military has violated any one of an assortment of U.S. laws and makes clear recommendations for action.

By investigating such cases, officials should be able to ''identify, recommend, and document what actions the Department can and will take in response to such incidents,'' according to the 21-page policy document, a copy of which was obtained by The Post but has not been made public.

Current and former U.S. officials described a process that, while detailed and deliberate on paper, has become functionally irrelevant with more-senior leaders at the State Department broadly dismissive of non-Israeli sources and unwilling to sign off on action plans.

Some U.S. officials and congressional Democrats have been frustrated by the State Department's apparent tendency to rely on Israel to substantiate the allegations against it.

Mike Casey, who worked on Gaza issues at the State Department's Office of Palestinian Affairs in Jerusalem, said senior officials routinely gave the impression that their goal in discussing any alleged abuse by Israel was to figure out how to frame it in a less negative light.

''There's this sense of: 'How do we make this okay?' '' said Casey, who resigned in July. ''There's not, 'How do we get to the real truth of what's going on here?' ''

Senior officials, he said, often dismissed the credibility of Palestinian sources, eyewitness accounts, nongovernmental organizations, and official accounts from the Palestinian Authority and even the United Nations.

A U.S. official who addressed questions about the administration's handling of these reports said that the State Department considers both Palestinian and Israeli voices as it assesses allegations of civilian harm.

People familiar with the process said that at least one-quarter of cases have been dismissed in the first of three investigative stages, either because they were deemed not

credible or because there was no indication of U.S. weapons use. The majority have proceeded to the ''verification'' stage, whereby, ''We ask the [government of Israel] about the cases: Did you forewarn? Why did you hit this school or safe road or safe zone?'' said one former official.

Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D–Maryland), who has met with administration officials on several occasions to discuss the issue, said he has been deeply frustrated by what he called a lack of follow-through. ''There's no set timeline for getting responses to the many ad hoc inquiries that have been made,'' Van Hollen said.

Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. military aid since World War II, and the Biden administration has provided it with at least $17.9 billion in U.S. military assistance in the past year alone, according to a recent study by Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs.

But despite deepening alarm among administration officials and lawmakers over Israel's conduct of the Gaza war, nearly all military assistance, apart from a delayed shipment of 2,000-pound bombs, has continued to flow without interruption. The pace and volume of weaponry have meant that U.S. munitions make up a substantial portion of Israel's arsenal, with an American made fleet of warplanes to deliver the heaviest bombs to their targets, analysts say.

William D. Hartung, a co-author of the Watson Institute report and an expert on the arms industry and the U.S. military budget at the Quincy Institute, said ''it's almost impossible'' that Israel is not violating U.S. law, ''given the level of slaughter that's going on and the preponderance of U.S. weapons.''

Among the cases submitted to the State Department, according to people familiar with the matter, are the January killing of a 6 year-old girl and her family in their car, with pieces of a U.S.-made 120mm tank round purportedly found at the scene. There were shards of American-made small-diameter bombs photographed at a family's home and at a school sheltering displaced civilians after airstrikes in May killed dozens of women and children. And there was the tail fin of a Boeing-manufactured Joint Direct Attack Munition on the scene of a July airstrike that killed at least 90 Palestinians.

''The U.S. is the biggest donor to Israel with these weapons,'' said Sarah Yager, the Washington director at Human Rights Watch. ''And it's a year in. When is the United States going to put its foot down?''

CHALLENGES CAUSED BY SHARED ZIP CODES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. LALOTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LALOTA. Madam Speaker, for far too long, my constituents who live in Flanders, Riverside, and Northampton have faced unnecessary challenges caused by shared ZIP Codes. Misdelivered mail, delays in receiving essential medications, and confusion over geographic identity have disrupted their daily lives for decades.

Last week, we took meaningful steps to address these persistent issues by ensuring that each of these communities has access to reliable mail delivery and U.S. postal services.

H.R. 8753, which I proudly supported, directs the United States Postal Service to designate single, unique ZIP Codes for these communities. This simple, commonsense fix will go a long way in improving the quality of life for my constituents in Flanders, Riverside, and Northampton.

By taking this step, we sent a clear message that every community, no matter how large or small, deserves accurate and dependable services from their government.

I thank the residents of Northampton, Riverside, and Flanders for their unwavering determination to bring this issue to our attention. This is a battle these communities have been fighting for more than a decade. I am proud to see it finally coming to fruition here in the House.

IMPORTANCE OF STRONG FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Mr. LALOTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to underscore the importance of strong Federal investments in research and education, which are critical to maintaining America's position as a global leader in innovation and progress.

Stony Brook University, located in my district, is a prime example of the extraordinary advancements that come from such support. As one of the Nation's leading public research institutions, Stony Brook excels in quantum physics, artificial intelligence, and healthcare. Their groundbreaking work drives economic growth on Long Island, throughout New York State, and across the Nation while pushing the boundaries of scientific discovery.

Stony Brook's role as a quantum internet testbed and its status as a hub of transformative research demonstrates the immense potential of continued Federal investment in higher education.

Institutions like Stony Brook don't just shape our present. They are laying the groundwork to become the next premier research institution, setting the standard for excellence in education, research, and innovation. I am committed to ensuring that institutions like Stony Brook have the resources needed to thrive, securing our Nation's leadership in education, research, and innovation. Let's go.

GOVERNOR HOCHUL'S COMMUTER TAX

Mr. LALOTA. Madam Speaker, Governor Hochul's so-called congestion pricing is just a commuter tax that unfairly targets hardworking Long Islanders. With families already struggling under New York's crushing tax burden, this plan adds insult to injury, forcing suburban communities to subsidize the wasteful and mismanaged MTA.

The MTA loses nearly $700 million annually to fare evasion—over $300 million on buses alone—and doles out six-figure overtime to hundreds of employees.

Instead of addressing these failures, Hochul and her New York City allies want suburban New Yorkers like my constituents to fill a $15 billion budget funding gap without any reforms or accountability.

Hochul suspended this ill-conceived commuter tax before the election but shamelessly brought it back afterward, breaking the trust of so many New Yorkers.

Long Island deserves better—real accountability, fairness, and policies that reflect our priorities, not another slap in the face from Albany's one-party, antisuburban agenda.

WELCOMING KAI LI HOME

Mr. LALOTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an extraordinary moment of triumph and resilience.

After 8 long years of wrongful detention in China, my constituent and Huntington resident Kai Li is finally back on American soil and has been reunited with his family. This long-awaited news brings immense relief and joy to his family and every Long Islander who has followed his adversity.

Kai's release ends an unimaginable ordeal and highlights the unwavering strength of his family, especially his son, Harrison, who tirelessly advocated for his father's return. I was honored to bring Harrison as my guest to this year's State of the Union to amplify his family's story. Kai's release is not only a victory for the Li family but for all of America.

The United States must remain steadfast in our commitment to bring home every wrongfully detained American. Kai Li's return reminds us of the power of persistence and the importance of standing firm against injustice.

Welcome home to Kai, whose courage and determination inspire us all.

RECOGNIZING TOM LANNEN ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. PEREZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the career and recognize the retirement of Skamania County Commissioner Tom Lannen.

Tom wasn't born here, but he got here as fast as he could. He is internationally famous in Washington State, serving as the chair of the Washington State Association of Counties' Timber Caucus.

Tom pioneered the use of ''the stick,'' a yardstick that visually demonstrates the fact that our county, Skamania County, has only 1.8 percent of our acreage which can generate tax revenue.

Tom won't let his Federal Representatives forget how much Skamania County needs their mills to produce timber, the Secure Rural Schools program to keep our schools open, and economic development opportunities to ensure that communities thrive.

Madam Speaker, I thank Tom for his mentorship and leadership and for spending time working on behalf of things that matter, our community. I hope he enjoys his retirement with Sophia and wish him the very best.

BALLOT BOX FIRE

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the fire that was set to a ballot box in my district on October 28. We still don't know who did this, but we know who did not do this. Real patriots don't torch each other's ballots. It was an attack on our democracy and our rule of law.

The fire destroyed hundreds of ballots. Although our incredible election workers tried to recover as many votes as possible and contact those whose ballots were partially burned, many votes were lost.

If people want to live in a society where ballots are burned, they can move there. My community will not stand for this spineless, shameful, and unpatriotic BS.

I thank our first responders for dealing with this fire in such a timely and efficient manner. Ballot recovery would not have been possible if it were not for them.

Another thank-you goes to those who stood guard at the local ballot boxes 24/7 following the fire, a precaution that never should have been necessary in the first place.

I promise to all of southwest Washington that I will always fight against political violence and protect our sacred right to vote in our communities.

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DENNIS WEBER RETIREMENT

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dennis Weber on his upcoming retirement from the Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners after serving as commissioner for 12 years and in the public sector for 40 years.

Dennis has spent his career being a pillar for our community. He spent many years as a social studies teacher before transitioning to roles in public office.

He has been an excellent advocate with the Spirit Lake/Toutle-Cowlitz River Collaborative to help protect downstream communities, project collaboration, and good, accessible data.

I have been privileged to work with Dennis over the years. When I helped reintroduce the National Landslide Preparedness Act, Dennis helped to provide testimony from Cowlitz County.

Dennis Weber has shown time and again what it means to be a public servant. He has always worked to ensure his community gets the resources and support they need. His priority has always been for the betterment of his hometown, and that has been evident in every chapter of his career. I thank Dennis for all he has done for southwest Washington. I hope retirement treats him well.

CHRISTMAS TREES

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a beloved holiday tradition and an important part of my district's culture: Christmas trees.

My district produces the second-most number of Christmas trees in the country. Coming from a family of loggers myself, I know firsthand how important it is to be a steward of the land, to depend on it, not just as a terrarium, but as part of your culture.

Our support and value for the forest products that come from our woods is engrained in our ethos. For generations, Washingtonians have used our trees to build and furnish their homes.

The holiday season offers us a unique opportunity to display and decorate the trees that we are so proud of. This holiday season, I encourage everybody to go out and visit a Christmas tree farm. Better yet, go into the woods, get a permit, cut down a tree yourself. This is not the time to be supporting petroleum-based Christmas trees, but our own homegrown trees that support our economy and our culture.

CONGRATULATING SHARON PESUT ON HER RETIREMENT

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sharon Pesut on her retirement as executive director at Partners in Careers, also known as PIC.

PIC is a nonprofit organization that connects jobseekers with workforce training and opportunities with local businesses and community members. PIC aims to assist low-income parents, domestic violence survivors, homeless veterans, and others get a second chance at a career.

PIC has been a huge asset to our local Ukrainian community, helping refugees and immigrants secure job opportunities.

Sharon has led PIC for 13 years where she has helped to expand youth and veteran programs throughout her community. Recently, Sharon, along with her partners at PIC, were honored as the Community Partner of the Year at the Washington Workforce Association Conference.

I thank Sharon for all of the work she has done for our community. I wish her all the very best in her retirement.

RECOGNIZING TERENCE ''BOO BOO'' RATCHFORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a person who was born with disabilities, but no one ever told him. His photo exemplifies what this man represents.

His name was Terence Ratchford, they called him ''Boo Boo,'' and he passed away on July 26, 2024. I rise to recognize his years of incredible dedication and exemplary work for the Fifth District of South Carolina.

Terence was raised in Gaffney, South Carolina, by his parents, Ruby Hemphill and Warren Ratchford, who was a star running back for Clemson University years ago.

Boo Boo always felt a deep connection with his community. He began volunteering his time at a young age and was known to be willing to help whenever, wherever.

As a child, he attended Limestone Missionary Baptist Church and later joined the Greater Hope Ministries. He loved his church, his church family, and he displayed a deep commitment to serving it very well. He was a leader in religious programs, the choir, and Bible studies. His impact on the churches he attended will last for generations to come.

As an active member of his community, Boo Boo volunteered his time at many chamber events, community service projects, and at the Gaffney Hospital. He served at the Peach Festival and played a large role ensuring that the great city of Gaffney was celebrated each and every year.

Boo Boo coached football at Gaffney High School for over 20 years. He was referred to as the ''Get Back Coach'' because when the coaches got too hot and were pressing the line and getting on the referees, he stepped in and said to get back. He was beloved by coaches and players alike.

He also volunteered for the Blacksburg Middle School girls' basketball team and sponsored a wrestling event for the middle school.

Boo Boo wore many different hats. He was a God-fearing man, a leader, a friend, a son, and a coach. He served in each of these roles with kindness and with joy.

He will be deeply missed. During his funeral services—I have been to a lot of them—but I have never been to a gymnasium, in which the service had to be held, because of all the friends and people who just respected him came.

Please join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the life of Terence ''Boo Boo'' Ratchford.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WEXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my gratitude for this remarkable opportunity to serve my community. As I prepare to retire from Congress, I have been reflecting on what brought me here.

Despite growing up just outside of D.C., I was very much not one of those people who envisioned themselves in elected office since grade school, but I did want to help people. That is why I chose to be a lawyer.

I was very fulfilled doing that work, especially the opportunities to serve as a prosecutor, and later, a guardian ad litem for abused and neglected children and a substitute judge.

Then, one day in late 2008, I went just around the corner from my law office to Ida Lee Park in Leesburg to hear a skinny guy with a funny name talk about his message of hope and change and: ''Yes, We Can.''

Hearing then-Senator Obama speak was the first time that I stopped thinking that can't be me and started thinking, yes, I can. I believed him when he

said that we could come together around what unites us as Americans and do the hard work of making life better for our neighbors.

So my political career began. In 2014, I won a State senate special election and went to Richmond as a bright-eyed, new legislator at a time when the legislature still didn't have a whole lot of people like me there. I was one of just a few women with school-aged kids, and I served in the minority.

I learned quickly that my best ideas for policy come from my constituents. I heard a woman's tragic story of losing her brother to an overdose and took action to make Narcan more accessible.

I worked with a mom to help pass a law that gave greater benefits to single parents of kids with disabilities. Another constituent came to me about her horrific sexual assault story, so I wrote a law empowering victims of revenge porn to file lawsuits and recover damages from their perpetrators.

Then, in 2016, another unlikely candidate for President led me to make a career change I never could have imagined. Once again, though, it was the hope that I could help people that led me to run for Congress.

I wanted to stand up for communities who did not feel represented. I stood with our Muslim neighbors at Dulles Airport to protest the Muslim ban. I became the first Member of Congress to hang a transgender rights flag outside of my office.

As the child of two parents who had worked for the Federal Government, I became a vocal advocate for the integrity of our civil service.

Most of all, I ran for Congress because of my kids. I went to Washington with the goal of making sure the stories of Virginia's families were heard, and that their Representative was fighting for their needs.

I am proud of what I was able to do, like working on legislation to invest in childhood cancer research in honor of a young constituent, Gabriella Miller, and her courageous battle and advocacy; supporting survivors of domestic violence and abuse; expanding mental health resources for Capitol Police in the wake of January 6; and standing up for human rights of Uyghurs in China.

It has been quite the unprecedented 6 years in Congress: Facing the longest government shutdown in history; not one, but two impeachments; a pandemic; an insurrection; and in the midst of it all, I began facing the greatest challenge of them all, my battle with PSP.

One of the first questions I asked my doctor after my diagnosis was if I could still run for reelection. His response was: Why would you want to? It was a very serious and sobering moment, but in truth, I had plenty of answers for him.

Above all, I did and still very much do believe in the possibility to bring hope and make change in the lives of those we serve here. As I battled this disease, which robbed me of my ability to move and speak, I wanted to make the most of my platform to bring some good out of this terrible situation.

As I mentioned, my best ideas for legislation often come from personal stories constituents share with me. Now, it was my own struggle that I hoped to help turn into meaningful change in policy.

One of my proudest moments in Congress has been successfully helping lead the bipartisan National Plan to End Parkinson's Act to become law, the most consequential legislation ever passed to tackle Parkinson's and related conditions like my PSP. It will go a long way toward improving and saving lives.

This has been a journey, which has been so challenging, yet one which I am proud to have stood strong in and done my part to give hope and comfort to others facing similar battles.

Our disabilities and our health struggles do not define who we are, and I feel more strongly than ever that it is so important to share that truth with the world. This journey could not have been possible without so many people who share my belief that I could make a positive change and conviction that there is real good to be done through public service.

I thank my family, Team Wexton, and all of the people of Virginia-10. I hope I have made you proud. As I head into my final days in Congress, I am choosing once again to have hope.

People didn't lose hope in me after my diagnosis. I have real hope that one day we will find a cure for PSP. I see reasons for hope every day, especially young people, women and girls, and others who don't traditionally have a seat at the tables of power who are discovering and believing in the power of public service, just like I did all those years ago at Ida Lee Park.

I hope that the most impactful legacy I can leave is in the power of perseverance and persistence, in the belief that change is possible through public service, and that change is coming if we are willing to work for it.

CONGRATULATING STEFANIE SMALLHOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Stefanie Smallhouse on her outstanding tenure as President of the Arizona Farm Bureau.

Since the day she took office 7 years ago, Stefanie has dedicated herself to fighting for the interests of our farmers and ranchers to make sure Arizona's vibrant agricultural community continues to thrive.

Her dedication, passion, and tireless work ethic set a standard of excellence and will continue to positively impact our agriculture community long into the future.

Stefanie's tenure not only strengthened the Arizona Farm Bureau, but it also empowered our farmers and ranchers to ensure they have a seat at the table when they are addressing critical issues, like water management and sustainability efforts.

In my time in Congress, I am deeply proud of the strong partnership and friendship that we were able to forge to promote the interests of Arizona's farmers and ranchers at the Federal level. Stefanie's role on my advisory council played a key role in my work for ag and farming communities.

While her leadership will be dearly missed, her legacy will have a lasting impact on Arizona's agriculture. On behalf of Arizona's farmers, ranchers, and the people of our great State, I thank her for her service, her leadership, and her tireless advocacy.

I wish her all the best in her future endeavors and look forward to seeing the positive impact she will continue to have in our community.

HONORING SHERIFF MARK LAMB

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding tenure of Mark Lamb as sheriff of Pinal County.

Sheriff Lamb first started his law enforcement career with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community where he rose to the rank of detective of the gang enforcement agency.

He later joined the Pinal County Sheriff's Office where he distinguished himself as a capable and tireless officer, dedicated to keeping his community safe. In 2017, he was elected as sheriff of Pinal County and became instrumental in the fight against drug cartels, human smugglers, coyotes, traffickers, and other bad actors trying to take advantage of the situation.

While Sheriff Lamb's leadership and service will be deeply missed in Pinal County, Mark will continue to serve our country.

Laura and I wish him all the best in his new role. I look forward to continuing to work with him to secure our border and keep communities in southern Arizona and across the United States safe.

□ 1115

CONGRATULATING ART DEL CUETO

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my good friend, Art Del Cueto, for an outstanding career as a Border Patrol agent.

Art is a tireless public servant who dedicated his career to the safety and security of our Nation, approaching his work with a steadfast resolve and a genuine passion.

In the last 4 years, as the Border Patrol encountered its most chaotic period, Art exemplified integrity and commitment, earning the respect and admiration of his colleagues, lawmakers, and Americans across our great country.

Art will continue his work as part of the National Border Patrol Council

where he remains a tireless advocate for the brave men and women who serve in the Border Patrol, fighting for them to ensure they have the tools and resources they need to protect our border.

As a Representative of a border district, I constantly relied on Art's expertise and advice, and I will always be extremely grateful for his constant willingness to be a resource.

As Art enters a well-deserved retirement, I honor his service, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to the safety and security of our Nation. I thank his wife, Zulma, and daughter, Zulma Alejandra, for their service as a family, as well.

On behalf of Arizona's Sixth Congressional District, Laura, my kids, myself, and our whole family, we thank Art for a career dedicated to keeping our community safe. I wish him and his family all the best as he embarks on this new journey. I thank my friend Art so much for his service. His contributions will not be forgotten. He is a true patriot.

CONGRATULATING PUSCH RIDGE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY FOOTBALL TEAM

Mr. CISCOMANI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pusch Ridge Christian Academy football team for winning the 3A State championship.

The fourth seed Pusch Ridge Christian Academy Lions overcame the odds and beat the second seed LA-West Foothills 26–7.

Despite falling behind 7–0 in the first quarter, the Lions roared back, scoring 26 unanswered points en route to their championship.

The title caps off a remarkable season for Coach Kent Middleton and his team.

After starting the season 1–1, the Lions won 12 straight games, including the State championship to finish the year 13–1.

I say to Coach Middleton, the coaching staff, the student athletes, administrators, and everyone who played a part in this special season, that you have made your school and your community extremely proud. Enjoy this victory. I look forward to rooting for the Lions next season. Go Lions.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JACKSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to give my last speech as a Member of the House of Representatives.

What an incredible honor this has been. It has never been lost on me that the privilege of serving here was granted by the people I represent, people who trusted me to listen to them, speak for them, and conduct myself with integrity.

Every time I have stepped onto this floor, I have felt the weight of our Nation's history and the hope of millions of people that we will conduct ourselves and do work that serves them well.

One of the joys of serving in Congress has been the surprise of learning how much good work you can do if you are here to do work.

I thank my staff, an incredible group of young people who woke up every morning asking themselves: How much good can I do today? A big part of the reason serving here was such a joy and such an honor was because I was able to do the work with them. I won't go down the big list of everything that we got done, but we were able to do a lot: improve water systems for small towns; expand parental leave for members of the National Guard, parents who had earned it; and improve weather radar detection for the people of North Carolina's 14th District who have needed that for decades.

When people come up to me now that I am leaving and say: Boy, JEFF, I bet you are glad to be getting out of that place, I say, no, that hasn't been my experience here at all.

Part of the reason that has not been my experience is because of the two committees I had an opportunity to serve on: Armed Services and Science, Space, and Technology, relatively serious bipartisan committees, really about the work. There is not a lot of shouting going on in the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. The Armed Services Committee, for someone who enlisted as a private 22 years ago, to be a part of classified briefings with our Nation's top military leaders, what an amazing experience, what an incredible education. To anyone who is considering running to serve, I could not encourage you more strongly.

However, that said, a word of caution to everyone back home, as well as anyone who may be listening. I know that when you look at Congress, you see a lot of anger. What I need you to know is that most of the ones who are angry here are faking. They know that eliciting your outrage is a surefire way to gain your attention. Some of them want your attention more than they want to do a good job. I have seen this over and over again, that when the cameras turn off, so does the anger.

There are moments of genuine frustration felt by everyone. It is felt by me. That is normal in a legislative body. It is to be expected. The ones who are always trying to make you angry, they are faking. It is theater. A ton of you keep falling for it, and you owe it to yourselves not to be fooled by the outrage farmers in Congress.

My request to all of you, to everyone back home, is don't reward the theater, reward the work. If you do that, you will get more work and less theater. I thank my colleagues who do their job in that manner. I thank my staff who genuinely was a constant source of energy and inspiration. I thank my family who allowed me to be away from home to do this work. Lastly, I thank the people of North Carolina's 14th District for trusting me to be your voice. It has been the greatest honor of my life.

CONGRATULATING JAMES WOOD HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL TEAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the James Wood High School volleyball team for their remarkable achievement in winning the Class 4 State championship. The Colonels have truly made history, claiming three consecutive State titles with their latest victory on November 23 in a five-set match against Courtland High School at the Siegel Center at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The volleyball program has secured half of James Wood's total State titles in the school's 75-year history. During the championship match, the Colonels were led by two-time State player of the year Kennedy Spaid with 25 kills, 24 digs, and 4 aces. Alongside her, three-time first team all-State player Brenna Corbin had 21 kills, 23 digs, and 3 blocks, while first-year varsity setter Kylee Plumb had 50 assists along with 15 digs and 12 service points. Their victory capped off a phenomenal season, bringing the record to 23–3 and an impressive 3-year total of 76–6.

I want to recognize each player on this exceptional team: Kennedy Spaid, Reese Justice, Bella Middleton, Kylee Plumb, Adeline Pitcock, Kyla Wilhelm, Tenley Mattison, Katilyn Brannon, Giselle Norris, Abie Tenney, Brenna Corbin, and Claire Keefer. I also want to recognize the outstanding coaching staff: Head Coach Adrienne Patrick; Assistant Head Coach Brandy Corbin; and their managers: Ethan Germeyer, Ethan Montoya, Fielding Conway, and Kyleigh Bly.

Madam Speaker, I once again congratulate the 2024 James Wood High School volleyball team. Virginia's Sixth Congressional District is incredibly proud of their accomplishment, and I wish them continued success in the season ahead.

RECOGNIZING LOUDOUN STREET MALL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Loudoun Street Mall, also known as the Old Town Walking Mall in the city of Winchester.

Over 50 years ago, a group of visionary store owners recognized a shift in shopping habits and the growing demand for convenient shopping spaces. In response, downtown businesses came together to close off two blocks of one of Winchester's busiest streets giving rise to the Loudoun Street Mall.

This bold decision led to the formation of the Downtown Development Committee. Composed of Old Town businessowners, including Betsy Helm,

Irvin Shendow, Julius Armel, William Duncan, Lewis Ebert, Larry Goodyear, Ray Jennings, Frank Loy, Jimmy Wilkins, John Lewis, and David Juergens, who collaborated with city hall in the early 1970s to bring this vision to life.

While the mall initially thrived, it faced challenges in the 1980s and struggled for decades. However, in 2013, a revitalization began, bringing new amenities and life back to the area. Today, the mall is a true treasure of the Winchester region and a hub for the community and tourism.

From the first businessowners like Irvin Shendow of Bell's Fine Clothing, who served as chairman of the Downtown Development Committee, to then-State senator William Truban, who enabled legislation, to the current city and business leaders, the Loudoun Street Mall has become a top destination for residents and visitors alike.

I am proud to represent the citizens of the city of Winchester, the Loudoun Street Mall in the Sixth District of Virginia, and I am confident it will continue to thrive for many years to come.

CONGRATULATING SHERIFF STEVE FUNKHOUSER

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable leader and friend, Rockbridge County Sheriff Steve Funkhouser, as he prepares to retire on January 1, 2025.

A proud native of Rockbridge County, Sheriff Funkhouser graduated from Natural Bridge High School. Inspired by his family's commitment to service, he dedicated his life to protecting our community and our country.

For almost three decades, Sheriff Funkhouser honorably served with the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office, starting his law enforcement career as a reserve deputy in 1996. He quickly rose through the ranks becoming a patrolman, investigator, lieutenant, and chief of patrol. In 2019, he was elected as the sheriff of Rockbridge County and Lexington city, winning reelection overwhelmingly in 2023.

Beyond his role as sheriff, he also served as a regional director for the Virginia Sheriff's Association and as an officer in the Virginia National Guard, retiring as a major after over 28 years of dedicated service. He has also contributed to the community by organizing Christmas shopping excursions for local residents of the Rockbridge County area.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Sheriff Funkhouser's extraordinary commitment to our community and his nearly 30 years of service. I wish him and his family the very best in his retirement and in the next chapter of his life.

HONORING LIFE AND SERVICE OF GEORGE WILLIAM HAWTHORNE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of my constituent, George William Hawthorne.

George is a 102-year-old World War II veteran living in Sidney, Illinois, whose life has been a testament of service to God, country, and family.

George grew up in Granville and Ottawa, Illinois, where his family were faithful attendees of the Congregational Church.

George's family has a proud tradition of service to the country. His family enlisted in World War I, and George was active in the Ottawa Cadet Corps. After high school, George worked several jobs to support the war effort following the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was eager to do more to defend his country, so he enlisted in the United States Army Air Forces on October 2, 1942.

Due to the attrition rates among bomber crews, there was an urgent demand for pilots. George courageously rose to the challenge. His class of cadets was raced through training at twice the typical speed to fulfill the need for pilots, and many cadets dropped out of the program.

George excelled and won his wings as second lieutenant on April 14, 1944. He was set to pilot a B–24 Liberator on a 13-hour flight to the Pacific theater. As he awaited departure, George became ill and was hospitalized with a serious infection.

While in the hospital, his crew left for the Pacific. Tragically, the plane went down in the Philippine Sea after an onboard explosion that claimed the lives of several crewmates.

George still wanted to do his part to serve his country. He trained another crew and prepared for the invasion into Japan. He flew to Hawaii and was stationed there when President Truman made the decision to use atomic bombs.

George finished out his time in the service flying a rescue squadron and was honorably discharged on October 29, 1946. He entered the Air Force Reserve and served there until July 31, 1960, attaining the rank of captain.

□ 1130

Madam Speaker, after leaving the military, George continued his legacy of service by investing in his church community. He attended church regularly and served on multiple boards, committees, and volunteer projects. He also raised three wonderful children with his wife of 64 years, Louise.

Through all his years, George has remained passionate about his country and the freedom that makes it great. Like his father before him, George understands the value and the responsibility of serving in our Nation's military and defending our freedom. He instilled these values in his children and grandchildren, and many of his family members have continued George's legacy of military service.

He remains passionate about defending liberty, his family, and his right to practice his faith in Jesus Christ.

At 102, George is still excited about the future and has plans for things he still wants to accomplish. He is thankful to God for all he has been given, and he loves to talk about his experiences and the lessons he has learned on his journey through life.

On behalf of Illinois' 15th Congressional District, it is my honor to recognize Captain George Hawthorne for his courage and selfless service to our Nation.

PROTECTING PRODUCTION OF CRITICAL MINERALS AND RARE EARTH ELEMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, last week, the Chinese Communist Party ordered a trade embargo on the export of critical minerals to the United States, minerals like gallium, which is used in semiconductor manufacturing and also used in the development of medical and dental devices.

This embargo by the CCP is yet another warning and a wake-up call: We need to produce these critical materials right here in the U.S. It is time to increase our domestic supply chains and safeguard our productions against foreign interference.

These critical materials are used in the creation of everything from cell phones to the guidance systems used by our military. We cannot and should not allow the Chinese Communist Party to manipulate what products we are able to build here in America.

This is the time to act. Government red tape should not continue to hold up this necessary manufacturing.

Under President Trump's leadership in the new year, we must take decisive action to approve new permits that allow the production of critical minerals and rare earth elements that are so necessary for our economy.

RECOGNIZING HENRY ''JACK'' ROEMER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Jack Roemer of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who will celebrate his 100th birthday on December 20.

There are so many positive things to say about Jack. He is one of the most kindhearted, salt-of-the-earth, intelligent, and witty people I have ever met. He had a long and successful career at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, where he served as general counsel, vice president, and a member of the board of directors. He is also a World War II Navy veteran and served as an officer on an LST, or a landing ship, tank.

The world would be a much better place if there were more Jack Roemers in it. May Jack treasure this monumental milestone as he celebrates with family and friends. Happy 100th birthday to Jack, and may God continue to bless him and give him many more years on Earth.

ADMIRATION FOR REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER WEXTON

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I want to say how much I admire JENNIFER WEXTON and the role model she has been as she has struggled with her disease.

We saw her here on the floor a few minutes ago, and I commend her for her willingness to speak openly about the challenges that she is facing and to show the world that one can deal with such a debilitating disease and continue to work for her constituents. I commend her for what she has done.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 4467. An act to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to assess contracts for covered services performed by contractor personnel along the United States land border with Mexico, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7177. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to consolidate certain divisions in the Northern District of Alabama.

H.R. 7524. An act to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the submission of reports on certain information technology services funds to Congress before expenditures may be made, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8219. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Lahaina National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8413. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land at Swanson Reservoir and Hugh Butler Reservoir in the State of Nebraska, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 465. An act to require Federal law enforcement agencies to report on cases of missing or murdered Indians, and for other purposes.

S. 5300. An act to authorize the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to reimburse the Town of Chincoteague, Virginia, for costs directly associated with the removal and replacement of certain drinking water wells.

S. 5465. An act to clarify where court may be held for certain district courts in Texas and California.

S. 5543. An act to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prohibit consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports containing adverse items of information about a consumer that resulted from that consumer being unlawfully or wrongfully detained abroad or held hostage abroad.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

O eternal God, You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Although we cannot see You with our eyes, touch You with our hands, or hear Your voice with our ears, give us a clear awareness of Your realness and presence among us. Reveal to us the hidden power You wield in our lives and in this world.

Do not let us consider this time and place as our only reality, that the only thing that matters is our own perspective but give us sight to see that there is so much more than meets our eyes.

Do not let us grasp jealously the things that we own or which we, by our efforts, have accomplished, but give us hands to reach out to lift up one another, to enable each to succeed in discovering and using the skills and talents with which You have endowed them.

Do not let us get caught up in the noise of compliments and accolades or even criticisms and disparagements but give us ears to listen to Your wisdom that we would hear Your own ''well done'' when the day has ended.

You, O Lord, are the first and the last, the alpha and the omega. May our time and talents be used to glorify Your eternal name, in which we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BURGESS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CONGRATULATING NICK DAWKINS ON RECEIVING ALLSTATE WUERFFEL TROPHY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania 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, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievement of Penn State University football player, lifelong Pennsylvanian, and starting center, Nick Dawkins.

Nick recently won the Allstate Wuerffel Trophy, college football's premier award for community service.

Every year, this trophy is given to one player across the country who combines exemplary community service with leadership achievements on and off the field.

Throughout his time at Penn State, Nick took great pride in founding the Dawkins Family Foundation. His foundation has hosted back-to-school supply drives, organized Christmas present donations, and continues to support and provide for children and families throughout the Pennsylvania community.

On the field, Dawkins was named team captain and continues to have an outstanding season, helping the Nittany Lions secure a home football game in the college football playoffs. He is a vocal leader who picks up and supports those around him, both teammates and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Nick on this outstanding achievement and wish him and the rest of the Penn State Nittany Lions good luck this weekend as they host their first college football game in Beaver Stadium.

We are.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, imagine dumping over 30 percent of the food in our refrigerators into the garbage every week. That is what we, as a country, have been doing for decades with the nearly 80 million tons of food that goes to waste every year. That is enough food for nearly 149 billion meals.

Food waste costs families, businesses, and municipalities money. It produces greenhouse gases that drive climate change, and it means fewer people have access to nutritious food.

I am proud to be from Massachusetts, a State who is taking this problem seriously. A study recently published in the Journal of Science called my home State a benchmark for success in reducing food waste through our successful commercial food waste ban, extensive infrastructure network, and robust inspection program.

Last month, Boston Mayor Wu's Office of Food Justice issued a report to

bolster food recovery efforts and improve food security.

I urge my colleagues from across the country to learn more about our efforts in Massachusetts to reduce food waste and end hunger now.

RECOGNIZING PHYLLIS COOLIDGE

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Phyllis Coolidge and the thousands of Nebraskans among America's 6 million Rosie the Riveters, who earlier this year were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their role in achieving victory in the Second World War as members of our Nation's workforce.

At 19 years old, Phyllis Coolidge began working at the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant near Grand Island, Nebraska, which employed some 15,000 workers between 1942 and 1945.

Reflecting on her experience, Phyllis said: I just went to work. It was something we were doing for the war effort.

Even her 59-year-old mother worked alongside her, a testament to the extraordinary willingness of Nebraskans to do their patriotic duty.

A resident of McCook, Nebraska, Phyllis is now 102 years of age, and her irrepressible can-do attitude is a prime example of the unity and resolve of the American people during one of the most challenging times in our Nation's history.

Recently, in one of the most meaningful moments of my time here in Congress, I had the privilege of presenting a gold coin to her, thanking her, and introducing her to my own family.

From the vital impact of our Rosie the Riveters to the monumental volunteerism of the North Platte Canteen, doing our part was at the heart of Nebraska's rich history of home-front contributions to the war effort. Nebraskans understood that, as Americans, we are all in this together, and so many volunteers answered the call.

DISAPPROVAL OF BLANKET PRESIDENTIAL PARDON FOR HUNTER BIDEN

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

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disapproval of Joe Biden's decision to issue a blanket pardon for his son, Hunter Biden.

During the time covered by the pardon, Hunter was working for entities controlled by foreign governments without registering as a foreign agent.

According to the House Oversight Committee, $20 million in cash and diamonds was paid to Biden LLCs by entities controlled by China, Russia, Romania, and Ukraine. Yet, there were no Foreign Agents Registration Act charges.

Now, Biden issued his son a blanket pardon covering a decade of illicit activity. Hunter's crimes were published in the ''Marco Polo Report.'' This report can be found at bidenreport.com.

The American people deserve to know the truth.

MONTH OF WAR CRIMINAL PUTIN FAILURES

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, partnering with Speaker MIKE JOHNSON and National Security Advisor designee MIKE WALTZ, we called for sanctions on corrupt Bidzina Ivanishvili, the puppet of Putin in Georgia, in the Republican Study Committee's National Security Strategy.

It is time to impose these sanctions as war criminal Putin tries to destroy Georgian democracy. War criminal Putin continues to threaten global stability, but he can be defeated, as evidenced by the fall of the Assad dictatorship in Syria, with the expelling of Putin's military from Syrian bases, as well as the rebuke of Russian intervention this week in Romania, with defeat last month in Moldova, as Putin still occupies territory in Georgia.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has courageously offered wheat to Syria after war criminal Putin announced he would cease all grain exports.

Türkiye is appreciated for its leadership as a NATO ally for leading in Syria with its call for democratic elections and protection of Christians and minorities.

I agree with President Donald Trump, who said yesterday that: ''I think Türkiye is very smart'' and that Türkiye is key to what happens next in Syria.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Open borders for dictators puts all Americans at risk of more 9/11 attacks imminent, as warned by the FBI. Trump will be reinstating laws to protect American families with peace through strength.

BIDDING FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

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

Mr. BANKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today one final time in this Chamber after 8 years of serving northeast Indiana in the House of Representatives.

I thank my supporters, my friends, and my family, who have allowed me the great honor of serving in Congress. I will always be grateful to them.

Most of all, I thank my wife, Amanda; and our three daughters, Lillian, Elizabeth, and Joann. I am only able to do this job because of the sacrifices that they make.

I thank my incredible staff over the last 8 years for their hard work on behalf of my constituents as well.

I am proud of where I come from, and it has been an honor to represent the best place in the world and the best people in the world in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This is the greatest country in the history of the world, and we have a duty to keep it that way.

I am thankful on behalf of my great State of Indiana, though I will have an opportunity to continue to serve my country and my State in January beginning in the United States Senate.

It has been an incredible honor to serve the people of Indiana.

RECOGNIZING MEDINA MAYOR VANCE COLEMAN FOR 20 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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

Mr. KUSTOFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vance Coleman, who recently retired as the mayor of Medina, Tennessee, after 20 years.

In 2004, 20 years ago, Vance was approached to run for mayor by citizens who thought his involvement with the school system and his deep affection for Medina made him a great candidate.

Mr. Speaker, Vance Coleman was elected mayor of Medina in 2004, and the population of Medina has grown by four times since he became mayor.

Mayor Coleman was instrumental in constructing the new municipal building, updating the city's infrastructure, and prioritizing public safety by expanding the police and fire departments.

Under his leadership, the Medina Sports Complex was opened to better serve the needs of athletes and children. Vance Coleman made Medina a great place to live and to raise a family. Vance's integrity and his commitment to family has been the foundation of his service.

He and his wife, Kay, have been married for over 40 years. After two decades of dedicated service, Medina is a better place to live, work, and raise a family because of Mayor Coleman.

I congratulate Vance on a job well done. Roberta and I wish him the best in his next chapter.

□ 1215

SHINING A LIGHT ON THE INJUSTICES BLACK WOMEN FACE IN OUR NATION

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

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to shine light on various

injustices that Black women and many people face in our Nation, our workplaces, and our healthcare system.

I just left a hearing of the Subcommittee on Crime and Federal Government Surveillance where we discussed the 2023 hate crime report, which reported increases in hate crimes based on race, religion, and gender. In my community, we specifically have more hate crimes against Black transgender women.

I am also standing here in honor of the women that, even in their workplaces, are 2.5 times more likely to have their hair labeled as unprofessional. Twenty percent of Black women aged 25 to 34 have been sent home from work because of their hair.

This isn't about style; it is about systemic bias that polices our identities.

I am so glad that Ms. PRESSLEY has reintroduced the CROWN Act and that my mother, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, supported it. I helped to get it passed in Harris County. We are the first county in Texas to pass a local version of the CROWN Act. While our State government of Texas did pass the CROWN Act statewide, they have yet to properly enforce it. Students have been sent home, denied their education, and treated unfairly just because of the crown on their head.

HONORING ART DEL CUETO'S RETIREMENT FROM THE U.S. BORDER PATROL

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate my friend, Art Del Cueto, who is retiring from the U.S. Border Patrol after more than 20 years of service.

Art's life and career have shaped his views and understanding of the dynamics of the southern border. He grew up in Douglas, Arizona, directly across the border from Agua Prieta, Sonora, and freely shares stories of how different the border was in the days of his youth.

For the last 20 years, he has patrolled in the Tucson sector, which is consistently one of the busiest sectors in the country.

Art has made it his mission to ensure every American can understand the need for border security and is a prolific commentator in the news and hosts ''The Green Line'' podcast, bringing the truths of the border straight to the listeners.

Art is one of the most knowledgeable people on the Arizona border. He has hosted President Trump, Vice President-elect Vance, incoming border czar Tom Homan, and dozens of Members of Congress.

There are countless stories I could share from these trips, such as watching an alien shimmy over the border wall to be promptly apprehended by Border Patrol, meeting coyotes waiting on the Mexican side for the opportunity to cross alien groups, discovering a group of young women and children left alone in the desert by their smugglers and simply told by the coyotes to wait for Border Patrol.

Mr. Speaker, these examples are only a small fraction of what Art has seen over the course of his career. He is a great friend to me and a true American patriot. I am grateful to know him and honored to share his story here with you today. I wish him the best as he moves into the next chapter of his life.

MORE PAPERWORK FOR CAR BUYING

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that when you go to get a permit to rebuild your roof or go open a new bank account that you think: Could I do even more paperwork?

Well, that is going to be applied to cars now and other vehicles through the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission. They finalized a new rule to do just that to small business dealerships, the so-called CARS Rule.

An estimate of this rule by the Center for Automotive Research claims it will add at least 1 more hour to purchasing a vehicle and over $24 billion in new regulatory costs across the 40 million transactions expected for consumer vehicles and hundreds of millions of consumer inquiries expected each year.

Even though this rule was supposed to only affect consumer sales, the FTC recently stated it would now apply to heavy-duty trucks, tractor-trailers, and schoolbuses, as well, which are almost exclusively bought by businesses and governments, not consumers.

Not even once did the FTC mention the words ''heavy-duty trucks'' or ''commercial transactions'' in their original proposal or the cost-benefit analysis that they are required to carry out.

A business buying a new cement truck and a family buying a minivan are two very different things. It only makes sense in the mind of a Washington bureaucrat that they somehow should be regulated the same way.

Next Congress, we need to fix or nix this sort of thing.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 115, MIDNIGHT RULES RELIEF ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1616 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1616

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 115) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for ''midnight rules'', and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STRONG). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, last night the House Committee on Rules met to report a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 115, the Midnight Rules Relief Act under a closed rule. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided between the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees. It also provides one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, first off, I will start today by saying thank you to everyone who has prayed for our family and sent letters, flowers, and best wishes over the past 2 weeks. Your thoughts and your prayers have helped our family as we deal with an almost unimaginable crisis with the loss of our beloved daughter, Christine. The support from everyone in this body has been overwhelming, and I hope everyone knows that my family appreciates the support. We met overwhelming grief with overwhelming support, and for that I want to thank people.

With today possibly being the last time I manage this debate, and if this body will indulge me, I will express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity of a lifetime to serve as chairman of the exceptional Rules Committee.

When I was first elected in 2003, I could never have imagined serving in this capacity and performing such an important role in our legislative process. Throughout my career, I have made a point of always saying ''yes'' to a challenge. When Speaker JOHNSON called me, I knew I had no choice but to accept. Serving on this committee,

let alone assuming the role of chairman, has not been an easy ride, and the legislative process is not as smooth as what we learned in ''Schoolhouse Rock!,'' but it has only allowed me and my appreciation for the House of Representatives to grow further. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to serve as its chairman.

It has given me a front-row seat to history, and whether I agreed with the decisions being made or not, this committee continues to be a model for how Members conduct themselves in the House of Representatives, respectful but ever-passionate, and I hope you all continue with that strong and honorable tradition in the next year because the American people have high expectations, but, frankly, they deserve the best from us.

I also will take a moment and thank the Rules Committee itself, my personal staff, the Rules Committee staff, who have worked so hard to ensure that I am prepared every day and that this body can conduct its work efficiently. For the past 22 years, I have been blessed to be surrounded by an amazing, smart, and talented staff. Without each of them, I would not have gotten to where I am today.

I thank my Republican colleagues for your continued commitment to prioritizing legislation that is always in the best interest of Americans. You all have a tall order next year, but having gotten to know each of you over my time here, I have every bit of confidence that this House is up to the task.

I appreciate Mr. Speaker's indulgence, and now we will get on to the business at hand.

Yesterday, the Rules Committee met to report on a rule providing for consideration of legislation that is as timely as it is fundamental to our constitutional checks and balances. The Congressional Review Act, or CRA, provides the primary legislative check on regulatory overreach by allowing Congress to reverse a rule by resolution. However, that is a single rule, and Congress' ability to keep up with these new regulations is constrained by its ability to write and pass new bills as fast as an administration can send them out with trillions of taxpayer dollars and resources at their disposal.

Administrations of both political parties tend to overwhelm Congress at the end of their term with hundreds of new rules. These are known as midnight rules, representing billions of dollars of new regulatory burden in the span of just a few short weeks. Congress has historically struggled to keep pace. The executive branch has exploited the inefficiency of the Congressional Review Act because bureaucrats know that Congress simply does not have the time or the resources to consider hundreds of rules, draft a bill for each one, and get each one signed into law by the time that rule would take effect. The result is our constituents bear the burden of this new bureaucratic cost without any accountability to eliminate it. H.R. 115 makes a small change to existing law to allow Congress to catch up to this expected onslaught of new regulations as the Biden-Harris administration leaves office.

The bill will streamline the process Congress already employs with respect to executive rulemaking. It does not change the lookback timeframe, congressional prerogatives to block similar rules, nor does it eliminate or constrain the executive rulemaking authority in any way. These things are already in existing law.

All it does is simply allow what Congress can already do in one bill instead of hundreds. Doing so will allow Congress to keep up with the rapid pace of midnight rules, reining in the Federal bureaucracy at a time when historically it is its most aggressive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I will take a moment to recognize my colleague, Chairman MICHAEL BURGESS.

First, I will let him know that he and his family will remain in our prayers during the difficult time that he is now dealing with, and we all will keep your daughter in our prayers, as well.

As he also mentioned in his opening remarks, this is the last time that he will be managing a rule on the House floor before his retirement. While it is no secret that Congressman BURGESS and I have rarely agreed on issues before us—we probably can't even agree on what to have for lunch—I have always respected his dedication. I have always respected his diligence and his service to this institution, and I know how much he loves this country.

I know I speak for all of us when I say that we appreciate his years of hard work and we wish him all the very, very best. We look forward to working with him in other capacities. He has placed his official portrait right in front of me in the Rules Committee, so I will constantly think of him.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, now for the matter at hand while we are all on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I could stand here today under different circumstances and I wish I didn't have to open my remarks with the news of another senseless tragedy, but here we are again. Yet another school shooting, this time at Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin. Innocent people killed; innocent people injured just days before Christmas.

Let's think about that for a moment.

Innocent people killed and injured while the Republican leadership in this Congress does absolutely nothing about the epidemic of gun violence in this country. Nothing at all. It is shameful.

How many times are we going to let this happen? How many more shootings before we decide enough is enough? This House should be moving heaven and earth to pass legislation to save lives. Instead, Republicans are wasting more time on yet another bill that does nothing and will go absolutely nowhere.

□ 1230

This so-called Midnight Rules Relief Act that we are considering is not about helping the American people. It is not about protecting kids from gun violence. It is not about making our communities safer. This bill is about one thing only: giving handouts to corporate special interests.

Republicans are gutting critical protections that keep our air clean, water safe, and economy fair because they want to give corporate special interests free rein to pollute, cheat, and exploit the system. This is about helping billionaires and big donors at the expense of everyone else.

While we waste time on this nonsense, kids continue to die in classrooms and parents continue to live in fear every time they drop their children off at school.

We should be voting on the assault weapons ban. We should be voting on universal background checks. We should be closing dangerous loopholes that allow deadly weapons to fall into the wrong hands.

Republicans don't want to do any of that. Why? Follow the money. Follow the money. Look at who the NRA donates to.

That is how Washington works. It is all one big giveaway for the special interests and those at the top who want to profit off gun sales.

I find it shameful. It is horrific that Republicans refuse to break free from the grip of the gun lobby.

Instead, we are here debating a bill that helps billionaire corporations and hurts everyday Americans. That is what we are doing in this Chamber today. What a disgrace, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), a distinguished member of the Rules Committee.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, Americans want safety in the products they buy and the food they eat. Republicans, with this bill, will undermine the regulations that provide Americans peace of mind.

The government's job is to keep us safe, to put people's health and safety over corporate profits, but Republicans want to side with profit-making corporations and their billionaire buddies over the people's interests.

H.R. 115 would allow congressional Republicans to reverse dozens of agency rules at once, in one fell swoop, without careful consideration by professionals or regard for the safety of American families. This bill would help corporations cut corners at the expense of families across the country.

We have seen what happens when rules and regulations aren't in place. Think back to when cars became deadly fire traps after car accidents because there were no safety regulations. Remember the defective airbags that exploded, taking lives instead of saving them?

Without regulations, those car companies would have been able to go on doing that. Regulations make sure that salmonella does not enter our food supply and sicken millions.

Because they don't like regulations, because their corporate friends don't like regulations, in one simple bill, Republicans would eliminate dozens of agency rules, including a rule to replace lead pipes so communities have safe drinking water.

There are almost 10 million American households and—listen to this number—400,000 school and childcare centers that are served by lead service lines, pipes, or other fixtures. In some of our Republican districts, there are tens of thousands of families and children exposed to lead pipes.

Why are they putting their corporate interests over the health and safety of those who are drinking water from lead pipes?

The Biden administration's October 2024 rule makes sure that those dangerous lead pipes would be replaced, but if Republicans get their way, this rule could be on the chopping block without any discussion in Congress.

This Republican bill could also eliminate a proposed rule to expand access to contraception. Women deserve to know that Republicans can't seem to stop going after our reproductive healthcare, this time by reducing our access to basic contraception. Really, Republicans just can't seem to respect women's rights to basic healthcare.

The Republican bill could also eliminate a rule to establish safety standards for infant support cushions and even a rule to finally implement the National Suicide Hotline Act. Once again, because Republicans know that these regulations are popular with the American public, they want to eliminate them without discussion or debate.

''Midnight'' is probably a good name to give to this bill because it is an in-the-dark attack on our ability to protect Americans now and in the future.

Congress already has a bill. If they want to reverse a regulation, they can do it. They can come on the floor and let the American people know why they want to do it so the American people are not in the dark.

This bill would let Republicans deny women's contraception. It would let them hide their work to weaken children's safety and hide the fact that they are turning their back on the suicide hotline.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule and against this bill.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

These are interesting talking points that have come up against a bill that the minority purportedly says didn't do anything in the first place. Let's look at what the facts of the case are.

This bill does nothing to change how the Congressional Review Act works. It does not change the look-back period for disapproving rules. It remains 60 legislative days from the point at which a rule is put in the Federal Register. That is current law.

It does not change whether Congress can block substantially similar rules. Congress is already able to do that. It is authorized under law and unchanged by this bill.

It does not proactively constrain or eliminate executive rulemaking authority.

All this bill does is allow Congress to do what it already can do in a single bill rather than having to file multiple bills.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since this is possibly the last time the Rules Committee will be on the House floor for this Congress, I wanted to take a moment to review some things—the dysfunction, the chaos, the incompetence, the extremism, and the broken promises that have become the new norm under this failed Republican majority.

Republicans came into power talking about openness, transparency, and regular order. Regular order, my foot. All they have done is delivered a master class in dysfunction, extremism, and behind-closed-doors lawmaking.

They promised openness and debate, and they basically broke that promise the moment they took power. They presided over the most closed, the most undemocratic, and the most restrictive House of Representatives certainly since I have been here and probably ever.

Republicans shattered their own record for closed rules, 115 closed rules in total. Fifty-seven percent of the rules advanced by this committee were closed. That is a 29 percent increase over the last Congress, which they had the gall to criticize at the time.

Understand that a closed rule means no amendments—no amendments, no debate, no nothing. A bill goes to the floor, and we take it or leave it.

Closed rules may be appropriate at some times, but the unprecedented number of closed rules here isn't just a failure of process. It is a deliberate choice by Republican leaders to silence the voices of Members on both sides of the aisle.

All told, this majority rejected nearly 6,000 amendments in Congress. Eighty-two percent of them were Democratic amendments blocked by Republicans. It didn't stop there. Sixty-seven percent of bipartisan amendments, proposals that could have brought this House together and delivered results for the American people, were blocked by the Republicans. They actively rejected bipartisanship.

Here is the most shocking number: Republicans blocked 57 percent of their own amendments. They didn't just box out Democrats. They boxed out a lot of their own people who wanted to bring amendments to the floor and have debates and votes. They blocked more than half of their own amendments. If I were a Republican, I would be asking: What the hell is going on around here? Why is this majority so afraid of debate?

We haven't even touched on their incompetence and dysfunction yet. Multiple times this Congress, we heard from Republican witnesses on bills that they never brought to the floor. Multiple times they would pass something through the Rules Committee only to never bring it up for a vote on final passage.

They still have not sent 13 bills they passed over to the Senate. Do these guys need to watch ''Schoolhouse Rock!''? I mean, a bill can't become law if you don't send it over to the Senate.

They are half-passing their crappy bills. You literally can't make this stuff up, Mr. Speaker. They have waived regular order dozens and dozens of times, skipping hearings and markups and sidelining committees of jurisdiction that have extensive expertise on policy matters.

Let's not forget how we started this Congress—with 5 days and 15 ballots just to elect a Speaker, a Speaker who handed over his gavel to the most extreme elements of the Republican Party. Then, 9 months later, the MAGA extremists fired him anyway. They fired him anyway, and they plunged the House into 3 weeks of complete paralysis and total chaos; 3 weeks where Congress couldn't move, couldn't legislate, couldn't do anything all because of Republican incompetence; 3 weeks where Republicans sat around and argued with themselves and did nothing at all about the urgent crises facing this country.

That is beyond dysfunction, Mr. Speaker. It is more than a waste of time. It is pathetic. If this were the private sector, they would all be fired. Republicans sat around and did nothing for weeks on end while Democrats pleaded with them to do something, anything, and they did nothing.

Then, somehow, things got worse because Speaker JOHNSON didn't end the dysfunction. He doubled down. Under his leadership, Republicans issued 56 closed rules in his first 9 months.

Things went from bad to worse. Rule votes failed time and again, a stunning humiliation for this Republican leadership. For context, Mr. Speaker, before this Congress, the last time a rule failed on the House floor was over 20 years ago, in 2002. Now, it is becoming routine because Republicans can't even pass their own bills.

They said they would complete all 12 appropriations bills before the August

2023 recess—another broken promise. They said this year that they would finally get their act together—another broken promise because here they are, the week before Christmas, trying to pass another stopgap funding bill that nobody has even seen the text for.

Where is it? Where is it? Is it hiding behind a desk somewhere in the Chamber? Is it under the Christmas tree? With Republicans in charge of this place, maybe the Grinch stole it.

Maybe we will see the text before we get to vote on it. Who knows with this majority.

It is just astounding, astounding incompetence and chaos. It is honestly pathetic. Republicans have run this place like a dictatorship, Mr. Speaker, and they don't even have anything to show for it.

This has been the most ineffective Congress in American history, the fewest laws passed in the first year of any Congress since the Great Depression. Maybe, just maybe, it is because Republicans prioritize extremism and handouts for corporations and billionaires over solutions for everyday people.

Even when they did work to address real challenges, like avoiding a catastrophic debt default, keeping the government open, or delivering essential foreign aid, it was Democrats who stepped up every time and got those bills over the finish line. They needed our votes every time.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that Republicans end this Congress the way they began it: Shutting down voices, shutting down ideas, and shutting off debate.

□ 1245

The American people deserve better. I think that is why the other side actually lost seats in this election. Control of this Chamber was decided by 7,309 votes across three districts out of 148 million votes cast for House candidates nationwide. That is not a mandate for chaos, Mr. Speaker, it is an indictment of this majority's failed leadership, and I shudder to think of how bad things will get next year if Republicans don't change things up.

Given their razor-thin margin next Congress, the way for them to do that is pretty obvious to me: They need to stop the extremism. They need to stop the extremism, and they need to get to work with Democrats to get stuff done.

That is the path ahead. That is what the American people want, and I hope my Republican friends will take it so we can work together for the good of the American people. All of us in this Chamber should be disappointed in the record of this Congress.

My Republican friends, in particular, should be disappointed with their failed leadership. That has to change. People have to come first. We have to solve the problems that are facing average people in this country, and we have an opportunity to do that. It is to turn away from the practices of this past Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, can I just point out for the record that the number of rules produced by this Rules Committee under this Republican majority is more than the number of rules that were produced in the previous Congress under a Democrat majority. That is just a fact of life.

Look, I recognize this time of year, it does get tense. The ranking member knows well that the committee has to remain flexible to be able to give the Speaker the tools he needs to get done whatever needs to be done for the government to be funded for the end of year. It is not always a pretty process. It wasn't when Democrats were in charge, and certainly this year, the challenge remains.

I do want to say this: The motion to vacate the Speaker a year and some months ago was a mistake. It was a mistake brought to the floor by individuals who had a particular axe to grind, and they ground it. It hurt the country, and it was wrong.

We are so fortunate that Speaker JOHNSON stepped forward. He took the challenge that the Conference provided him, and he has provided excellent stewardship in the 16 months that have followed. We are enormously grateful as a Nation, especially at this time at the end of the year where we are giving thanks and we are looking around and counting our blessings.

Well, one of those blessings that families should count is Speaker MIKE JOHNSON because he has really placed the future of his country front and center in his life. His family has had to make sacrifices, and he has had to make sacrifices.

Yes, we have made some sacrifices on the Rules Committee. I freely admit that, but this country is worth that. As we wrap this up—and this may not be the last rule of the year. You never know. The excitement is always around every corner. As we conclude this debate, I, for one, just want to say how grateful I am to the Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON, for the work that he has done in delivering us and getting us here. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his response, but maybe one of the reasons why you had the number of rules you did is because you had to keep on redoing them because they either failed on the House floor or they couldn't pass the House floor.

When the gentleman says that it was a mistake to vacate the Speaker's chair, it wasn't a mistake. It was something that the gentleman and the Republicans deliberately did by changing the rules to make it easier for any single Member to vacate the chair to get rid of the Speaker.

That was a deliberate change in the rules that Republicans made possible because they were afraid of the extremists. They sided with the extremists in their Conference.

Again, I have nothing but personal high regard for the current Speaker of the House, but I don't think it is appropriate to say that Republicans are necessarily happy with his leadership.

I am just reading a quote from one of my Republican colleagues here who said that the Speaker's overseeing of the CR process, the continuing resolution process, is—and I am saying this directly—a ''dumpster fire.'' A dumpster fire.

All I am pleading with my Republican friends to do is to change your ways as we enter the new Congress, to actually make this place function in a way that doesn't always cave in to the extreme, rightwing, MAGA elements of your Conference and actually put people first.

We all don't have to agree on everything to agree on something, but the way my Republican friends run this place, even something we agree on, we can't get to the floor.

Maybe if we open the process up a little bit more, and we don't try to break this Congress' record for having the most closed rules, maybe we will have a deliberative process, and we can get some stuff done and the American people might have some confidence in this institution.

Right now, this place is not functioning. This is the least productive Congress that I can ever recall, perhaps even in history. I don't think that that is kind of the title that anybody should want to aspire to.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I would just point out that in the last election that the gentleman keeps referring to, Republicans did prevail. They prevailed up and down, Presidency, the Senate, and the House. It is a narrow margin to be sure, but it keeps you on your toes when you are trying to manage a very slim majority.

I think for the first time in history, there is a larger majority in the Senate than there will be in the House in the next Congress. The American people heard a vision articulated by our Presidential candidate, President Trump, and they responded to it.

I mean, what has failed the last 2 years has been leadership from the White House. It has been nonexistent. We are entering a time where there will be a bold vision for America, articulated by soon-to-be 47th President Donald J. Trump. I, for one, am grateful and looking forward to his leadership on that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I respond to the gentleman that I think that when you look at the numbers, the election was pretty close.

Yeah, unfortunately, for people who think like me, Donald Trump became President. I think that is a terrible thing for the country, but that is what ended up happening.

At the same time, the American people voted to lower their margin here in the House. Maybe that is because the American people are paying more attention to what is happening in this Chamber and not liking what they are seeing, what they are hearing.

I think the message of the last election, given how close everything is, is the American people want us to work together, because if not, we are not going to get very much done. I think there are a lot of things that we need to do.

I began my opening today referring to the terrible tragedy in Madison, Wisconsin. I think the American people would like us to do something to prevent gun violence in this country.

I think they want us to do more to lower prices. I think they want us to do more to increase wages, to make housing more affordable and accessible for people. I think they want us to take on the pharmaceutical industry, which we have tried to do under the last two Democratic Presidents, but my Republican friends seem to always be critical of those efforts to lower prescription drug prices, but they want to have healthcare costs lower.

They want us to take on everyday problems. I don't think you can do that if all you bring to the floor are extremist measures, measures that, quite frankly, play well with a small group of hard, rightwing conservatives in this country, but have no appeal to anybody else.

Mr. Speaker, we are here in the aftermath of yet another senseless gun massacre, another preventable loss of life. Yet, this majority would rather do the bidding of special interests than address an actual crisis facing our Nation.

The bill we are talking about here today on regulations, again, is big corporations' dream come true. It is a way to eliminate regulation designed to protect the well-being and the safety of the American people without having a lot of debate and just doing it all at once with a bunch of repeals all bunched together, and just giving big corporations what they want. I think that is a terrible idea.

Big corporations don't speak for the people I represent in Worcester. Big corporations, quite frankly, are working overtime to try to deny my constituents the fair shake that they all want so that they can make more profits.

My colleagues on the other side need to take a hard look in the mirror. They need to ask themselves, again, on the issue of gun violence, how many more shootings until they find the courage to stand up to the gun lobby and actually do something.

The American people are watching, and they are tired of this cowardice. They want us to act. They want us to keep people safe. They sure as hell don't want us wasting their time on corporate giveaways like the ones contained in the legislation that we are going to be debating later today.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. I urge my colleagues to reject this shameful bill and start doing the job we were sent here to do, protecting the people we serve, helping to even the playing field, helping to give people more hope that their life will improve in the future.

I urge a ''no'' vote on this rule, a ''no'' vote on the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Review Act, a lot of times, people don't think about it. It is not something that registers or strikes a lot of cords in people's souls, but let me just tell you something, we all have those moments in our lives: I remember where I was when the man landed on the Moon. I remember where I was when a world leader died. I remember where I was when the Congressional Review Act was allowed to go into law under George W. Bush early in his administration that prevented the institution of what was called the repetitive injury rule.

I ran a small medical practice at the time, not a big business. I had 50 employees in my office, and I was going to have to change every computer terminal, every keyboard, and every keyboard rest to be in compliance with the repetitive injury rule that some agency in the Federal Government had produced.

Congress, early in the days of the Bush administration, passed the Congressional Review Act, which reversed this rule. I remember pulling into my driveway one evening, probably early the year 2001. We didn't have cable news and 24-hour news back then. I was listening to NPR on the radio.

The news came across the wire that Congress had repealed this Federal rule that was going to cost me tens of thousands of dollars in my small medical practice. Although that was a small step for man, a giant leap for mankind, it was at that moment I realized in my mind the importance of my Representative looking at the rules that are produced by a Federal agency. I didn't need more paperwork to make my life safe at that point.

Clearly, I urge this body to support the rule and the underlying legislation. The bill allows Congress to more efficiently review rules issued during the midnight hours of the President's term by reviewing more than one rule at a time. This change would let Congress properly oversee agency rulemaking in the period when a disproportionate amount of rulemaking historically occurs.

Mr. Speaker, for perhaps the last time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1330

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST) at 1 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1616; and

Adoption of House Resolution 1616, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 115, MIDNIGHT RULES RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 1616) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 115) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for ''midnight rules'', and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 207, nays 192, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 506]

YEAS—207

Aderholt	Allen	Arrington
Alford	Amodei	Babin

Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—192

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Pocan
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—30

Blumenauer
Bowman
Brecheen
Cárdenas
Case
Chavez-DeRemer
Crow
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart
Duarte
Evans
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Granger
Grijalva
Kelly (PA)
Lieu
Moskowitz
Pelosi
Phillips
Porter
Pressley
Rodgers (WA)
Salazar
Titus
Trahan
Trone
Waltz
Wexton

□ 1354

Mr. NEAL, Ms. PEREZ, Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Ms. BROWN changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. MAST changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from the floor today. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 506 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 1616.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was delayed by an elevator outside of the House chamber that suffered a mechanical failure during the roll call. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 506.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 212, noes 197, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 507]

AYES—212

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOES—197

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, V.

Gottheimer	McGarvey	Schrier
Green, Al (TX)	McGovern	Scott (VA)
Harder (CA)	McIver	Scott, David
Hayes	Meeks	Sewell
Himes	Menendez	Sherman
Horsford	Meng	Sherrill
Houlahan	Mfume	Slotkin
Hoyer	Moore (WI)	Smith (WA)
Hoyle (OR)	Morelle	Sorensen
Huffman	Moskowitz	Soto
Ivey	Moulton	Spanberger
Jackson (IL)	Mrvan	Stansbury
Jackson (NC)	Mullin	Stanton
Jacobs	Nadler	Stevens
Jayapal	Napolitano	Strickland
Jeffries	Neal	Suozzi
Johnson (GA)	Neguse	Swalwell
Kamlager-Dove	Nickel	Sykes
Kaptur	Norcross	Takano
Keating	Ocasio-Cortez	Thanedar
Kelly (IL)	Omar	Thompson (CA)
Kennedy	Pallone	Thompson (MS)
Khanna	Panetta	Titus
Kildee	Pappas	Tlaib
Kilmer	Peltola	Tokuda
Krishnamoorthi	Perez	Tonko
Kuster	Peters	Torres (CA)
Landsman	Pettersen	Torres (NY)
Larsen (WA)	Pingree	Trahan
Larson (CT)	Pocan	Trone
Lee (CA)	Quigley	Underwood
Lee (NV)	Ramirez	Vargas
Lee (PA)	Raskin	Vasquez
Lee Carter	Ross	Veasey
Leger Fernandez	Ruiz	Velázquez
Levin	Ruppersberger	Wasserman Schultz
Lofgren	Ryan	Waters
Lynch	Salinas	Watson Coleman
Magaziner	Sánchez	Wild
Manning	Sarbanes	Williams (GA)
Matsui	Scanlon	Wilson (FL)
McBath	Schakowsky	
McClellan	Schneider	
McCollum	Scholten	

NOT VOTING—20

Blumenauer	Gallego	Phillips
Bowman	Garcia, Mike	Porter
Castor (FL)	Granger	Pressley
Chavez-DeRemer	Grijalva	Rodgers (WA)
Correa	Kelly (PA)	Waltz
Crow	Lieu	Wexton
Evans	Pelosi	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1401

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MIDNIGHT RULES RELIEF ACT

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1616, I call up the bill (H.R. 115) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for ''midnight rules'', and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KEAN of New Jersey). Pursuant to House Resolution 1616, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary, printed in the bill, is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 115

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Midnight Rules Relief Act''.

SEC. 2. EN BLOC CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS OF DISAPPROVAL PERTAINING TO "MIDNIGHT RULES".

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 801(d) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) In applying section 802 to rules described under paragraph (1), a joint resolution of disapproval may contain one or more such rules if the report under subsection (a)(1)(A) for each such rule was submitted during the final year of a President's term.''.

(b) TEXT OF RESOLVING CLAUSE.—Section 802(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting after ''resolving clause of which is'' the following: ''(except as otherwise provided in this subsection)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: ''In the case of a joint resolution under section 801(d)(4), the matter after the resolving clause of such resolution shall be as follows: 'That Congress disapproves the following rules: the rule submitted by the ____ relating to ____; and the rule submitted by the ____ relating to ____. Such rules shall have no force or effect.' (The blank spaces being appropriately filled in and additional clauses describing additional rules to be included as necessary).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of H.R. 115, the Midnight Rules Relief Act.

This is an important piece of legislation that will allow Congress to more effectively and efficiently oversee Federal agency rulemaking.

Under the Congressional Review Act, known as the CRA, executive agencies must report all promulgated rules to both Chambers of Congress. This reporting requirement allows Congress to properly consider Federal regulations before they take effect. The CRA gives Congress the ability to pass a joint resolution to prevent an agency's rule from taking effect.

The CRA's disapproval mechanism gives Congress a critical check on Federal administrative overreach. Currently, however, the CRA forces Congress to introduce a single, separate joint resolution for each agency rule it seeks to render unenforceable. This one-by-one limited joint resolution under the CRA slows Congress' oversight of agency rulemaking.

Its inefficiency is most clear during the midnight rulemaking period of the last year of a President's term, when executive agencies historically issue substantially more regulations that last year of a President's term.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 115 would make Congress' oversight more efficient during this midnight rulemaking period by allowing Congress to introduce joint resolutions covering multiple agency rules during the final year of a President's term.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle may claim that this bill is only an attempt to slow down agency rulemaking or disincentivize Federal agencies from issuing rules on important issues, but that is incorrect. There are no provisions in this bill designed to slow down rulemaking. Rather, this bill would merely allow Congress to more efficiently exercise the oversight authority it already has and respond to the influx in agency regulations during the midnight hours of a President's term.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, despite the bill's title, H.R. 115 is not really intended to address midnight rules, but rather is an effort by our Republican colleagues to advance their antigovernment, deregulatory agenda under cover of darkness.

This legislation may appear to be a modest change to the Congressional Review Act, but do not be fooled. It would enable the Republican-controlled 119th Congress to use a turbocharged CRA to nullify every rule issued by public agencies under the Biden administration for the entire year of 2024 in a single party-line vote.

Under the CRA, if a rule is overturned, agencies are forever prohibited from considering, without new congressional authorization, a ''substantially similar'' rule, an unreviewable, vague, and harmful standard that would undermine agencies' statutory missions.

Doing away with dozens of rules at once, as the Republicans intend with this bill, would substantially weaken agencies' ability to protect the public long into the future.

While historically the CRA has been used sparingly, after Donald Trump's first inauguration in 2017, the Republican-controlled Congress used the CRA to repeal 16 rules issued by the Obama administration, an all-time high. Critical rules on teacher training, internet privacy protection, and the prevention of water pollution from coal mines, among many others, were all repealed over a few short weeks.

It seems that Republicans have even bigger ambitions for the next deregulatory spree as they pursue their unabashedly antigovernment agenda.

Rather than consider agency rules on their individual merits, they want to package as many rules as possible into a single resolution to eliminate them

all at once with little debate or deliberation over the merits of each individual rule. The results of this single vote could be catastrophic.

□ 1415

Right now, there are dozens of regulations at risk of summary execution, including rules that ensure the safety of bath seats for infants, implement the National Suicide Hotline Act, create dust-lead and lead pipe safety standards, update chemicals listed under the Toxic Substances Control Act, update heavy vehicle automatic emergency braking standards, and ensure all cell phones are hearing aid compatible, among others.

Why do Republicans feel they even need this power? Maybe it is because they realize that many of the agency rules that they constantly rail against are actually popular with the American people.

Taking a series of votes making it easier for corporations to pollute the environment or take advantage of the most vulnerable would likely not be well received. Better to overturn as many rules as possible in a single vote, reducing transparency and obscuring the consequences.

Make no mistake, whether those votes are held individually or en bloc, the American people will be the ones to bear the consequences. With Republicans in charge of the House, Senate, and White House, it is likely that every rule the Biden administration has issued in the last year will be on the chopping block, along with the protections those rules provide to our constituents' health, safety, and economic well-being.

In addition, striking down a bundle of rules at once means not only that each rule will not be considered on its own merits but also that months and years of agency time and taxpayer dollars, along with the expert analysis and public comments from industry, nonprofit groups, and individual Americans, all will have been wasted.

Members on both sides of the aisle have recognized that midnight rulemaking, if left completely unchecked, can lead to abuses by the executive branch, but true midnight rules are rarely issued, and there is already a lookback period under the CRA to address rules promulgated at the end of any congressional term.

If we are truly concerned about so-called midnight rules, we have other options to check them. For example, at the end of President George W. Bush's administration, I authored a bill that would delay implementation of rules issued near the end of a President's term, giving his or her successors a chance to review such rules and to determine if they should go forward.

I believe there are ways we could work together in a bipartisan manner to address this issue.

Where past efforts tried using a scalpel to address the problems associated with midnight rulemaking, today's Republicans would instead use a machete, hacking away at the Biden administration's regulatory agenda and furthering their ideological goal of radically transforming our government.

None of this should be a surprise. H.R. 115 is a key plank of Project 2025, the blueprint for the incoming Trump administration. Project 2025 calls for ''dismantling'' the administrative state and argues that doing so must be ''a top priority for the next conservative President.'' That is because, according to the document, ''the only real solution is for the national government to do less.''

To be clear, the ''less'' that they want to do refers to the important and expert work undertaken by the country's Federal agencies protecting consumers, workers, and the public from corporations and people that break the law.

We should reject any backdoor efforts that would eviscerate vital regulations, would open rules and protections to even more political interference, and could prevent agencies from ever working on similar issues again, all with just the most cursory examination by Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to oppose the Midnight Rules Relief Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE).

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for introducing this important bill.

It is no surprise that House Democrats are once again standing against the wishes of the American people. The voters voted on November 5, and they voted for Donald Trump to be President. They are seeking to stop Donald Trump's administration from doing anything even before it starts.

Last week, it was judges. They didn't want the incoming administration to look forward and appoint judges to fill vacancies. Now, they don't want the incoming administration to be able to look backward and stop the flurry of last-minute regulations that are coming out of the Biden White House, midnight rules issued in the final days of a President's term.

The Democrats should listen to the voters. Their failure to listen to the voters is why, for the next 2 years, they are going to have a timeout. Their tantrums are not going to be listened to anymore because the voters have given them a timeout.

These midnight rules are rushed through without sufficient review, public input, or thorough consideration of their economic impact. They are politically motivated policies that may not reflect the will of the American people or the incoming administration.

This bill addresses the problem by extending the window for congressional review of regulations after an administration's final year. It is vital because it would allow Congress to undo the onerous rulemaking of the Biden administration here in the last days, the rules related to the Green New Deal, environmental regulations that heavily rely on renewable energy transitions and increase the cost of everyday products for Americans, or the rules promulgated by the ATF that significantly curtail the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens.

It is about ensuring transparency and accountability in our regulatory process. It is about giving the American people a voice through their elected Representatives—note, their elected Representatives—preventing regulatory overreach by the vast bureaucracy and protecting our economy from last-minute policies that could have a lasting impact on taxpaying Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I support this important legislation and encourage my colleagues to as well.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ).

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member NADLER for yielding.

We are in the people's House, and we often say that democracy is built on checks and balances, but my Republican colleagues seem to have no respect for the fundamental separation of powers.

H.R. 115 is a bald-faced attempt to expand the power of Congress in order to abuse the power of Congress. Let me say that again: H.R. 115 attempts to expand the power of Congress so that it can then abuse the power of Congress.

While a process to address specific agency rules may have been finalized in the late hours of an outgoing administration, there are already systems in place to address it.

Republicans want to have the power to go back 60 legislative days—think about that; that can take us as far as May—and bundle dozens or even hundreds of agency rules into one single resolution. Then, they want to go as far as forbidding the agency from issuing any rules that are substantially the same in the future.

We are seeing today exactly what Republicans plan to do in the next 2 years. While leading the most unproductive Congress in U.S. history, they also want to expand their power so when they do take action, when they finally take action, they can inflict the maximum damage on rules and policies that benefit working people, working Americans.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I would like to offer a motion to recommit this bill back to committee. If the House rules permitted, I would have offered the motion with an amendment to this bill to send the bill back to the Judiciary Committee and exclude any rule that was noticed more than 6 months prior to when the rule was finalized.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of this amendment into the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois.

There was no objection.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for the motion to recommit.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let's just address the previous speaker first of all. We already have a 60-day legislative lookback in the law. We are not changing that. That is apparently an objection that my colleague had.

We already have in the law that a substantially similar rule cannot be introduced if the Congress says no-go on it. Apparently, that is what my colleague's beef is. That is already the law.

What we are allowing now is for Congress to actually look at more than just a piece-by-piece, one here, one there, maybe you get a dozen to 18. You really don't ever get much more than that in a congressional lookback in the CRA.

Let's review what the Biden administration has done. The rules that they have promulgated in the last year alone have an economic impact of $1.4 trillion on the economy. There are individual bills in this packet here. This is just for the last little bit, the lookback period. There are 68, and that is with 30 days to go. There are 68 of them in here that I am holding up.

One of my favorites is the $45 billion boondoggle that they have got here. It is a rule, and $45 billion is the impact on that one. Let me see if I can read it. It is the national primary drinking water regulation for lead.

Here is the deal: It doesn't get looked at under the Democrats' concerns, but it does under ours. Why do you need to look at it? It just seems to be common sense that if you are going to have a $45 billion rule, maybe we ought to get to look at that.

We are going to come together to actually be able to effectively and efficiently put together these rules in a package. They are going to be marked up. They are going to be heard. If we think that it is justified, we get a chance to vote on it. Members can make their amendments to it. They can do everything else that we can have in the process, but the current methods that we are doing right now slow this down so much that we effectively review just a handful of rules, literally, of the dozens and dozens and hundreds of rules. Like I say, there have been 68 in the last little bit here that this administration put through.

When my colleagues across the aisle start talking about this rule or that rule, I challenge them to go through here and tell me how many of these rules they have even looked at. Are they aware of what is even in these rules? Are they aware of how much they are going to cost? Are they aware of the impact that it has on the working individual or an industry or the American people as a whole? No, they don't have that.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we pass this bill. I am going to leave it there. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD a letter from more than 250 organizations representing workers, consumers, and the environment opposing H.R. 115.

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

There was no objection.

DECEMBER 16, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER JEFFRIES: The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS) and the undersigned organizations strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 115, the Midnight Rules Relief Act of 2023.

H.R. 115 would amend the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to allow simultaneous disapproval of dozens of regulations finalized near the end of presidential terms using a single joint resolution. The bill also would create unnecessary confusion about whether rules issued outside of the lookback period can be swept in. The effect of this bill would be to greatly expand the CRA's anti-regulatory force by amplifying the harmful impact of the CRA's ''salt the earth'' provision, which bars agencies from issuing new rules that are substantially the same as the rules that are repealed. It would also make it easier for narrow majorities of lawmakers to repeal recently completed safeguards without the due consideration and deliberation that Congress should employ before taking such drastic steps. As such, the operation of the bill would significantly constrain agencies' authority to carry out their statutory missions to protect the public.

The proposed legislation is based on a fatally flawed premise—namely, that regulations which are proposed or finalized during the so-called ''midnight'' rulemaking period are rushed and inadequately vetted. In fact, the very opposite is true. In recent months, the Biden Administration has finalized regulations that increase overtime pay to put more money in the pockets of working families, limit carbon emissions from polluters to fight climate change, increase fuel efficiency standards to make cars cleaner, protect workers from harmful ''non-compete'' clauses in employment contracts, block companies from taking advantage of consumers with ''junk fees,'' put new limits on toxic ''forever chemicals'' that poison communities across the country, and many more. Unlike CRA resolutions, which can sprint through Congress in just a few weeks, many of these regulations that will benefit the American public had been in the regulatory process for years.

In July 2016, Public Citizen released a report that compared rulemaking lengths for rules finalized at the end of the term or during the presidential transition period to those that were finalized outside of this period. The results were noteworthy. The report found that rules issued during the presidential transition period spent even more time in the rulemaking process and received even more extensive vetting than other rules.

Prominent administrative law experts have also concluded that the concerns regarding these regulations are not borne out by the evidence. For example, in 2012 the Administrative Conference of the United States (ACUS) conducted an extensive study of regulations finalized near the end of previous presidential terms and found that many end-of-term regulations were ''relatively routine matters not implicating new policy initiatives by incumbent administrations.''

ACUS also found that the ''majority of the rules appear to be the result of finishing tasks that were initiated before the Presidential transition period or the result of deadlines outside the agency's control (such as year-end statutory or court-ordered deadlines).'' ACUS concluded that ''the perception of midnight rulemaking as an unseemly practice is worse than the reality.''

Supporters of H.R. 115 have presented no persuasive empirical evidence supporting their claims that regulations were rushed near the end of presidential terms. Likewise, they have supplied no evidence that such regulations did not involve diligent compliance with mandated rulemaking procedures. In reality, compliance with the current lengthy regulatory process prevents agencies from finalizing new regulations efficiently, and thus earlier in presidential terms.

In the end, it is difficult to overlook the tragic irony at the heart of H.R. 115. It would empower Congress to use the Congressional Review Act (CRA)—a process that is rushed, nontransparent and discourages informed decision-making—to block rules that have completed the long journey through the rulemaking process.

Unlike the CRA's expedited procedures, agency rules are subjected to myriad accountability mechanisms, and, for each rule, the agency must articulate a policy rationale that is supported by the rulemaking record and consistent with the requirements of the authorizing statute. In contrast, members of Congress do not have to articulate a valid policy rationale—or any rationale at all—in support of CRA resolutions of disapproval. Quite simply, they can be, and often are, an act of pure politics. H.R. 115 would make the situation even worse. It would, in effect, demand that all members of Congress have adequate expertise on all of the rules that would be targeted by a single disapproval resolution. Such a scenario would be highly unlikely.

It would also risk encouraging members to engage in ''horse trading'' to add still more rules to the disapproval resolution until enough votes have been gathered to ensure the resolution's passage. Surely, this approach to policymaking cannot be defended as superior to that undertaken by regulatory agencies.

Public Citizen, which co-chairs CSS, is actively tracking the CRA resolutions introduced in the 119th Congress. At least 50 rules are vulnerable to repeal through the CRA, and another 52 would be vulnerable if finalized before the end of the current administration. In the current Congress, 22 out of at least 109 CRA resolutions have faced votes on the House or Senate floor. The targeted rules protect small businesses, workers, consumers, students, veterans, investors, people of color, clean air, clean water, renewable energy, wildlife, gun safety, among others.

Further, instead of empowering Congress to bundle CRA resolutions, Congress should investigate if the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) role in evaluating whether agency actions are rules, and therefore subject to the CRA, is an appropriate authority for the U.S. Comptroller General given that the CRA provides GAO with no authority whatsoever to make such determinations. This review overrides an agency decision that the particular action was not a rule and gives members of Congress the ability to request a determination that could lead to a resolution of disapproval under the CRA.

CSS agrees that the CRA is in dire need of reform, but instead of expanding its harmful effects, as the Midnight Rules Relief Act of 2023 would do, we encourage the Committee to evaluate proposals that would limit those effects. One such measure is H.R. 1507, the ''Stop Corporate Capture Act.'' Among its many real and meaningful reforms to strengthen the regulatory process, the Stop Corporate Capture Act would address one of the most problematic aspects of the CRA by eliminating the ''salt the earth'' provision discussed above. Critically, the Stop Corporate Capture Act would also create a fast-track reinstatement process for rules that were the subject of resolutions of disapproval.

We look forward to assisting the Committee in ensuring that our regulatory process is working effectively and efficiently to protect the American public.

CSS strongly urges opposition to H.R. 115, the Midnight Rules Relief Act of 2023.

Sincerely,

Accountable.US; AFL–CIO; American Bird Conservancy; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Americans for Financial Reform; Animal Welfare Institute; CalWild; Center for Biological Diversity; Center for Economic Integrity; Center for Food Safety; Center for Progressive Reform; Center for Responsible Lending; Christian Council of Delmarva; Citizen Action/Illinois; Coalition for Sensible Safeguards; Consumer Action; Consumer Federation of America; Consumer Federation of California; Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety; Earthjustice.

Economic Action Maryland Fund; Economic Policy Institute; Endangered Habitats League; Endangered Species Coalition; FOUR PAWS USA; Friends of the Earth; Government Information Watch; Greenpeace USA; Impact Fund; Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; Kettle Range Conservation Group; Large Carnivore Fund; League of Conservation Voters; National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders; National Consumers League; National Health Law Program; National Wolfwatcher Coalition; National Women's Law Center; Natural Resources Defense Council; Oceana.

P Street; People Power United; Physicians for Social Responsibility; Public Citizen; Public Justice Center; Resource Renewal Institute; RESTORE: The North Woods; Rise Economy; Southern Environmental Law Center; Team Wolf; Texas Appleseed; Tzedek DC; United Auto Workers (UAW); United Steelworkers (USW); Vermont Public Interest Research Group; Virginia Citizens Consumer Council; Womxn From The Mountain; Wyoming Wildlife Advocates.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Arizona says the Biden administration has enacted rules that will cost $1.4 trillion. Over what period of time, he doesn't tell us, and I don't know whether it is correct or not, but I am sure, in terms of the budget, the Democratic and Republican staffs of the Appropriations Committee are looking at them very carefully every year.

He picked one as an example, $45 million to protect against lead poisoning. Lead poisoning is a real problem. It leads to mental deficiencies in children. If there is a $45 million rule to deal with this, that sounds fine to me.

The real question is, maybe we ought to examine that rule. Maybe, as Mr. BIGGS said, there is something wrong with that rule. Maybe we ought to repeal that rule, but we have the procedure to do that in the current law.

What this bill seeks to do is to say: Don't look at that law. Take 25 rules and put them together so that you can't examine any one of them, and in one vote, we will get rid of 25 rules. Maybe some of them are good rules, and maybe some of them are bad rules, but no one is going to get a chance to debate them because we have one vote, one bill.

That is what this bill does. This bill says to combine all the CRAs into one CRA vote. CRAs are a proper exercise of congressional power. It helps us control the executive, whether it is Democratic or Republican. Nobody argues against a CRA—well, maybe a particular CRA, but no one argues against the idea of a CRA. A CRA ought to be looked at individually. We ought to look at the merits of the CRA, maybe debate it on the floor. Maybe Republicans support it and Democrats oppose it, or maybe the other way around. Maybe it splits not along partisan lines. Maybe it is very clear that we want to do it, but we ought to look at it.

□ 1430

This bill says take 25 CRAs and have one vote so that we can't look at the merits of the individual CRAs, and with one vote, we may be doing immense damage to the health, safety and welfare of the American people, or not. We have no way of knowing because we can't study the CRAs individually.

This bill is pernicious because it combines everything into one vote and denies us the ability to look at the merits of each. Therefore, it ought to be defeated.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, when I first got to Congress, I was sitting in the Senator from Utah MIKE LEE's office, and I said, hey, I don't understand this. You have got a stack on your desk here of about 4 inches, and yet you have a 13-foot tall stack of documents right next to it. What does that symbolize?

He said, the 4 inches are the total number of laws passed by Congress in the last year. The 13 feet is the total number of rules and regulations promulgated by administrative agencies. That is what we are facing.

When my colleague says, hey, we can look at 25—do you know what the high recently has been? It has been 17 in a year, 17 individual ones. Guess what? My bill doesn't say you can't look at these. In fact, it does the opposite. It encourages us to look at the rules. If they are good, they will stand. If they are not good, they will fail. That is what Congress is supposed to do. Another colleague would say, we are trying to expand Congress' power.

No. The Founders were clear. In the Constitutional Convention it isn't three separate coequal branches. It is three separate but unequal branches.

The legislative branch is supposed to be the most powerful. That is why it got funding. That is why the House is supposed to do the funding because we are the people's House. We are ostensibly closest to the people in the Federal Government.

They don't want you to look at the rules promulgated by unelected bureaucrats. They want you to just blithely go ahead with it. That is the problem.

So when my colleague stands up and says, well, I don't know the cost. Maybe that cost is $45 billion. Maybe BIGGS is right, maybe he is wrong. I don't know what is in the regulation. Maybe it is good, maybe it is not.

The essence of that argument is that we really shouldn't look at it. Really? Don't look at the law?

That is not what we are saying. We are saying, indeed, look at the regulation, and let's get as many regulations as we possibly can and look at them. That is what we are trying to do.

Let me give you one right now. This is another one right here. If you happen to be fortunate enough to buy a piece of property, no matter how large or how small, and you can pay cash for it—and oddly enough, I was able to buy a couple of acres of property not long ago—it was actually a long time ago, about 25 years ago now, back before property blew up in cost in my area—well, if I were to pay cash now, that transaction is going to be heavily regulated, and it is going to cost the economy and cost taxpayers $2.2 billion.

By the way, these aren't BIGGS' numbers, these are the Biden administration's numbers. When the Biden administration's number says we imposed $1.4 or $1.37 trillion on our regulations, that is not me talking. That is the Biden administration admitting that their regulatory impact is $1.4 trillion.

Maybe we should look at that. Let me just add this: This notion that, gee, we need to look at these one at a time, and if we only get through 16 or 17 that is really odd because—it is ironic, actually. Tomorrow probably or the next day, you are going to see an omnibus, a short-term omnibus, come to the floor. They are calling it a CR, but it is really a short-term omnibus. In that bill are loads and loads of spending, loads and loads of policy.

Guess what? They are all going to vote for it. They just don't want you to look back at the rules that this administration has put into place.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, another rule on the chopping block is to update heavy machinery emergency brakes.

Does my colleague also want to roll back this rule, a rule that will save lives?

If the will of the people is truly that we roll back these lifesaving measures,

my colleagues should have the bravery to vote down each rule individually. Then you can tell your happy constituents that you voted for lead poisoning, and you voted for not implementing a national suicide hotline.

Let me say this: The gentleman from Arizona gets it exactly backward. First of all, he says the cost of all of the regulations is $1.2 trillion.

What are the benefits? Maybe they are far greater than that. We ought to know.

If you find a rule that you think is wrong, if you think the cost of this rule outweighs the benefits, fine, bring a CRA to the floor. That is not what this bill does. This bill says don't bring a CRA to the floor. Bring a combination of 25 or 30 CRAs to the floor so that you can't examine them individually.

Maybe some of them make sense. Maybe, in some cases, the regulation outweighs the benefits, or the cost outweighs the benefits. Maybe in another case, it is a different regulation, the benefits outweigh the costs. We should look at it as an individual CRA. That is why the CRA process was designed.

What this bill does is to upend that process by saying we are not going to look at the individual regulation. We are not going to look at the individual CRA. We are going to put 25 or 30 or 40 or 50 or 100 CRAs together in one vote with presumably an hour of debate on the floor. It is saying you can't look at the merits. That makes no sense.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman from New York says we ought to know what is in the rule, he doesn't know diddly crap about the lead pipe rule that he keeps referring to. He doesn't know diddly about any of these other rules. He has admitted that.

He doesn't know about them, doesn't know how much they cost, and he doesn't know whether they would have a good cost-benefit analysis. Guess what? Most of this body doesn't either.

What he is arguing is you really shouldn't look at it because this bill does not change regular order. It does not change regular order. That means somebody is going to be drafting this bill. It means somebody is going to debate this bill in a committee. It means somebody is going to debate it on the floor, and that means you are going to have an opportunity to look at these rules, and if it has benefit, you can amend it.

You can amend that bill to remove that from your CRA. That is the way to get this through. I do find it—I have got to mention it again—laughable to say you shouldn't combine 20 rules that are made by unelected officials who we haven't seen their rule, we haven't participated in their rulemaking process generically—that is normal—and then stand up here and tell us we shouldn't have that lookback.

We shouldn't do that, when awkwardly, those same folks are going to vote on a massive omnibus spending package in the next 48 hours. They haven't seen the language. You know why I know they haven't seen the language? I know because it isn't out yet. I haven't seen the language, but they are going to vote for it. They don't want you to know what is in these rules promulgated by unelected officials. That is the doggone shame of it all.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman wants to criticize the Republican leadership of the House for not bringing to the floor the 12 appropriations bills that they promised they would and that they should, and instead putting them all in one omnibus bill, I join him in that criticism. It is not the way to run the ship of state. I join him in that criticism of the Republican leadership of the House.

Let's go back to the lead paint. It costs $45 million we are told. How much does it save in children not getting lead paint poisoning, in hospital costs? It saves a lot more, presumably.

We have agencies that Congress has established over the last more than a century, since World War I, since the Wilson administration, to make determinations that Congress can't.

How many parts per million of cadmium should be permitted in drinking water? I don't know, but the EPA makes that judgment. Now, if someone in Congress thinks the EPA made the wrong judgment, that it is costing more than it is worth, bring a CRA. That is why we have CRAs. Don't talk about the total cost of all regulations because the total benefit of all regulations is many times greater than that.

Certainly, if you are talking about looking at anything, bring a single CRA. This bill, again, says to Congress, don't look at what the administrative agencies have done. Don't look at whether it makes sense to have this regulation or not. Just take 25 or 35 or 45 CRAs, repeal 35 or 25 or 55 rules without having a chance to really look at any of them because someone in the Republican leadership decided that they should.

If this bill passes, Congress will not have the chance to examine any subject of a CRA. That is why this bill is so pernicious and ought to be defeated.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we can walk around this barn all day long. When you say, look, we want you to do this on a single rule over and over again, that is not real. That is the way it has been. We don't know. Congress doesn't know.

That is why your constituents come up and say to you, hey, why is this going on? Why is now a financial adviser going to be regulated very tightly to the tune of $7.2 billion adjudicated by the Biden administration? Why is that?

Well, I don't know. Well, you are in Congress. Well, yeah, but it is a rule. You know, we put it on autopilot because we think the experts really are experts. Maybe they are. Maybe they are not. One thing this bill does is it says look at what the bureaucracy is doing. Look at what the fourth branch of government is doing here. Look at this.

If my colleague from New York says, hey, we don't know if something is good or bad, let me reiterate: We are not changing regular order. We are not changing regular order. Someone has to draft the bill. You are going to debate the bill. You are going to debate it in committee. You are going to debate it in rules. You are going to debate it on the floor. There will be opportunities to amend it. That is called regular order.

His criticism of our leadership for not bringing 12 bills, I am always there. I am always critical of it. This is probably the only thing that we have agreed on today so far. Well, his party did the same just a couple years ago, too. It goes back and forth.

There is a problem with that on both sides, but what I am encouraging and what this bill encourages is a real lookback, a real follow through on regular order, and a real understanding of what the rules are doing to the American people.

Some of them may be excellent. Some of them may not be so, but this is an opportunity to actually get Congress doing its job. Maybe that is why there is reticence to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does exactly the opposite of what the gentleman from Arizona says. This bill does not give us the chance to look at a regulation and decide whether it makes sense.

This bill puts all the regulations together so that we can't look at them. We can't look at any one of them in particular because they are all together in one vote with one hour of debate on the floor.

Let me give you an example of a rule that is on the chopping block. You have a rule ensuring that all cell phones—it is a new rule—that all cell phones are hearing aid compatible, a rule that requires cell phone makers to update their tech.

Does my colleague want to roll this back? What is the cost that my colleague would stomach to ensure our seniors can call and hear their family members and friends? That is just one regulation.

□ 1445

Maybe you think it costs too much money for the tech companies to satisfy grandma and grandpa, that they

shouldn't be able to talk to their grandkids or their family members by phone because it costs the tech companies too much money. All right. Make that case on the floor with a CRA. I will debate it because I think the opposite, but make that case on the floor with a CRA.

This bill says don't make that case on the floor with a CRA. Put all the CRAs together so you can't debate the merits of any one of them.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Here we go, Mr. Speaker. We are going to walk around the barn one more time. Let's go around that barn just one more time and say the same thing again.

My colleague and I are obviously diametrically opposed. He thinks that if this bill passes you won't look back, you won't specifically look at any iterated rule. I am telling you, nothing seems further from the truth than that to me because here is the deal: Somebody is going to have to draft that bill. They are going to have looked at some of these regulations. They then are going to bring it to the committee chairs, you are going to be sitting in a committee, and you are going to have a markup on this.

The gentleman from New York knows this because we both sit on the Judiciary Committee, and I sit on the Oversight and Accountability Committee, and we have almost indeterminable debates in markups. They go forever. Everybody gets 5 minutes for everything, for every amendment. If you have 25 rules sitting in there, guess what? You are going to have everybody in that committee probably taking 5 minutes a piece on all 25 rules and fully examining that rule and deciding whether they want to keep it in the CRA.

Right now do you know what happens? You might look at as many as 15 or 20 rules per Congress. That is it. We are talking literally hundreds and hundreds of rules that pass that are promulgated. Some may be great. Some may be bad. What this bill does is it encourages Congress to finally do its job.

I am all in on doing the 12 approps bills separately, but even with the 12 approps bills, you will have multiple lines that you are looking at, and you won't necessarily see all those lines.

It is time that we start looking at the rules and see what the administrative state is doing to Americans. That is the bottom line. They don't want that. They don't want that. That is a crying shame to me. It is a crying shame.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are going around in circles, but let me just add one thing. We call this the Midnight Rules Relief Act, but it is a big midnight. It extends the entire year, the last year of any President's administration. A whole year, that is hardly a midnight rule.

Again, if you want to look at the merits of a rule—and the gentleman says we have only like 20, 25 a year maybe or maybe we will have 250 next year, who knows. It depends on the politics. Debate the bill.

When a bill comes to the floor, there is 1 hour of debate. We are supposed to debate 25 CRAs in an hour. Some of them may be good, and some of them may be bad. Each CRA deserves its own consideration by those who support it and by those who oppose it.

This bill says, no, all together in one bill, so you can't really oppose or support any particular one of them. Take it or leave it on all of them, and you have no time for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am glad we agreed finally on the second thing, and that is we are going around in circles.

I want to make a couple quick points as I round the barn one more time. The most CRAs done in a year was in the 115th Congress. Mr. Speaker, 17, only 17—which by the way, that is the same year that MIKE LEE had 13 feet of regulations promulgated by the administrative state.

I just want to remind you what happens in the last year and why this is critical. Regulatory promulgation kind of goes at a flat line. Then that last year of a Presidency, of an administration, boom, it spikes up. It spikes up. That is the reality. That is why we have always had the 60-day lookback. If it extends now to the whole year, if it were to do that, you are going to be dealing with a spike.

I am just getting back to this point. If the most you have ever looked at ever is 17 in a year, then you don't know what the other hand is doing, the other hand being the administrative state.

I am just saying let's do it. Let's look at them, and let's make this work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to pass this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, as we have both said, we are going around in circles, so I will say what everybody has been waiting to hear: I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am also prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Arizona just said that the greatest number of CRAs that we have had in a given Congress is 17. Okay, I will take him at his word. Why not have 17 votes? Why not debate each for up to an hour so we know what we are doing? This bill says put them all together so we don't know what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is just the latest Republican effort to undermine the regulatory process. It would allow Donald Trump and his Republican enablers in Congress to wipe away dozens of lifesaving regulations and consumer protections in one single party-line vote under cover of darkness.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to oppose this dangerous legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, so you have thousands of regulations in 2024 promulgated, thousands, impacting us by $1.4 trillion. The most CRAs you have ever had is 17, and we are told, oh, just trust the administrative state.

I can't do that.

My constituents can't do that.

Americans can't do that.

We are trying to come up with a reasonable approach to make this more workable, and that is what this bill is. That is what H.R. 115 is. It encourages Congress to do its job. That is why this is so important.

I urge my colleagues to join me and vote in favor of H.R. 115. Let's get this passed and let's make Congress the legislative branch it is supposed to be per the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1616, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mrs. RAMIERZ. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Ramirez of Illinois moves to recommit the bill H.R. 115 to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The material previously referred to by Mrs. RAMIREZ is as follows:

Mrs. Ramirez moves to recommit the bill H.R. 115 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Page 3, line 12, insert ''except in the case of a rulemaking where the proposed rule was published more than 6 months prior to the publication of the final rule,'' before ''a joint resolution of disapproval''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

NEVER AGAIN EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2023

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3448) to reauthorize the Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to support Holocaust education programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3448

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 4(a) of the Never Again Education Act (Public Law 116–141; 134 Stat. 638) is amended by striking ''each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years'' and inserting ''each succeeding fiscal year through fiscal year 2030''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on S. 3448.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3448, the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023.

October 7 was the worst day in Jewish history since the Holocaust. S. 3448 will ensure that the lessons of history are not forgotten in these troubling times.

The bipartisan bill promotes tolerance by extending the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's mission to disseminate Holocaust education resources through fiscal year 2030.

In May 2020, Congress passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and President Trump signed into law the Never Again Education Act. This law authorizes $2 million for the Holocaust museum to create and disseminate educational resources on how and why the Holocaust happened.

This year, the world celebrated the Allied victory of Normandy 80 years ago. We were reminded of what our heroes fought for and against. Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in anti-Semitic and other bias-based offenses on college campuses, demonstrating that the hate and bigotry that motivated the Nazis is still present in our society.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, expanding the presence of Holocaust education programs in schools will increase the knowledge of basic facts related to the Holocaust, and that is important.

More importantly, it will give schools optional resources to help provide students a greater understanding of the ancient scourge of anti-Semitism and provide them intellectual and moral tools to fight against it and to prevent genocide, hate, and bigotry against any group of people. I thank Representative BUDDY CARTER for authoring this bill in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3448, Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023.

This bill reauthorizes the bipartisan Never Again Education Act through 2030 to continue providing educators with resources and training to teach important lessons pertaining to the Holocaust.

While Congress should not dictate school curriculum, this legislation maintains the balance of promoting important education while allowing school districts to govern themselves.

The bill reauthorizes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to support Holocaust education programs across the country that educators can, if they desire, access to better serve their classrooms.

Anti-Semitism is not a new problem, and we have seen such a disturbing rise in anti-Semitism that it must be addressed for the safety and dignity of all Americans. Congress must continue to take steps to ensure that Americans are educated on the dangers of anti-Semitism and the lessons of the Holocaust.

Passing this bill is critically important to combating anti-Semitism and ensuring schools maintain safe, productive spaces for all students.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I have worked with the majority to ensure that the curricula introduced are appropriate for students according to their grade level and following the guidance from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), the sponsor of the House companion to the bill we are considering.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I thank her for her leadership on this committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 3448, the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act. I am proud to lead this important bipartisan bill with Senator ROSEN, and I thank her for her work.

The bill before us today reauthorizes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's program to disseminate Holocaust education resources through fiscal year 2030.

Since the horrific attacks of October 7, 2023, pervasive discrimination and bias against Jews has been on full display. The Anti-Defamation League reports more than 10,000 incidents of anti-Semitism in the United States between October 2023 and September of 2024. This is hateful, disgusting, and despicable.

Nowhere is this more visible that on college and university campuses where there was a staggering 321 percent increase of anti-Semitic incidents in just 1 year.

During that time, the American people watched anti-Semitic mobs rule over so-called elite universities including Columbia University, Harvard University, George Washington University, and many, many more. Not only were these demonstrations morally reprehensible but they also incited violence against Jewish students and staff.

Yet, as these mobs raged on campuses, the American people witnessed three Ivy League presidents refuse to unequivocally state that calling for the genocide of Jews would violate their institutions' code of conduct.

Think about the example that sets for today's college students. Three adults in a position of power believe calling for the genocide of Jews would be in line with their school policies.

Jewish students deserve better. We must speak out against hate and educate our students on the history of anti-Semitism to ensure that the horrors of the Holocaust are never repeated.

You have heard the saying: Those who don't know their history are bound to repeat it. We must set a better example than that for our children, and the recent pro-Hamas demonstrations happening at colleges and high schools across the Nation are proof of that.

No one should be discriminated against because of their faith or their culture or their heritage. When we say never again, we mean it.

Let me be clear. October 7 was the worst day in Jewish history since the Holocaust, and this bill will ensure that we learn from history instead of hiding from it. That is why I applaud Senator ROSEN for working with me on this bipartisan bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING), a distinguished Member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member SCOTT for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation authored by my colleague Senator JACKY ROSEN of Nevada.

As the co-lead of the House version of this bill with my colleague Congressman BUDDY CARTER, I am proud to support this legislation to continue vital resources for Holocaust education nationwide.

We have witnessed an alarming rise in anti-Semitism across our country in recent years. Since Hamas' brutal attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, this hatred has skyrocketed. According to the Anti-Defamation League, anti-Semitic incidents have increased by more than 200 percent following Hamas' attack.

We have seen the impact of the rise in anti-Semitism in our K–12 schools and on college campuses across the country. Unfortunately, too many young people know too little about the Holocaust and the long history of anti-Jewish hatred.

According to a 2020 Claims Conference survey, among millennial and Gen Z Americans, 63 percent do not know that 6 million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust, and 12 percent have never heard about or do not think they have ever heard the word ''Holocaust'' before.

Additionally, in its very first report to Congress under the Never Again Education Act, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum highlighted a striking and troubling finding: a significant lack of student knowledge about the Holocaust.

In the educator-centered surveys, both experienced and inexperienced secondary teachers reported that close to 40 percent of their students had no familiarity with the Holocaust.

In the fight against bigotry, ignorance, and intolerance, education is one of the most powerful tools we have.

Education about the Holocaust and the long history of anti-Semitism is vital because it can help teach students about how to be moral citizens. It allows them to learn valuable lessons about bearing witness, fostering tolerance and civic values, safeguarding democracy, and embracing the responsibility to confront hate wherever it appears, to speak out rather than remain silent bystanders.

That is why Congress passed the Never Again Education Act in 2020 and why we must work together on a bipartisan basis to ensure this critical work continues.

This bill will extend support for Holocaust education across the Nation. It will continue the United State Holocaust Memorial Museum's strong track record of providing resources.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act, and I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY), a Member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. KILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023, a bill of which I am a cosponsor.

For years now at college campuses, we have seen an alarming rise in anti-Semitism that in far too many cases was allowed by university faculty administration, sometimes even encouraged.

Even though this trend has been years in the making, nothing could have prepared us for the horrifying scenes that we have seen over the last year, ever since the attack of October 7 where these tendencies and this rise in anti-Semitism came out into the open.

We saw scenes unlike anything we ever thought we would see in this country. You had students setting up checkpoints on campuses and saying that if you are a Jewish student, you are not allowed to pass. You had encampments set up for the specific purpose of harassing Jewish students and extracting anti-Semitic concessions from faculty that in some cases were, in fact, agreed to.

Our committee, the Education and the Workforce Committee, began an investigation into these incidents. We brought in university presidents, some of whom are now former university presidents. We heard from students who lived through this horror and who no longer feel safe on their own campuses.

This culminated in a report that laid out exactly what has been going on at campuses across this country. This alarming normalization of anti-Semitism in higher education must not continue. It demands swift, decisive action, and the Never Again Education Act responds to this crisis.

The bill reauthorizes funding for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to develop and distribute educational resources on the Holocaust, how it happened, and why it must never happen again.

These tools equip educators to combat prejudice, apathy, and complicity. It empowers students to recognize anti-Semitism, reject its resurgence, and to see an echo of our most painful history when it occurs.

By passing this legislation, we will assure that ignorance does not prevail, and I encourage a strong bipartisan vote to assure that it is passed into law.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, in 2024, there are very few individuals who remember firsthand the horrors of the Holocaust. It is our duty to remember and to educate our children so that lessons learned will never be forgotten.

By reauthorizing the Holocaust education resources for teachers and students, the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023 is a vital step in fighting back against anti-Semitism and acts of hate that remain far too pervasive in our society.

By prioritizing, we can invest in a younger generation of critical thinkers who can learn from history and use it to benefit the world around them with empathy and insight.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1515

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, anti-Semitism exploded on college campuses across the country following October 7, 2023, increasing 700 percent over the same period in the prior year. Swastikas were spread across campus as graffiti. Jewish students were segregated in classrooms by their professors. Jewish students at New York City's Cooper Union were forced to lock themselves in the college library and later were escorted out a back door.

I recognize that anti-Semitism is not a new problem. It has taken on various forms throughout history. The most noted prior to October 7 were the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. Both will forever remain a stain in the annals of human history.

The modern form of anti-Semitism is often disguised by progressive political ideologies. Evidence shows that campus DEI bureaucracies play a major role in propagating the spread of anti-Semitism. DEI divides the world into oppressors and the oppressed, ascribing collective guilt to the oppressors and collective innocence to the oppressed.

What does this mean for Jewish students? The DEI hierarchy places the Jewish people at the bottom of the oppression spectrum. DEI programs are ideologically anti-Semitic because they ascribe collective guilt to the entire State of Israel for its mere existence.

The core principles of the Marxist ideologue are not diversity, equity, or inclusion. They are, instead, discrimination, intolerance, and bigotry toward individuals thought to belong to the wrong group.

This modern manifestation of one of history's greatest evils, anti-Semitism, is repugnant. By passing S. 3448, the Never Again Education Reauthorization Act of 2023, Congress takes a step toward ensuring a safer and more secure future for Jewish Americans. More importantly, it ensures that we

will always remember the victims of the Holocaust, who were murdered simply for being Jewish.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3448.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

JENNA QUINN LAW

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1147) to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to provide for grants in support of training and education to teachers and other school employees, students, and the community about how to prevent, recognize, respond to, and report child sexual abuse among primary and secondary school students.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1147

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Jenna Quinn Law''.

SEC. 2. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS FIELD INITIATED GRANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 105(a) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(8) CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS FIELD-INITIATED GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants under this subsection to entities, for periods of up to 5 years, in support of field-initiated innovation projects that advance, establish, or implement comprehensive, innovative, evidence-based or evidence-informed child sexual abuse awareness and prevention programs by—

''(i) improving student awareness of child sexual abuse in an age-appropriate manner, including how to recognize, prevent, and safely report child sexual abuse;

''(ii) training teachers, school employees, and other mandatory reporters and adults who work with children in a professional or volunteer capacity, including with respect to recognizing child sexual abuse and safely reporting child sexual abuse; or

''(iii) providing information to parents and guardians of students about child sexual abuse awareness and prevention, including how to prevent, recognize, respond to, and report child sexual abuse and how to discuss child sexual abuse with a child.

''(B) REPORTING.—Each entity receiving a grant under subparagraph (A) shall submit an annual report to the Secretary, for the duration of the grant period, on the projects carried out using such grant, including the number of participants, the services provided, and the outcomes of the projects, including participant evaluations.''.

(b) REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPENDITURES.—Not later than 5 years after the date on which the first grant is awarded under paragraph (8) of section 105(a) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106(a)), as added by subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) prepare a report that describes the projects for which funds are expended under paragraph (8) of such section 105(a)(8) and evaluates the effectiveness of those projects; and

(2) submit the report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(c) REPORT ON DUPLICATIVE NATURE OF EXPENDITURES.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) prepare a report that examines whether the projects described in subsection (b) are duplicative of other activities supported by Federal funds; and

(2) submit the report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 1147.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill's story begins with its namesake, Jenna Quinn, a teenage sexual assault survivor.

Legislation in Jenna's name was enacted in the State of Texas in 2009 and has already saved countless children from abuse. In fact, a study found that after Jenna's Law was passed in Texas in 2009, educators reported abuse at a rate of almost four times more after receiving education and instruction about abuse. Now, Congress has a chance to apply some of the law's key protections across the country.

Child abuse and neglect are heartbreaking, immoral, and inexcusable. No child should ever have to endure pain and suffering. In a perfect world, we would not need laws addressing child abuse, but this world is far from perfect.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys in the United States are estimated to experience child abuse.

The National Children's Alliance states: ''An estimated 558,899 children (unique incidents) were victims of abuse and neglect in the U.S. in 2022, the most recent year for which there is national data.''

The Jenna Quinn Law, S. 1147, champions prevention through education. This bill aims to prevent child sexual abuse by allowing schools to utilize existing grants to educate teachers, staff, parents, and students to recognize and respond to abuse.

In addition to protecting children, the bill respects taxpayer money. The bill does not mandate or authorize any new spending. Importantly, it includes a provision that requires the Comptroller General of the United States to provide oversight by submitting a report to the respective committees no later than 5 years after enactment to ensure that the funds are used effectively and transparently.

To sum it up, this bipartisan legislation directly addresses the pervasive issue of child sexual abuse in our country. S. 1147 recognizes that parents, educators, and other school personnel are on the front lines in recognizing and reporting child abuse and equips them with the knowledge of the signs of abuse and the tools to report abuse accurately and correctly.

Protecting the Nation's children is not a partisan issue but a moral imperative.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives MORAN and WILD for their tireless advocacy on the issue and for working on this bill. I encourage my colleagues to support S. 1147, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1147, the Jenna Quinn Law. The Jenna Quinn Law considers only one small part of the much broader Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, or CAPTA.

Through the reauthorization of CAPTA, Congress could take meaningful steps in preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect through providing States with the necessary resources to strengthen community-based child abuse prevention services. Despite CAPTA reauthorization passing in the House on a bipartisan basis in two previous Congresses, the bill did not become law, so we find ourselves here today considering the very narrowly drafted Jenna Quinn Law, which specifies that the HHS Secretary can award projects aimed at preventing child sexual abuse. It must be said that the Jenna Quinn Law regrettably does not authorize any new funding for such projects.

Reauthorizing CAPTA would have been a much better route and is a top priority, but another priority would be to address the communication holes in State child welfare systems. Specifically, the inability to communicate the threat of child endangerment across State lines can have devastating consequences.

In particular, one of my constituents, Heaven Watkins, fell victim to the lack of communication between State welfare agencies. In her case, the system allowed her to remain with an abusive parent who moved her from Minnesota to Virginia. Her past abuse was not communicated with Virginia officials, and the move resulted in her tragic death.

I am frustrated that this bill did not come to us under regular order. As a result, I am not able to offer the amendment that I offered at markup and the language that had been included in previous House-passed CAPTA reauthorization bills. My amendment would have required the creation of a nationwide interstate data exchange system to provide caseworkers with appropriate background and information on a family's interaction with the child welfare system in another State. If we had that State database in place, then it could have prevented further abuse or even death at the hands of abusive caregivers whose actions are not monitored across State lines, as was the case for Heaven Watkins and countless children.

While, ultimately, I will support the Jenna Quinn Law as far as it goes, the issue of child abuse prevention and treatment requires a more comprehensive approach. We can and should do more to reduce child abuse and neglect.

Despite the lack of a more comprehensive approach and no additional funding, this bill is still a step in the right direction. As a result, I will vote ''yes'' on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to speak in support of S. 1147, the Jenna Quinn Law.

As the proud sponsor of the House companion legislation, I know how critical and vital this legislation is for so many.

I thank, at the outset, Senator CORNYN for his hard work on the Senate side on this bill and for his years of leadership protecting children.

S. 1147 will authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to allow existing Federal funds to be used by eligible entities for evidence-based, informed training on sexual abuse prevention, education, and reporting. These courses would focus on teachers, school employees, students, caregivers, and other adults who work with children.

Furthermore, the bill would ensure that grant recipients coordinate with local educational agencies to train students, professionals, and volunteers who work with children on abuse prevention, recognition, and reporting. These are important matters.

This bill, however, does not add to overall spending. We do have a spending problem here in the United States. Rather, it makes existing funding available for these important programs.

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of meeting and getting to know the namesake of this bill, Texan Jenna Quinn.

Mr. Speaker, you just heard her story. Jenna is a symbol of hope and bravery. She has an inspiring story of overcoming sexual abuse herself, and her unwavering commitment to helping so many like her who have been or presently are victims of abuse is just remarkable.

As it stands, our Nation's children face a tragic and silent epidemic, child sexual abuse.

As I speak before you now, Mr. Speaker, every 9 minutes, new evidence for a claim of sexual abuse is substantiated. Of all victims under the age of 18, 2 out of 3 are between the ages of 12 and 17. Tragically, child sexual abuse is one of the most underreported crimes in our country.

Mr. Speaker, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys are subject to this heartbreaking reality. Even more alarming, 90 percent of these children who are victims of sexual abuse know and trust their abuser. The same was true for Jenna Quinn.

While child sexual abuse is a criminal epidemic, one part of the solution to this tragedy lies in preventative education. Education, combined with a comprehensive set of preventative policies, is a powerful tool to combat this crisis.

School personnel report 52 percent of all identified child abuse cases classified as causing harm to children, more than any other profession or organization, including child protective services and law enforcement. For that, we are profoundly grateful to our educational partners.

□ 1530

Each life is precious, and each life deserves protection at all stages. I am confident that the Jenna Quinn bill will strengthen our efforts to prevent the evils of child sexual abuse and help identify children who have experienced this or are currently experiencing it and get it stopped. Most importantly, it will help them in finding pathways to healing.

Today, I am grateful that both Republicans and Democrats have come together to pass or will pass this bipartisan, bicameral, and commonsense legislation.

I thank Representative SUSAN WILD on the Democratic side for her hard work on this effort, and I thank Chairwoman FOXX and her staff for their dedication and hard work on bringing this legislation to the floor.

I know that there are children whose lives will forever be impacted for the better because of the Jenna Quinn bill.

Mr. Speaker, today, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and get it to the President's desk so it can be signed into law.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD), a distinguished member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman, the ranking member, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MORAN) for bringing the Jenna Quinn act forward. It is so important.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Jenna Quinn act, a crucial piece of legislation that directly addresses the pervasive issue of child sexual abuse in our country.

Unfortunately, child sexual abuse is a silent epidemic. The CDC estimates that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys will experience sexual abuse before the age of 18.

In my home State of Pennsylvania, child abuse laws reflect the sobering reality of this crisis. Between 2019 and 2023, a period of 4 years, there were more than 32,000 individuals charged in child abuse cases, and of those charged, a striking 56 percent were between the ages of 19 and 35, and 23 percent of these defendants were charged with endangering the welfare of children, according to the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania.

These numbers highlight the widespread and deeply rooted problem in our communities. They also reinforce the need for proactive measures to prevent child abuse before it occurs, which is exactly what the Jenna Quinn act seeks to accomplish.

This bill empowers educators and school personnel, who are often on the front lines when it comes to identifying and stopping child sexual abuse, with the tools they need to recognize, report, and prevent the abuse from happening. By providing schools with trauma-informed training and helping staff to recognize, report, and ultimately prevent child sexual abuse, the Jenna Quinn act will create a safer environment for children across the country.

This training is not about turning teachers into investigators. It is about making sure that every teacher knows what to do if a child shows evidence of abuse or discloses abuse or if the teacher notices warning signs. It is about giving those children the chance to be heard and to be helped.

The bill emphasizes flexibility, allowing States to develop the right programs for their schools while ensuring that Federal support is there to back them up.

Let me be clear that this bill is a bipartisan solution to a problem that knows no political boundaries. Protecting our children is not a partisan issue, but it is a moral imperative. Our educators deserve the training and resources that they need to effectively intervene in situations of abuse, and our children deserve to feel safe in their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''yes'' on the Jenna Quinn act.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, while this legislation would be a step to improve prevention, awareness, and reporting of child sexual abuse in schools, it woefully falls short of a comprehensive reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, or CAPTA.

CAPTA was last reauthorized over a decade ago in 2010, and a timely reauthorization is an appropriate solution to prevent child abuse and neglect from happening in the first place and provide better evidence-based treatments to address child maltreatment.

In both the 116th and the 117th Congresses, when I was chairman of the committee, the House passed a bipartisan CAPTA reauthorization bill called Stronger CAPTA. Regrettably, a CAPTA reauthorization has not yet become law despite a mutual understanding that Congress must do more to support children and families.

If the bipartisan Stronger CAPTA bill had been signed into law, it would have already provided States with necessary resources to expand locally driven prevention strategies, which strengthen families and invest in child protective services agencies.

Unfortunately, the bill we are considering today does not provide any additional funding to implement its proposed grant program on child sexual abuse prevention and awareness. In contrast, Stronger CAPTA would actually provide States with the resources to strengthen prevention programs.

Research shows that the best way to support families is to provide a targeted prevention to families of at-risk children when they are at risk of maltreatment, and primary prevention services need to be provided so that families can be served before they become vulnerable to factors associated with maltreatment.

Additionally, Stronger CAPTA would have streamlined communications between child protective services agencies across the country so that critical information is not lost across State lines. Such a system would likely have saved the life of Heaven Watkins, the 11-year-old who I mentioned before, who tragically died because local child protective services had no way of knowing that her parents had a history of child abuse in another State.

If the reforms in Stronger CAPTA had been in place, Heaven's death would likely have been prevented. By investing in prevention strategies and improving the collection and sharing of vital information, we can keep children like Heaven from slipping through the cracks.

There is no doubt that Congress has a vital role in helping States protect children from immediate injury and lifelong emotional trauma associated with child abuse and neglect.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working in a bipartisan manner in the next Congress to reauthorize CAPTA. Meanwhile, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, children are the Nation's future, but, sadly, the life and bright future of hundreds of thousands of children are threatened each year by abuse and neglect.

Mr. Speaker, S. 1147 allows for grants for child sexual abuse prevention programs in schools, equipping educators to recognize and report signs of abuse early.

Jenna Quinn's story reminds us of the urgency to act, and this bill ensures that we continue to safeguard vulnerable children from preventable cases of sexual assault. I believe this legislation, in the face of evil, will help prevent child sexual abuse and help identify children who are experiencing these horrible acts to be put on a path towards healing.

By passing S. 1147, Congress is taking meaningful steps to prevent additional child abuse and neglect by providing States with the tools necessary to strengthen child abuse prevention services.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1147.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 5355) to ensure that the National Advisory Council on Indian Education includes at least 1 member who is the president of a Tribal College or University.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 5355

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''National Advisory Council on Indian Education Improvement Act'' or the ''NACIE Improvement Act''.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION.

By not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and notwithstanding any other provision of section 6141 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7471), the President shall ensure that the National Advisory Council on Indian Education established under such section includes at least one member who is a president of a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 5355.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 5355, the National Advisory Council on Indian Education Improvement, or NACIE, Act.

NACIE is the Department of Education's Tribal advisory group, composed of 15 members who are appointed by the President.

NACIE advises the Secretaries of both the Education Department and the Department of the Interior on programs serving Tribes and members.

Currently, there is no requirement that a Tribal college or university, TCU, president sit on the board. As a result, the Education Department's Tribal consultation sessions often do not provide the opportunity for TCU leaders, who are the prominent leaders in Tribal post-secondary education, to provide direct input.

S. 5355 requires at least one of NACIE's members be the president of a TCU. In doing so, the legislation would give TCUs a seat at the table when discussing Tribal education.

Simply put, this bipartisan legislation ensures TCUs have a voice in decisions that directly impact Native-American students.

Strengthening our Nation's post-secondary education system means supporting all types of colleges and universities. Today, we can take an important step to strengthen TCUs, which play an important role in serving students and expanding the opportunities for skills and a post-secondary education in communities across America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, which ensures that presidents of Tribal colleges and universities, TCUs, will have a direct voice on the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. This bill is a necessary step to guarantee that TCUs, institutions that serve as educational hubs for Native-American communities, always have a voice in Federal funding discussions that directly impact their colleges.

As many of my colleagues know, the Federal Government holds a unique trust responsibility to the Native and Tribal communities, a responsibility that is not just a legal obligation, but a moral one. This trust is rooted in both the U.S. Constitution and centuries of commitments to Native communities.

Tribal colleges and universities pursue a unique mission. Not only do they educate Native communities, but they also preserve and advance Native-American culture and traditions. TCUs are central to the survival of Native languages, history, and cultural practices, all while providing access to higher education and advancing economic opportunities for Native students.

Having TCU representation will help to advise the NACIE as they fulfill one of their duties in advising the Education, Health, and Labor Secretaries in ways to strengthen TCUs and increase TCU participation in Federal agency programs.

While congressional Democrats and the Biden administration made critical investments to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID–19 pandemic on Native-American communities, including through COVID relief funds totaling over $360 million, much work still remains.

Congress must make stronger, sustained investments in TCUs to address decades of systemic underfunding that these institutions have faced. This bill is about more than just adding a voice to the commission. It is about ensuring that the leaders of these vital institutions, who are on the front lines of education, have the opportunity to advocate for the unique needs of their students.

By including TCU presidents in NACIE, we ensure that Native leaders across the educational pipeline always have a guaranteed seat at the table.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, which will help honor our trust responsibility to Indian Tribes and support Native-American students and communities across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1545

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, TCUs provide an important doorway to postsecondary education for many American students.

TCUs know best what their students and communities need. S. 5355, the National Advisory Council on Indian Education Improvement (NACIE) Act, will give TCUs a seat at the table during the decisionmaking process.

This will not only ensure that Native-American students are better served, but it will also ensure that taxpayer resources will be used more efficiently and effectively.

TCUs provide an important doorway to postsecondary education for many students. This bipartisan legislation will help strengthen that voice and the voice of the postsecondary education leaders who deserve to share their unique experiences and guidance with the rest of NACIE.

Mr. Speaker, before I yield back my time, I will take a few minutes to reflect on my time leading the Education and the Workforce Committee.

First, I applaud the committee's ranking member, BOBBY SCOTT. You wouldn't think a Democrat with two Harvard degrees would have much in common with a Republican who grew up without running water or electricity and was the first in her family to go to college, but we are both realists who want to get things done.

We are passionate about the committee's issues. It has been a pleasure to work alongside BOBBY.

Our colleagues have heard us say this before, but we both share the sentiment that you can disagree without being disagreeable.

Let me say something about the work of the committee it was my honor to lead for two terms.

My family grew up poor, but my parents always believed in the power of education and hard work. My work on the committee has centered on ensuring those who grew up like me can accomplish anything they set their minds to and that education can help them do it.

Unfortunately, students and parents have been living through an education nightmare characterized by massive learning loss, attacks on parental rights, a leftist takeover of curricula, and plummeting confidence in our education system.

To put our students on a path to success, I have worked with my colleagues to pass the Parents Bill of Rights, fight for school choice, protect women's sports, push for lower college costs and more accountability, and promote strong workforce development programs.

The committee has also fought attempts by the Department of Labor and the National Labor Relations Board to push all workers into unions and extend the Federal Government's control over the workforce.

Additionally, we have worked to protect the retirement savings of workers and retirees, save private insurance and increase healthcare affordability, protect small businesses, allow flexible work arrangements, and expand worker choice.

We have been busy, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, I can't talk about the committee's work without talking about my passion for accountability. As elected Representatives, it is our duty to hold the Federal Government to the highest standard of accountability so that hardworking taxpayer dollars are used effectively and efficiently.

When we push for answers, parents are no longer left in the dark, lawmakers are better informed when it comes time to consider legislation, and American taxpayers see where their hard-earned money is going.

None of the work accomplished by the committee was done by me alone. I was bolstered at every turn by the support and efforts of my colleagues. More importantly, I had the incredible talent of a dedicated staff.

Mr. Speaker, when I first came to Congress, I heard Members on the floor saying all these fabulous things about their staff, and it was hard for me to envision at the beginning how important the staff could be, but I have certainly come to understand that as the chair of the committee. To all of the staff, I say thank you, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, on the legislation, I will emphasize the fact that this bill is more than just adding a voice on the National Advisory Council on Indian Education; it is about honoring our Nation's commitment to Native-American communities and ensuring that Tribal colleges and universities are properly represented to discuss the effective legislation and executive action on their future and the students they serve.

We must include TCUs in conversations on Federal funding and educational policy. This bill is a step toward ensuring Native-American students and the institutions they serve will have the resources and support they need to thrive.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation as a demonstration of our commitment to empowering the Native-American communities through education.

Mr. Speaker, before I yield back, I will comment on the fact that this will be the last bill brought by Dr. FOXX in her capacity as chair of the committee.

I just point out that when we became chair and ranking member—we switched back and forth—we agreed that we would try to be the most dignified committee on Capitol Hill.

Regrettably, that is a mighty low bar around here, but I think we did as she has indicated. I think we demonstrated how you can disagree without being disagreeable. There were a lot of things we didn't agree on, but there were a lot of things we did. There was a lot of job training legislation that we were able to agree on, retirement savings, child abuse and prevention that we just considered, several healthcare bills, surprise billing, and things like that that took a lot of work.

We showed that it is possible to enact meaningful legislation on a bipartisan basis when you are willing to work together in a constructive way.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Dr. FOXX on her chairmanship and understand that there may be other leadership positions in her future, but I thank her for being able to conduct the committee as we were able to do it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Congressman SCOTT's comments very much. We have worked together very well. Now I urge my colleagues to vote for S. 5355, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 5355.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KLAMATH BASIN WATER AGREEMENT SUPPORT ACT OF 2024

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7938) to amend the Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 to provide the Secretary of the Interior with certain authorities with respect to projects affecting the Klamath Basin watershed, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7938

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Klamath Basin Water Agreement Support Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. KLAMATH PROJECT WATER AND POWER.

(a) ADDRESSING WATER, POWER, AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT FOR IRRIGATION.—Section 4 of the Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–498) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) RESTORATION ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary may—

''(1) plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain projects in the Klamath Basin watershed, including—

''(A) facilities to reduce fish entrainment;

''(B) projects that reduce or avoid impacts on aquatic resources of facilities involved in the storage or diversion of water for irrigation in the Klamath Project service area; and

''(C) projects that restore habitats in the Klamath Basin watershed, including Tribal fishery resources held in trust;

''(2) undertake studies, including feasibility studies, and improvements that the Secretary determines to be necessary to implement this subsection;

''(3) in implementing this subsection, enter into contracts, memoranda of understanding, financial assistance agreements, cost-sharing agreements, or other appropriate agreements with—

''(A) State, Tribal, and local governmental agencies; and

''(B) private parties; and

''(4) accept and expend non-Federal funds in order to facilitate implementation of this subsection.

''(e) GOALS.—The goals of activities under subsections (b) and (d) shall include, as applicable—

''(1) the short-term and long-term reduction and resolution of conflicts relating to water in the Klamath Basin watershed; and

''(2) compatibility and utility for protecting natural resources throughout the Klamath Basin watershed, including the protection, preservation, and restoration of Klamath River Tribal fishery resources, particularly through collaboratively developed agreements.

''(f) PUMPING PLANT D.—The Secretary may enter into 1 or more agreements with the Tulelake Irrigation District to reimburse the Tulelake Irrigation District for not more than 69 percent of the cost incurred by the Tulelake Irrigation District for the operation and maintenance of Pumping Plant D, subject to the condition that the cost results in benefits to the United States.

''(g) KENO AND LINK RIVER DAMS.—The Secretary of the Interior shall comply with the terms of the agreement entitled '2016 Klamath Power and Facilities Agreement'('Agreement'), including Attachment A to the Agreement.''.

(b) ADMINISTRATION; EFFECT.—

(1) COMPLIANCE.—In implementing the amendments made by this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall comply with—

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

(C) all other applicable laws.

(2) EFFECT.—None of the amendments made by this section—

(A) modify any authority or obligation of the United States with respect to any Tribal trust or treaty obligation of the United States;

(B) create or determine any water right; or

(C) affect any water right or water right claim in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 7938, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7938, the Klamath Basin Water Agreement Support Act of 2024.

This legislation, sponsored by Congressman CLIFF BENTZ, would uphold the commitments made by the Federal Government in the agreements concerning dam removal and species restoration, which are aimed at ensuring farmers are shielded from the adverse effects of these actions.

The Klamath River Basin in southern Oregon and northern California encompasses more than 12,000 square miles with some of the most productive irrigated agriculture in the country.

The basin is partially supported by the Bureau of Reclamation's Klamath Project and is home to six national wildlife refuges, which rely on basin waters to sustain migratory bird habitats and support Native American Tribal fishing grounds. However, this basin has been plagued by decades of disagreement and conflicting agency opinions on how to best conserve the ESA-listed species.

While H.R. 7938 provides the Department of the Interior the authorization to operate and improve infrastructure, it makes clear that Klamath Project irrigators are not responsible for those costs. The bill also enables Reclamation to implement conservation measures for ESA-listed species through fish screens and other restoration projects. This would protect Tribal resources in the basin and avoid additional regulatory burdens on other stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BENTZ for his diligent leadership on this issue and tireless support of the Klamath Basin. I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Klamath Basin Water Agreement Support Act, which seeks to resolve stakeholder conflicts regarding water use and fish and wildlife management in the Klamath River Basin.

Since time immemorial, the Klamath River has supported the livelihoods of several tribes in the basin. It continues to play a key role in each of these tribes' cultures, economies, and food sovereignty.

Unfortunately, the construction of dams along the river and changing climate conditions in the basin resulted in devastating consequences for tribes, agriculture, fish and wildlife, and fishing communities as a result of reduced water flows.

Since planning for dam removal in the lower Klamath River started, there have been years of work and negotiations between the tribes and other parties to reach agreement on issues affecting water, fish, and wildlife in the basin.

After the removal of the four lower Klamath Dams, salmon have already begun migrating into previously inaccessible historic salmon spawning habitat. Good for them.

The legislation before us today would build on this historic restoration project by further supporting the commitments made under the Klamath Basin agreements.

I thank the majority for working with us to ensure that Tribal concerns with the introduced language were addressed prior to moving the bill out of committee.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7938, as amended.

This long overdue legislation is necessary if the Federal Government is to honor critical commitments it has made to farmers and ranchers in my district in Oregon and Mr. LAMALFA's district in northern California.

For generations, farmers and ranchers receiving water delivered from the Klamath River and Klamath Lake have assumed the risk of weather, skyrocketing costs of production, wildly fluctuating markets, while playing by the rules, conserving more and more water, and continuing to do their best to provide high-quality food for our Nation.

However, over the past 25 years, they have done so under the additional burden of federally mandated drastic reductions in the amount of water they have State certified rights to use. These reductions dictated federally, coupled with increasing drought, threaten farmers' and ranchers' livelihoods, the communities that rely upon them, and ultimately our Nation's food supply.

The reason this legislation is needed now is because earlier this year, the four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River in Oregon and California were dismantled and removed. This leaves operation of instream structures, located upriver from the now removed four hydroelectric dams, at legal risk through no fault or action of or by the farmers.

□ 1600

As context, Mr. Speaker, for over 100 years, there were four hydroelectric facilities on the Klamath River. These facilities were located downstream from the Klamath Reclamation Project diversion structures. The four hydroelectric dams generated low-cost, clean, renewable energy for over a century. Although they were built by a local company, they were eventually acquired by PacifiCorp, a nationally operating investor-owned electrical utility.

In recent years, State and Federal regulators decided they wanted the four lower dams on the Klamath River removed. Regulations and litigation drove the cost of relicensing these dams through the roof, leading their owner, PacifiCorp, to the not-too-surprising conclusion that disposing of rather than relicensing the dams was the best path forward.

Based on this, PacifiCorp agreed the dams could be removed, but only if someone else assumed all legal responsibility and paid for all the work.

In addition, as a condition of allowing the four hydroelectric dams to be removed, PacifiCorp demanded that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation assume ownership of all remaining water infrastructure previously owned by PacifiCorp, including the Link River and Keno Dams, regardless of their condition, shifting all and whatever liabilities, known and unknown, that might burden them to the Bureau of Reclamation.

In the 15 years before removal of the hydroelectric dams, farmers and ranchers on the Klamath Project were promised that they would not have to bear the cost of retrofitting and updating this upstream infrastructure. This legislation will finally deliver on those promises.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a link to this copy of the 2016 Klamath Power and Facilities Agreement, which reflects some of these promises: https://bentz.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/bentz.house. gov/files/evo-media-document/OR02Sharp____20241217____150611-compressed.pdf

In addition, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7938 partially addresses another consequence of the destruction of these dams. The major reason for their removal was to allow salmon, steelhead, and other fish to migrate up rivers and streams to new areas. However, accompanying these returning fish are regulations and regulators anxious to make sure that the fish have appropriate means of passage, but the Klamath Project's irrigation infrastructure was not built or designed to deal with the needs of these species.

Over the past 15 years, irrigators in the Klamath Project have been repeatedly assured that there would not be any significant new regulatory burden or costs imposed upon them associated with removal of the four dams and the resultant arrival of fish, yet here we are.

Fortunately, this legislation would give the Bureau of Reclamation some of the authority and tools needed to keep that promise.

I thank my colleagues, Mr. LAMALFA, Ranking Member HUFFMAN, and the Natural Resources Committee for supporting and working with me on this important bill. I also thank Chair WESTERMAN.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on H.R. 7938.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7938 would provide important tools and certainty for both wildlife and people living in the Klamath River Basin. The irrigated lands of the Klamath Project support family farms and ranches, Tribal fishing rights, and the recovery of several ESA-listed fish species. This legislation builds upon vital work being done by these groups.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank my colleague, Mr. BENTZ, for his work on the bill. I urge Members to support this commonsense legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7938, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MODERNIZING ACCESS TO OUR PUBLIC WATERS ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6127) to provide for the standardization, consolidation, and publication of data relating to public outdoor recreational use of Federal waterways among Federal land and water management agencies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6127

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Modernizing Access to Our Public Waters Act'' or the ''MAPWaters Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FEDERAL FISHING RESTRICTION.—The term ''Federal fishing restriction'' means a defined area in which all or certain fishing activities are temporarily or permanently prohibited or restricted by a Federal land or water management agency.

(2) FEDERAL LAND OR WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—The term ''Federal land or water management agency'' means—

(A) the Bureau of Reclamation;

(B) the National Park Service;

(C) the Bureau of Land Management;

(D) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(E) the Forest Service.

(3) FEDERAL WATERWAY.—The term ''Federal waterway'' means any portion of a body of water managed partially or wholly by 1 or more of the relevant Secretaries.

(4) FEDERAL WATERWAY RESTRICTION.—The term ''Federal waterway restriction'' means a restriction on the access or use of a Federal waterway applied under applicable law by 1 or more of the Secretaries.

(5) SECRETARIES.—The term ''Secretaries'' means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. INTERAGENCY DATA STANDARDIZATION.

Not later than 30 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in coordination with the Federal Geographic Data Committee established by section 753(a) of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (43 U.S.C. 2802(a)), shall jointly develop and adopt interagency standards to ensure compatibility and interoperability among applicable Federal databases with respect to the collection and dissemination of geospatial data relating to public outdoor recreational access of Federal waterways and Federal fishing restrictions.

SEC. 4. DATA CONSOLIDATION AND PUBLICATION.

(a) FEDERAL WATERWAY RESTRICTIONS.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, each of the Secretaries, to the maximum extent practicable, shall digitize and make publicly available online, as applicable, geographic information system data that includes, with respect to Federal waterway restrictions—

(1) status information with respect to the conditions under which Federal waterways

are open or closed to entry or watercraft, including watercraft inspection, decontamination requirements, low-elevation aircraft, or diving;

(2) the dates on which Federal waterways are seasonally closed to entry or watercraft;

(3) the areas of Federal waterways with restrictions on motorized propulsion, horsepower, or fuel type;

(4) the areas of Federal waterways with anchoring restrictions, no wake zones, exclusion zones, danger areas, or vessel speed restrictions;

(5) Federal waterway restrictions on the direction of travel, including upstream or downstream travel; and

(6) the types of watercraft that are restricted on each area of a Federal waterway, including the permissibility of—

(A) canoes;

(B) rafts and driftboats;

(C) motorboats;

(D) personal watercraft;

(E) airboats;

(F) amphibious aircraft;

(G) hovercraft;

(H) oversnow vehicles and other motorized vehicles on frozen bodies of water; and

(I) oceangoing ships; and

(7) citations documenting the source of the restrictions.

(b) FEDERAL WATERWAY ACCESS AND NAVIGATION INFORMATION.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, each of the Secretaries, to the maximum extent practicable, shall digitize and make publicly available online, as applicable, geographic information system data that includes, with respect to Federal waterway access and navigation information—

(1)(A) the location of boat ramps, portages, and fishing access sites under the authority of the Federal land or water management agency; and

(B) the identification of the dates on which the facilities and sites identified under subparagraph (A) are open or closed, as applicable; and

(2) bathymetric information and depth charts, as feasible.

(c) FEDERAL FISHING RESTRICTIONS.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, each of the Secretaries, to the maximum extent practicable, shall digitize and make publicly available online geographic information system data that describes, with respect to Federal fishing restrictions—

(1) the location and geographic boundaries of Federal fishing restrictions on recreational and commercial fishing, including—

(A) full or partial closures;

(B) no-take zones; and

(C) Federal fishing restrictions within or surrounding marine protected areas;

(2) Federal fishing restrictions enacted pursuant to section 302(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732(b)); and

(3) Federal requirements with respect to catch and release.

(d) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Secretaries shall develop a process to allow members of the public to submit questions or comments regarding the information described in subsections (a) and (b).

(e) UPDATES.—The Secretaries, to the maximum extent practicable, shall update—

(1) the data described in subsections (a) and (b) not less frequently than 2 times per year; and

(2) the data described in subsection (c) in real time as changes go into effect.

(f) EXCLUSION.—This section shall not apply to irrigation canals and flowage easements.

(g) DISCLOSURE.—Any geographic information system data made publicly available under this section shall not disclose information regarding the nature, location, character, or ownership of historic, paleontological, or archaeological resources, consistent with applicable law.

SEC. 5. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION.

(a) COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS.—For purposes of carrying out this Act, the Secretaries may—

(1) coordinate and partner with non-Federal agencies and private sector and nonprofit partners, including—

(A) State, territorial, and District of Columbia natural resource agencies;

(B) Tribal natural resource agencies;

(C) technology companies;

(D) geospatial data companies; and

(E) experts in data science, analytics, and operations research; and

(2) enter into an agreement with a third party to carry out any provision of this Act.

(b) UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.—The Secretaries may work with the Director of the United States Geological Survey to collect, aggregate, digitize, standardize, and publish data on behalf of the Secretaries to meet the requirements of this Act.

(c) REQUIREMENT.—With respect to data developed and distributed under this Act, the Secretaries shall include a notice that any geospatial data are subject to applicable Federal, State, and Tribal regulations.

SEC. 6. REPORTS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter through March 30, 2033, the Secretaries shall submit a report that describes the progress made by the Secretaries with respect to meeting the requirements of this Act to—

(1) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;

(4) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(5) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 7. EFFECT.

Nothing in this Act—

(1) modifies or alters the definition of the term ''navigable waters'' under Federal law;

(2) affects the jurisdiction or authority of State or Federal agencies to regulate navigable waters;

(3) modifies or alters the authority or jurisdiction of Federal or State agencies to manage fisheries; or

(4) authorizes or is intended to result in the closing of or restriction of access to waters open to hunting, fishing, or other forms of outdoor recreation as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6127, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6127, the Modernizing Access to Our Public Waters Act, or MAPWaters Act, sponsored by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE).

This bill seeks to improve recreational access for our country's boaters and anglers by requiring agencies to digitize maps of Federal waterways and information related to the regulations and restrictions to accessing those waterways. The bill then calls upon Federal land management agencies to publish this information online and work with the private sector to make this information easily available to the public.

This bill is necessary because access to information related to regulations and restrictions to Federal waterways can often be hard to come by. The Natural Resources Committee heard testimony about a specific example of an unfortunate situation that happened at Yellowstone National Park. A group of backpackers was hiking to a remote lake in the park where the group planned to fish. Upon arriving at the lake, they discovered that half the lake was off-limits to fishing because of nesting swans. It just so happens that the half of the lake that was closed to fishing was the part of the lake they were permitted to fish.

This is unacceptable. Passing this bill would prevent incidents like this by ensuring this information is easily available to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, the MAPWaters Act would improve the standardization and public access to information about Federal waterway restrictions, Federal waterway access and navigation, and Federal fishing restrictions.

By standardizing and digitizing this information, this bill would give Americans the information and confidence to engage in recreation without searching for and deciphering information across numerous agency websites.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Modernizing Access to Our Public Waters Act, or MAPWaters Act, which passed the Natural Resources Committee unanimously last month.

The legislation builds upon the success of my MAPLand Act, enacted in 2022, and the MAP Army Corps language included in this year's Water Resources Development Act to ensure Americans can quickly see the public resources around them and spend more time recreating on the water that they love.

The MAPWaters Act will improve the standardization, consolidation, and availability of information on the recreational opportunities for Federal waterways, allowing recreationists in Utah and around the country to have the most up-to-date information on what is available to them.

In addition to providing chances for families to experience the outdoors and instill a love of nature in new generations, recreational boating and fishing are major drivers of Utah's economy, contributing over $536 million in 2023.

As our love for the outdoors continues to grow, accessing these public treasures should be as easy as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. PANETTA), the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. FULCHER), and the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL), as well as our Senate companions, Senators BARRASSO and KING, for partnering with me on this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6127.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) for his work on this bill and his work as a Member of this body to increase recreational access to our public lands.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6127, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LUMBEE FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1101) to amend the Lumbee Act of 1956, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1101

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Lumbee Fairness Act''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.

The Act of June 7, 1956 (70 Stat. 254, chapter 375), is amended—

(1) by striking section 2;

(2) in the first sentence of the first section, by striking ''That the Indians'' and inserting the following:

''SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF LUMBEE INDIANS.

''The Indians—'';

(3) in the preamble—

(A) by inserting before the first undesignated clause the following:

''SEC. 1. FINDINGS.

''Congress finds that—'';

(B) by designating the undesignated clauses as paragraphs (1) through (4), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) by striking ''Whereas'' each place it appears;

(D) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end of each of paragraphs (1) and (2) (as so designated); and

(E) in paragraph (4) (as so designated), by striking '': Now, therefore,'' and inserting a period;

(4) by moving the enacting clause so as to appear before section 1 (as so designated);

(5) by striking the last sentence of section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2));

(6) by inserting before section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2)) the following:

''SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

''In this Act:

''(1) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

''(2) TRIBE.—The term 'Tribe' means the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina or the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina.''; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 4. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Federal recognition is extended to the Tribe (as designated as petitioner number 65 by the Office of Federal Acknowledgment).

''(b) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS.—All laws and regulations of the United States of general application to Indians and Indian tribes shall apply to the Tribe and its members.

''(c) PETITION FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—Notwithstanding section 3, any group of Indians in Robeson and adjoining counties, North Carolina, whose members are not enrolled in the Tribe (as determined under section 5(d)) may petition under part 83 of title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations for acknowledgment of tribal existence.

''SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL SERVICES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Tribe and its members shall be eligible for all services and benefits provided by the Federal Government to federally recognized Indian tribes.

''(b) SERVICE AREA.—For the purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), those members of the Tribe residing in Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke, and Scotland counties in North Carolina shall be deemed to be residing on or near an Indian reservation.

''(c) DETERMINATION OF NEEDS.—On verification by the Secretary of a tribal roll under subsection (d), the Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

''(1) develop, in consultation with the Tribe, a determination of needs to provide the services for which members of the Tribe are eligible; and

''(2) after the tribal roll is verified, each submit to Congress a written statement of those needs.

''(d) TRIBAL ROLL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), the tribal roll in effect on the date of enactment of this section shall, subject to verification by the Secretary, define the service population of the Tribe.

''(2) VERIFICATION LIMITATION AND DEADLINE.—The verification by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) be limited to confirming documentary proof of compliance with the membership criteria set out in the constitution of the Tribe adopted on November 16, 2001; and

''(B) be completed not later than 2 years after the submission of a digitized roll with supporting documentary proof by the Tribe to the Secretary.

''SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE LAND INTO TRUST.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is hereby authorized to take land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

''(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN LAND.—An application to take into trust land located within Robeson County, North Carolina, under this section shall be treated by the Secretary as an 'on reservation' trust acquisition under part 151 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

''SEC. 7. JURISDICTION OF STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to land located within the State of North Carolina that is owned by, or held in trust by the United States for the benefit of, the Tribe, or any dependent Indian community of the Tribe, the State of North Carolina shall exercise jurisdiction over—

''(1) all criminal offenses that are committed; and

''(2) all civil actions that arise.

''(b) TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may accept on behalf of the United States, after consulting with the Attorney General of the United States, any transfer by the State of North Carolina to the United States of any portion of the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina described in subsection (a) over Indian country occupied by the Tribe pursuant to an agreement between the Tribe and the State of North Carolina.

''(2) RESTRICTION.—A transfer of jurisdiction described in paragraph (1) may not take effect until 2 years after the effective date of the agreement described in that paragraph.

''(c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section affects the application of section 109 of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1919).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1101, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about Tribal recognition bills, it often comes with a lot of passion. There are people who support the bills and people who oppose the bills, and it is hard to get consensus on these Tribal recognition bills.

As we consider this bill today, I just want to lay out the facts of what is at stake here in this particular Tribal recognition bill.

H.R. 1101 would extend Federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and remove a statutory bar that has impacted the Tribe since 1956.

According to the Tribe, this statutory bar has prevented them from being federally recognized through any administrative procedure.

Under the legislation, the Lumbee Tribe would be eligible for services, benefits, and immunities available to other federally recognized Indian Tribes.

In 1956, an act of Congress designated certain Indians as Lumbee Indians of North Carolina. It declared that they shall enjoy all rights as citizens of the State of North Carolina and the United States, but in 1989, the Department of the Interior solicitor issued an opinion stating that the 1956 act effectively denied the Lumbee Tribe eligibility to petition for recognition under the Federal acknowledgment process at the Department.

In 2016, the Department of the Interior solicitor withdrew the 1989 opinion and replaced it with a new opinion, stating that the Lumbee Tribe may pursue Federal recognition under the current administrative procedures for federally recognizing a Tribe.

This complex history has created legal confusion, and the Lumbee Tribe has chosen to seek Federal recognition through Congress rather than apply through the Federal acknowledgment process.

H.R. 1101 would use Congress' plenary power over Indian affairs to federally recognize the Lumbee Tribe.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsor of this legislation, Representative ROUZER, for his work on this bill. I urge support, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Lumbee Fairness Act, which would extend Federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

The State of North Carolina formally recognized the Lumbee Tribe in 1885, and the Tribe has been seeking Federal recognition from the United States for nearly 140 years. Mr. Speaker, that is a long time.

Legislative efforts to provide Federal recognition to the Tribe over the years have been led by both Democratic and Republican sponsors and have historically passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support. The Tribe has time and time and time and time again shown that they are a distinct, self-governing Indian community and that they are worthy of Federal recognition.

It is long past time that Congress extended these rights to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 1101, the Lumbee Fairness Act, to give the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina the full Federal recognition they have been unfairly denied for decades.

The Lumbee Tribe, comprised of 55,000 members, is the largest American Indian Tribe east of the Mississippi River and the ninth largest in the Nation. Throughout recorded history, the Lumbee have called southeastern North Carolina home, spanning Robeson, Scotland, Hoke, and Cumberland Counties.

Despite their long history and cohesive culture, the Lumbee Tribe has never had access to the same resources exercised by every other federally recognized Tribe. During the termination era, when Congress ended the Federal relationship with 60 Tribes, the Lumbee Act of 1956 recognized the Tribe's existence yet denied them the Federal rights and protections afforded to other federally recognized Tribes. This includes access to benefits from the Indian Health Service and support from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Sometimes, it is quite helpful to go back to see what the statute actually says. Public Law 571 specifically reads: ''Nothing in this act shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians.'' It is a bit wordy but very clear and very to the point.

□ 1615

Beginning in 1978, the Federal Government began rectifying the damage done during the termination era, establishing processes in which Tribes could regain Federal recognition and privileges.

The Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act established three ways in which an Indian group may become federally recognized: By act of Congress, by the administrative procedures established by the Department of the Interior, and by decision of a United States court.

Since then, Congress has stepped in and recognized 23 Tribes through legislation, reestablishing their relationship with the Federal Government.

Unfortunately, given the language of the Lumbee Act of 1956, only an act of Congress can establish the Federal rights and privileges of the Lumbee Tribe.

Some point to the administrative process as the path forward for the Lumbee Tribe, but the language of the 1956 act, which I just read, has acted as the law of the land, barring the Tribe from gaining their due privileges.

The fundamental point is this: Congress wrote a law that terminated the Federal relationship with the Tribe, and Congress is the only entity that can restore that recognition. The administrative process has quite honestly proved to be a dead-end street simply because of that statute.

The Lumbee's leadership and members work tirelessly every year to mobilize support to move the legislation that is before us today. The bill has been introduced in Congress more than 30 times with broad bipartisan support in the House and Senate.

Through more than a dozen congressional hearings, documentation has consistently affirmed the Lumbee Tribe as a distinct, self-governing Indian community. In each of the last 11 Congresses, legislation has been introduced to grant the Lumbee Tribe the full recognition they deserve.

In the last two Congresses, the House passed this legislation under suspension, and beyond Congress, the Lumbee Fairness Act has the support of 236 Tribes across the country who have repeatedly cited the unfair treatment of the Tribe under the 1956 Lumbee Act.

All of this is to say, Mr. Speaker, this needs to be done. I thank the House leadership, particularly Speaker JOHNSON and Majority Leader STEVE SCALISE, for bringing this bill forward for consideration today.

I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and his committee for their diligent work on all issues, particularly this one. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed. Today, the House can take a great step forward to right the wrong of the unfair and unjust treatment of the Lumbee Tribe once and for all. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON).

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1101, the Lumbee Fairness Act, which rights a historic wrong and provides long overdue Federal recognition for the Lumbee Tribe.

My family goes back seven generations in Robeson County, which is the home of the Lumbee people, and I represent many Lumbees in Hoke and Cumberland Counties.

The Lumbees have deep cultural roots and traditions in our State and have made significant contributions since North Carolina fully recognized the Tribe in 1885.

Though Congress recognized the Lumbee Tribe in 1956, they were discriminated against like no other Tribe and tragically denied the same protections and resources enjoyed by every other Federal Tribe.

Since I came to Congress, I proudly championed Federal recognition. Yet, despite broad bipartisan support, Congress has failed to send this legislation to the President. This is unacceptable, and it is past time we right this wrong once and for all.

I thank my friend, Representative DAVID ROUZER, for leading this must-pass legislation to give the Lumbee people the long overdue Federal recognition they rightfully deserve.

I also thank Chairman WESTERMAN and his incredible hardworking staff. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this legislation.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this is my final week in Congress. Many come to the floor and ruminate over their service. As for me, I can't think of a better way to spend my final words on the floor than in support of recognition for the Lumbee Tribe.

The Lumbee have been pursuing justice since the mid-1800s. I have previously stated on the floor some of the specifics of the Lumbee's Native American heritage, their struggle as a people against racial discrimination, and their deep and abiding community orientation around the life-changing power of education, especially represented by UNC Pembroke.

I have talked about their rich Tribal culture, the Tribal Council, the Warriors Ball, Lumbee homecoming, the Powwow. I count among my greatest privileges in Congress having been designated an honorary Lumbee warrior.

I have explained the abomination of the recognition legislation of 1956, which acknowledged the Lumbee's nationhood while explicitly denying them the incidents and benefits of the status extended to other American Indian Tribes, the epitome of arbitrary and capricious governmental action.

Although Robeson County, the historic homeplace for the Lumbee, passed into Mr. ROUZER's district in 2022, Lumbee recognition remains the unfinished business that is closest to my heart.

I have been pleased to introduce President Trump to the Lumbee and am proud to count him a vocal supporter of this legislation. I am certain that progress toward righting this historic injustice has occurred over my 5 years in the House, and I am pleased to say that victory is in sight.

Let my final words here be to thank the Lumbee for the honor of representing them here and for their friendship.

Mr. Speaker, let's pass the Lumbee Fairness Act now and vote for the bill.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BRECHEEN).

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Lumbee Fairness Act because of the three-quarters of a billion dollars that is unpaid for in cost and how it undermines Tribal designation based on merit, a 100-year history where merit drives and not politics.

While I respect the hard work of my colleagues from North Carolina and I have no doubt about their intentions with this legislation, the Lumbee Fairness Act would represent a lack of fairness for all historically recognized Native Americans and a lack of fairness for the merit-based process for Federal Tribal recognition.

I am a card-carrying member of the Choctaw Nation. My family can trace its lineage to the time of the Indian Removal Act and the Choctaw Trail of Tears. Oklahoma is a Choctaw word.

I am one of only four current Native-American Members in the House of Representatives. I harbor no ill will toward any people who seek Federal recognition for themselves and appreciate the hardship of going through the Federal recognition process.

However, we must also acknowledge that Tribal-Federal relations have a near 250-year history, rooted in our Constitution. It is found in Article I and Article VI of the Constitution. There are two centuries of tradition showing how the founding generations and those following after dealt with the issue of Federal treaties with Tribes.

The recognition process is robust. It is designed to ensure only people who can prove themselves as historical Tribes are designated as such.

The Lumbee people have attempted to gain recognition via this process for 130 years, and each time rebuffed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Proponents of this bill argue the Lumbee are not eligible for the merit-based Tribal recognition process.

However, the latest ruling on this from the Department of the Interior 2016 says that the Lumbee are eligible to go through the merit-based recognition process. We should let that merit-based process go forward instead of replacing that time-honored process with a vote on this floor and what is popular.

Congressional passage of this sends a subliminal message to historically recognized Tribes all over the country that politics trumps what we should be looking at within this situation, which is merit.

That is why 141 Tribes alongside the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Muscogee, Seminole Nations, et cetera, have opposed this effort going back many years.

Mr. Speaker, with that in mind, I include in the RECORD a resolution from the Five Civilized Tribes opposing the goal of this bill and a news article detailing the opposition of 141 recognized Tribes, to the same effect.

The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING FEDERAL OR STATE RECOGNITION OF GROUPS THAT CLAIM TO BE TRIBAL NATIONS BY CIRCUMVENTING THE OFFICE OF FEDERAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 22–14

Whereas, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (ITC) is an organization that unites the tribal governments of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations, representing approximately 815,000 Indian people throughout the United States; and

Whereas, our tribes maintain a historic and continual government-to-government relationship with the United States and exercised the sovereign rights of self-government; and

Whereas, our tribes have distinct histories, languages, cultures and identities that have been fiercely protected despite government policies intended to eradicate our ways of life; and

Whereas, fraudulent groups that appropriate our culture and erroneously claim to be legitimate tribal governments threaten the foundation of tribal sovereignty; and

Whereas, the federal government is granted authority by the U.S. Constitution to regulate matters relating to Indian tribes, which includes the process of obtaining federal recognition; and

Whereas, these groups often seek state recognition and other means to bolster their legitimacy and bypass the Department of the Interior's Office of Federal Acknowledgement (OFA); and

Whereas, the OFA currently manages a fair and measured process for attaining federal recognition, which includes a number of important steps that a petitioner must complete before being granted this status; and

Whereas, it is irresponsible for any governmental body, including the United States Congress, to bypass this process in favor of certain groups claiming to be tribal governments.

Now therefore let it be *Resolved that,* the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes opposes efforts by any group attempting to gain federal or state recognition that circumvents the Office of Federal Acknowledgement (OFA).

Be it further *Resolved*, the Inter-Tribal Council opposes current efforts by the ''Lumbee Tribe'', ''Chickamauga Tribe'', ''Wolf Creek Cherokee'', and any other groups illegitimately claiming tribal recognition without following the outlined process of the OFA

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma on this 15th day of July, 2022, by a vote of All in favor for 0 against and 0 abstentions.

BILL ANOATUBBY,
Governor, The Chickasaw Nation.
GARY BATTON,
Chief, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
CHUCK HOSKIN, Jr.,
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation.
DAVID W. HILL,
Principal Chief, Muscogee (Creek) Nation.
LEWIS J. JOHNSON,
Chief, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

TRIBAL LEADERS FIGHT TO DEFEND CULTURE AND SOVEREIGNTY 141 TRIBES OPPOSE EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE TRIBAL-PROTECTION MEASURES

SUMMARY

In 1978, tribal leaders and the National Congress of American Indians worked with Congress to create the Office of Federal Acknowledgement to facilitate federal recognition of tribal governments. The leaders sought to ensure that eligible tribes were able to obtain recognition but also expressly sought to protect legitimate tribes from groups making false or questionable claims.

Now, several groups who lack a common language, evidence of native ancestry or the ability to meet any of the standards as a historical tribal government are seeking to avoid scrutiny of their claims by seeking political recognition through Congress.

A growing coalition of 141 tribal nations is opposing any effort to circumvent the OFA process, saying that Congress should defer to the OFA process. While Congress certainly has the authority to recognize Tribes and correct any errors in the OFA process, political lobbying and horse-trading in Congress should not displace historical verification and evidence of a groups' claims.

''. . . recognition of groups claiming to be tribal nations with uncertain status as to historical tribes and without a close review of claims to Native ancestry imperils the government-to-government relationship between the United States and federally recognized tribal nations.''—Excerpt from Resolution of North Eastern Oklahoma Tribes, August 17, 2022.

''USET has passed several resolutions supporting administrative recognition over legislative recognition, because administrative recognition provides an orderly process, administered by experts, such as ethno-historians, genealogists, anthropologists, and other technical staff, that is insulated from political considerations unrelated to the historic legitimacy of a Tribal Nation.''—Excerpt from Resolution of the United South and Eastern Tribes COLT), October 27, 2015.

''As a tribal nation that was historically removed from our ancestral homelands, the Muscogee Nation is familiar with the risks inherent in granting federal recognition to a tribe that is not who they claim to be . . . hasty political decisions granting a group of people federal recognition significantly undermine the rights of legitimate tribal nations to protect the most sacred of sacred.''—Excerpt from letter from Muscogee Creek Nation to Senators Schatz and Murkowski, March 7, 2022.

PENDING BILLS IN CONGRESS DEMONSTRATE THREAT TO TRIBAL NATIONS

S. 3443—MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians Recognition Act:

Claim to be descendent from Choctaw, Cherokee, Creek, and other tribes.

The Office of Federal Recognition found that they bore no descendancy from any historical tribe and that 99 percent of their members had ZERO native ancestry.

Despite not even being Native Americans, this group is seeking recognition by attaching language to a must pass bill through back room political deals.

If successful, this group would have the right to claim the culture and identities of the Choctaw tribe.

The group would have same rights as Choctaw, Cherokee, Creek, and other federally recognized tribes have to the remains of their ancestors, to their homelands, sacred sites and many other.

This group would also be able to act as a sovereign nation with the authority to tax, incarcerate and enter government to government treaties with the United States.

HR 2758—Lumbee Recognition Act:

Serious questions remain about the legitimacy of their claims,

The group is eligible to seek acknowledgment through the OFA process but refuses to submit their claims for scrutiny and instead are seeking to attach language to a must pass bill through back room political deals.

They have no evidence of being a historical tribe. They have no language, no treaties with the United States and no customs, songs, dances or tribal religion.

At different times they have claimed descendancy from four separate and unrelated tribes, changing their claims when challenged. For over 40 years, they falsely claimed to be Cherokee.

The group boasts nearly 100k members based on descendance from a group of families that historians have testified cannot be verified as Cheraw or even Native American at all.

If recognized by Congress this group would obtain rights to the remains of ancestors, homelands, sacred sites, culture and identity of numerous other legitimate tribes.

This group would also be able to act as a sovereign nation with the authority to tax, incarcerate and enter government to government treaties with the United States.

Tribal leaders recently came together in D.C. to discuss the implications of these bills.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, if a Tribe cannot prove the necessary documentation to receive Federal recognition, they should not receive it by Congress' action.

If the Lumbee have a historical record of being a formal Tribe, if they have evidence of lineage to any particular Tribe, if they had a formal claim to the land that they now occupy, why would the BIA repeatedly refuse to formally recognize them as a Tribe?

Whatever Tribe may have occupied the land near the Lumbee River has long since dissipated. In fact, the 1956 bill that acknowledged the Lumbee as a people stated that the Tribe around the Lumbee River had fully assimilated into the surrounding European communities during the colonial era before the Constitution was written.

The Lumbee agreed to the language in that bill in 1956 as a compromise. In return for the Federal Government referring to them as a distinct people, they promised they would not seek formal Federal recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a copy of the 1956 hearing on the Lumbee bill where a representative of the Lumbee stated they would rather leave the county than accept the Federal recognition status. That is a strong statement of promise.

They could look us up and find we are in the law; in the books at Raleigh, and therefore we are honest in their sight. That is No. 1.

Mr. Aspinall. Do you or any members of your organization anticipate that after you might receive this designation you would come to Congress and ask for any of the benefits that otherwise go to Indian Tribes?

Reverend Lowery. No, sir. We would leave the county before we would come under a reservation or anything like wards of the government. We are citizens and always have been citizens. We would leave before we would come on this reservation.

The transcript of the hearing record makes clear that the Lumbee Indians were not expecting to receive any federal benefits or privileges as a result of the 1956 law. Nonetheless, the Department of the Interior objected to the bill because the United States has no treaty or other obligation to provide services to these Indians. Because of this, the Secretary of the Interior stated:

We are therefore unable to recommend that the Congress take any action which might ultimately result in the imposition of additional obligations on the Federal Government or in placing additional persons of Indian blood under the jurisdiction of this Department.

The persons who constitute this group of Indians have been recognized and designated as Indians by the State legislature. If they are not completely satisfied with such recognition, they, as citizens of the State, may petition the legislature to amend or otherwise to change that recognition. Except for the possibility of becoming entitled to Federal services as Indians, the position of this group of Indians would not be enhanced by enactment of this bill.

Ultimately, the Congress amended the bill as requested by the Department of the Interior by including the following language: ''Nothing in this Act shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians.'' Thus, the Indians of Robeson and adjoining counties were designated as Lumbee Indians, but not granted any eligibility for services or benefits.

The Department of the Interior has interpreted the 1956 law as preventing the Lumbee Indians from utilizing the Federal Acknowledgment Process to become a federally-recognized Indian tribe. In 1989, the Solicitor for the Department of the Interior concluded that the 1956 law forbids a government-to-government relationship with the Lumbee Indians.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, this bill undermines that verbal promise. Constitutionally sound agreements to the Federal Government must be adhered to. I think we should all agree to that. Nations fall apart when people walk back commitments to one another.

The entire foundation of Tribal-Federal relations today is premised on both sides upholding commitments, agreements, and treaties made two centuries ago by our ancestors and our Founding Fathers.

Why do we uphold agreements?

Why do we uphold treaties? It is about trust.

The cornerstone to Tribal law is the adherence to promises made hundreds of years ago. The Lumbee must be held to that standard, that commitment from 70 years ago. Granting the Lumbee Tribal recognition sets a dangerous precedent. Granting them recognition by going around this 100-year-old process opens the floodgates for anyone who claims themselves a Tribe to receive specific benefits through politics not merit. This will lead to a vast and irresponsible increase in Federal spending.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, this will lead to a vast and irresponsible increase in Federal spending. I would like to respectfully refute the claim that this does not increase spending.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the CBO report from the 117th Congress scoring the exact same bill at a cost of $726 million over 10 years.

H.R. 2758, LUMBEE RECOGNITION ACT AS PASSED BY THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON NOVEMBER 1, 2021

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—		
	2023	2023–2027	2023–2032
Direct Spending (Outlays) ..	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (−) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	363	not estimated

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? No.

Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2033? No.

Mandate Effects:

Contains intergovernmental mandate? No.

Contains private-sector mandate? No.

The legislation would:

Provide federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina

Extend services and benefits to the tribe provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service

Authorizes the Bureau of Indian Affairs to take land into trust for the benefit of the tribe

Estimated budgetary effects would mainly stem from:

Providing federal benefits to the newly recognized tribe

Legislation summary: H.R. 2758 would extend federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, thereby making the tribe and its members eligible for various federal programs.

Estimated Federal cost: The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 2758 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall within budget functions 450 (community and regional development) and 550 (health).

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION UNDER H.R. 2758

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—					
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2023–2027
Bureau of Indian Affairs:						
Estimated Authorization	0	15	33	37	43	128
Estimated Outlays	0	10	27	36	43	116
Indian Health Service:						
Estimated Authorization	0	39	79	80	81	279
Estimated Outlays	0	29	65	75	78	247
Total Changes:						
Estimated Authorization	0	54	112	117	124	407
Estimated Outlays	0	39	92	111	121	363

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted by the end of 2022. Providing federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina would allow the tribe and its members to receive benefits from various programs administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS). CBO expects that those agencies and the tribe would require over a year to document the tribe's membership and approve contracts for services, so no federal spending would occur until 2024. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2758 would cost $363 million over the 2023–2027 period, assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts.

Bureau of Indian Affairs: The Department of the Interior, primarily through BIA, provides funding to federally recognized tribes for various purposes, including child welfare services, adult care, community development, and general assistance. Based on recent per capita expenditures for other federally recognized tribes located in the eastern United States, CBO estimates that providing BIA services would cost $116 million over the 2023–2027 period, assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts. CBO expects that most of that funding would go toward law enforcement and infrastructure needs on the tribe's reservation.

Indian health service: H.R. 2758 also would make members of the Lumbee Tribe eligible to receive health benefits from the IHS. Using information from the tribe, CBO estimates that about 44,000 of the tribe's 63,000 members live in the service area that is covered by IHS. CBO expects that the cost to service those people would be similar to current IHS beneficiaries—about $1,700 for each person annually over the 2023–2027 period. Assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts and adjusting for anticipated inflation, CBO estimates that providing IHS benefits for the Lumbee Tribe would cost $247 million over the 2023–2027 period.

Other Federal agencies: In addition to BIA and IHS funding, certain Indian tribes also receive support from other federal agencies, including the Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services. Based on their status as a tribe recognized by North Carolina, the Lumbee already receive funding from those agencies. Thus, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2758 would not increase spending for those programs.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: None.

Increase in long-term deficits: None.

Mandates: None.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Julia Aman (Bureau of Indian Affairs), Rob Stewart (Indian Health Service); Mandates: Rachel Austin.

Estimate Reviewed By: Justin Humphrey, Chief, Finance, Housing, and Education Cost Estimates Unit; H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, just because CBO this time around didn't score it, doesn't mean it doesn't have a cost. It just means they didn't score it. The score from it 2 years ago was three-quarters of a billion dollars.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1101, the so-called Lumbee Fairness Act.

I am proud to represent North Carolina's 11th District, which is the home of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, a Tribal Nation rich in culture, language, and sovereignty that is a true treasure to the State of North Carolina and to the United States.

In stark contrast, it must be noted that the Lumbee community has no standing treaties with the Federal Government, no reservation land, and no common language. The Office of Federal Acknowledgment under the U.S. Department of the Interior, or OFA, was established to provide a vigorous process that groups seeking Federal recognition must go through, including genealogical and historical research.

This legislation wholly bypasses the OFA process, and I believe that if the Lumbee community truly had a legitimate claim for Federal recognition, they would go through that process like other prospective Tribes have done.

Let us not circumvent our rules to bring this bill to the House floor with the purpose of circumventing the rules for an alleged Tribal Nation.

In my view, this legislation should have gone through the committee markup process before being put on the floor as a suspension bill, as has been done for numerous other bills this Congress, before being given consideration by the full House.

If the administration or Congress allows the Lumbee to bypass the OFA, it sends a clear message that other groups with dubious claims for Tribal recognition can also avoid the deliberation and scrutiny that the OFA petition process is designed to provide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this legislation.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, as someone who represents Tribal communities in Los Angeles County who also seek recognition, it is tough stuff when Tribal Nations are fighting with one another.

I hope that we can find a ''both/and'' rather than an ''either/or'' to many of these discussions. I rarely find folks are trying to fake it and pretend that they are Native when they are not.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1101 would extend Federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, ensuring its members are eligible for the services and benefits provided to members of all federally recognized Tribes.

Again, I thank the sponsor for his work on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOLINARO). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1101, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to recommit on H.R. 115;

Passage of H.R. 115, if ordered; and

Motions to suspend the rules with respect to:

S. 3448; and

H.R. 1101.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute or 2-minute votes.

MIDNIGHT RULES RELIEF ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to recommit on the bill (H.R. 115) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for ''midnight rules'', and for other purposes, offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 198, nays 211, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 508]

YEAS—198

Adams
Aguilar
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NAYS—211

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—21

Allred
Blumenauer
Bowman
Chavez-DeRemer
Crow
Evans
Garcia, Mike
Granger
Grijalva
Hoyer
Kelly (PA)
LaMalfa
Lieu
McHenry
Pelosi
Pettersen
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Trone
Waltz
Wild

□ 1658

Messrs. KUSTOFF, JOYCE of Pennsylvania, FITZGERALD, MOORE of Alabama, VAN DREW, STAUBER, GRAVES of Louisiana, LUCAS, and BABIN changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. PRESSLEY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I missed a vote today on the Motion to Recommit on H.R. 115. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 508.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 210, nays 201, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 509]

YEAS—210

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger

Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—201

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schneider
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—18

Blumenauer
Bowman
Chavez-DeRemer
Crow
Espaillat
Estes
Evans
Garcia, Mike
Granger
Grijalva
Kelly (PA)
Lieu
McHenry
Pelosi
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Scholten
Waltz

□ 1705

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. ESTES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 509.

Stated against:

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 509.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I was not present to vote today on Roll Call No. 509, H.R. 115 due to an unforeseen matter. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 509.

NEVER AGAIN EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2023

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3448) to reauthorize the Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to support Holocaust education programs, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 12, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 510]

YEAS—402

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amo
Amodei
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burgess
Burlison
Bush
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crockett
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Fong
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, V.
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Murphy
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Peltola
Pence
Perez
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Posey
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Ross
Rouzer
Ruiz
Rulli
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Suozzi
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wied
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—12

Arrington
Biggs
Boebert
Brecheen
Burchett
Crane
Good (VA)
Greene (GA)
Massie
Rosendale
Roy
Rutherford

NOT VOTING—16

Blumenauer	Granger	Porter
Bowman	Grijalva	Rodgers (WA)
Chavez-DeRemer	Kelly (PA)	Sarbanes
Crow	Lieu	Waltz
Evans	McHenry	
Garcia, Mike	Pelosi	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1709

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 510, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA.

LUMBEE FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1101) to amend the Lumbee Act of 1956, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 311, nays 96, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 511]

YEAS—311

Adams	Casar	Espaillat
Aguilar	Case	Feenstra
Alford	Casten	Ferguson
Allred	Castor (FL)	Finstad
Amo	Castro (TX)	Fischbach
Amodei	Cherfilus-McCormick	Fitzgerald
Auchincloss	Chu	Fitzpatrick
Bacon	Ciscomani	Fletcher
Baird	Clark (MA)	Flood
Balderson	Clarke (NY)	Fong
Banks	Cleaver	Foster
Barr	Clyburn	Foushee
Barragán	Cole	Frankel, Lois
Beatty	Connolly	Frost
Bentz	Correa	Gallego
Bera	Costa	Garamendi
Bergman	Craig	Garbarino
Beyer	Crawford	García (IL)
Bice	Crenshaw	Garcia (TX)
Bishop (GA)	Crockett	Garcia, Robert
Bishop (NC)	Cuellar	Goldman (NY)
Blunt Rochester	D'Esposito	Gomez
Bonamici	Davids (KS)	Gonzales, Tony
Bost	Davidson	Gonzalez, V.
Boyle (PA)	Davis (IL)	Gottheimer
Brown	Davis (NC)	Graves (LA)
Brownley	Dean (PA)	Graves (MO)
Buchanan	DeGette	Green, Al (TX)
Bucshon	DeLauro	Griffith
Budzinski	DelBene	Guthrie
Bush	Deluzio	Harder (CA)
Calvert	DeSaulnier	Hern
Caraveo	Dingell	Higgins (LA)
Carbajal	Doggett	Hill
Cárdenas	Duarte	Himes
Carey	Duncan	Hinson
Carson	Dunn (FL)	Horsford
Carter (GA)	Emmer	Houchin
Carter (LA)	Escobar	Houlahan
Carter (TX)	Eshoo	Hoyer
Cartwright	Espaillat	Hoyle (OR)
Hudson	Menendez	Scott, Austin
Huffman	Meng	Scott, David
Huizenga	Meuser	Sessions
Hunt	Mfume	Sewell
Issa	Miller (OH)	Sherrill
Ivey	Miller (WV)	Simpson
Jackson (IL)	Miller-Meeks	Slotkin
Jackson (NC)	Molinaro	Smith (MO)
Jackson (TX)	Moolenaar	Smith (NE)
Jacobs	Moore (AL)	Smith (NJ)
James	Moore (UT)	Smith (WA)
Jayapal	Moore (WI)	Sorensen
Jeffries	Morelle	Soto
Jordan	Moulton	Spanberger
Joyce (OH)	Mrvan	Stansbury
Kamlager-Dove	Mullin	Stanton
Kaptur	Murphy	Stauber
Kean (NJ)	Nadler	Steel
Keating	Napolitano	Stefanik
Kelly (IL)	Neal	Steil
Khanna	Neguse	Steube
Kiggans (VA)	Nehls	Strickland
Kildee	Newhouse	Suozzi
Kiley	Norcross	Swalwell
Kilmer	Nunn (IA)	Sykes
Kim (CA)	Obernolte	Takano
Krishnamoorthi	Ocasio-Cortez	Thanedar
Kuster	Omar	Thompson (CA)
LaHood	Owens	Thompson (MS)
Landsman	Pallone	Thompson (PA)
Langworthy	Panetta	Timmons
Larsen (WA)	Pappas	Titus
Larson (CT)	Perez	Tlaib
Latta	Pettersen	Tokuda
LaTurner	Pfluger	Tonko
Lawler	Phillips	Torres (CA)
Lee (CA)	Pingree	Torres (NY)
Lee (FL)	Pocan	Trahan
Lee (NV)	Posey	Trone
Lee (PA)	Pressley	Turner
Lee Carter	Quigley	Underwood
Leger Fernandez	Ramirez	Valadao
Lesko	Raskin	Vargas
Letlow	Reschenthaler	Vasquez
Levin	Rogers (AL)	Veasey
Luetkemeyer	Rogers (KY)	Velázquez
Luna	Rose	Wagner
Lynch	Ross	Walberg
Mace	Rouzer	Waters
Magaziner	Ruiz	Watson Coleman
Malliotakis	Rulli	Webster (FL)
Maloy	Ruppersberger	Wenstrup
Manning	Ryan	Westerman
Matsui	Salinas	Wexton
McBath	Sánchez	Wied
McCaul	Scalise	Wild
McClain	Scanlon	Williams (GA)
McClellan	Schakowsky	Wilson (FL)
McCollum	Schneider	Wilson (SC)
McGarvey	Scholten	Wittman
McGovern	Schrier	Womack
McIver	Schweikert	Yakym
Meeks	Scott (VA)	Zinke

NAYS—96

Aderholt	Fry	Miller (IL)
Allen	Fulcher	Mills
Arrington	Gimenez	Mooney
Babin	Golden (ME)	Moran
Bean (FL)	Good (VA)	Moskowitz
Biggs	Gooden (TX)	Norman
Bilirakis	Gosar	Ogles
Boebert	Green (TN)	Palmer
Brecheen	Greene (GA)	Peltola
Burchett	Grothman	Pence
Burgess	Guest	Perry
Burlison	Hageman	Rosendale
Cammack	Harris	Roy
Carl	Harshbarger	Rutherford
Cline	Hayes	Salazar
Cloud	Johnson (SD)	Self
Clyde	Joyce (PA)	Sherman
Cohen	Kelly (MS)	Smucker
Collins	Kennedy	Spartz
Comer	Kustoff	Stevens
Crane	LaLota	Strong
Curtis	LaMalfa	Tenney
DesJarlais	Lamborn	Tiffany
Diaz-Balart	Lofgren	Van Drew
Donalds	Lopez	Van Duyne
Edwards	Loudermilk	Van Orden
Ellzey	Lucas	Wasserman Schultz
Estes	Luttrell	Weber (TX)
Ezell	Mann	Williams (NY)
Fallon	Massie	Williams (TX)
Fleischmann	Mast	
Foxx	McClintock	
Franklin, Scott	McCormick	

NOT VOTING—22

Balint	Garcia, Mike	Pelosi
Blumenauer	Granger	Peters
Bowman	Grijalva	Porter
Chavez-DeRemer	Johnson (GA)	Rodgers (WA)
Courtney	Kelly (PA)	Sarbanes
Crow	Lieu	Waltz
De La Cruz	McHenry	
Evans	Nickel	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1713

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on Roll Call Nos. 506 through 511 today. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 506, NAY on Roll Call No. 507, YEA on Roll Call No. 508, NAY on Roll Call No. 509, YEA on Roll Call No. 510, and YEA on Roll Call No. 511.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL SHOOTING

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, my community of Madison, Wisconsin, was devastated by a senseless shooting at the Abundant Life Christian School that tragically claimed the lives of one student, one teacher, and the shooter, and left six others injured with two students still in critical condition.

These were innocent lives, innocent victims of senseless violence, and we mourn their loss with their families and loved ones and the entire Abundant Life community.

We also give our sincere thanks for the bravery and quick response of our law enforcement, first responders, and local healthcare workers who have worked tirelessly to respond to this tragic event and save the lives of those injured.

The Abundant Life community, the students, the staff, and the parents are all victims of this traumatic experience, and what happened this week will live on in our memories.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to think about what we can do to prevent us from having to stand here again for yet another moment of silence. We must do better, and we must turn these moments of silence into moments of action.

I ask all Members in this Chamber, as well as all Members and staff in the Capitol, to rise for a moment of silence in remembrance of the recent shooting at the Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisconsin.

THINK DIFFERENTLY TRANSPORTATION ACT

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 4107) to require Amtrak to report to Congress information on Amtrak compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 with respect to trains and stations.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 4107

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Think Differently Transportation Act''.

SEC. 2. REPORT ON AMTRAK ADA COMPLIANCE.

Section 24315(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) shall include an action plan for bringing Amtrak-served stations that are not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) into compliance with such Act, as required by the settlement agreement entered into in 2020 between Amtrak and the Department of Justice;

''(E) shall include a status report on—

''(i) Amtrak-served stations for which Amtrak is solely responsible for compliance with such Act based on a station assessment carried out by Amtrak, including a timeline for any required compliance with such Act, as required by the settlement agreement;

''(ii) Amtrak-served stations for which Amtrak has a shared responsibility for compliance with such Act based on a station assessment carried out by Amtrak or by the party responsible for such compliance, including a timeline for any required compliance with such Act for the portions of the station for which Amtrak is the responsible party consistent with the terms of the settlement agreement, identifying who is responsible for compliance (and the status of the compliance of each responsible party with such Act) for such portions and the timeline for compliance in cases in which Amtrak is not the responsible party; and

''(iii) the status of compliance with such Act for all Amtrak-served stations for which Amtrak is not the responsible party, nor is responsible for a portion of the station, and identify the entity or entities that have responsibility for compliance with such Act, based on a station assessment carried out by Amtrak or the party responsible under such Act.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) Amtrak may meet the requirements described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of paragraph (1)(E) by demonstrating that Amtrak took reasonable measures to obtain cooperation from responsible entities.

''(4) Amtrak shall submit the action plan and status report required under subparagraphs (D) and (E) of paragraph (1)—

''(A) annually while the settlement agreement referred to in paragraph (1)(D) is in effect; and

''(B) every 5 years beginning on the first day the settlement is no longer in effect.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EDWARDS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on S. 4107.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to stand again in support of my bill, the Think Differently Transportation Act, as it returns to the floor after minor amendments that were made in the Senate.

After passing this bill today, the bill will head to the President's desk to be signed into law. This bill is one of several initiatives that passed the House to build off of the work I began as Dutchess County executive in New York State, the ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative.

This was a call to action to create a supportive and welcoming environment for those living with intellectual, developmental, and physical disabilities. The Think Differently Transportation Act does just that.

The bill requires that Amtrak submit to Congress and the President an annual report with an expected timeline for bringing Amtrak trains and stations into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Amtrak stations and trains should be fully accessible to all Americans with disabilities and of every ability, and fully compliant, of course, with Federal law.

Mr. Speaker, the ADA was passed in 1990 and established a 20-year timeframe for intercity rail stations to be accessible to those with disabilities. As of July 2023, sadly, Amtrak has only brought 30 percent of their 385 stations that they are responsible for into ADA compliance. Of course, this is unacceptable, and it is the reason that this bill is necessary.

The Think Differently Transportation Act is strongly supported by Republicans and Democrats, and it allows Congress to have the appropriate oversight of Amtrak to ensure it complies with its obligations under the law. The bill is a big step forward that Congress can take to address accessibility barriers to traveling by rail.

I certainly thank Senator DUCKWORTH for taking up the bill and her support in the Senate and, of course, working to ensure its adoption there.

Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the Think Differently Transportation Act, a bipartisan bill that will advance accessibility to Amtrak-served stations.

Amtrak received $22 billion in the bipartisan infrastructure law, or BIL, to buy new equipment, invest in station accessibility, and reduce the backlog of capital projects and operating needs.

In the BIL, Congress directed Amtrak to make all of the stations that Amtrak serves accessible. The Think Differently Transportation Act, as led by Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH and passed by the Senate, will require Amtrak to report annually to Congress on the accessibility status for all of the more than 500 stations Amtrak serves, not just the ones where it has the responsibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Thanks to the BIL, Amtrak is investing in new equipment and upgrading stations. We need assurances that these investments are taking into account people with disabilities, as required under the ADA. This bill helps to do just that.

This bill differs slightly from the House companion version of the Think Differently Transportation Act, sponsored by Representative MOLINARO, which I am proud to cosponsor and that the House has previously passed.

This version included a requirement that Amtrak report on accessibility of its railcars in addition to stations. While that requirement has been left out of this version, we are hopeful that Amtrak will also include these updates on how their equipment is and will be accessible to people with all types of disabilities.

My friend, the late Representative Donald Payne, Jr., whose 66th birthday would have been today, cosponsored and helped write the House companion version of the Think Differently Transportation Act, and I am pleased that this bill, soon to become law, will be part of his legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 4107, the Think Differently Transportation Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MOLINARO, as well, and I think of Don Payne at this moment. I am pleased to support the Think Differently Transportation Act, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, first, let me extend my appreciation to my colleague for his support and cosponsorship of the legislation.

I, too, wish to extend our prayers and love to the family of Donald Payne, but I also am grateful for Representative Payne's leadership on this very issue.

As I mentioned, this is an important opportunity for the disability community to ensure that the barriers that they face to accessing Amtrak trains and stations are taken down.

When I first came to Congress, I actually couldn't believe that Amtrak hadn't adequately met the ADA requirements as Congress had previously mandated, and so we immediately got to work on this very piece of legislation.

It is certainly gratifying to see the bill now about to become law because it addresses injustices for those with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities when they travel by train.

As this might be one of the last times I speak before the House, Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my appreciation to Members on both sides of the aisle. There are so many individuals with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities, like my very own daughter, who have yet to have been granted full access to the quality of life that so many others get to enjoy.

If Congress can continue to take incremental and, in some cases, bold steps to break down barriers and create opportunities for those of every ability, we can truly ensure that the rights, privileges, and opportunities that are granted and protected by this House, our Constitution, and this very government are extended to those too often overlooked. Those living with disabilities face some of the greatest challenges of any American, and we ought to find new ways to break down those barriers and create opportunities for them.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 4107.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1730

THINK DIFFERENTLY DATABASE ACT

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 670) to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a clearinghouse on intellectual disabilities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 670

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Think Differently Database Act''.

SEC. 2. PROMOTING AWARENESS OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall establish and update periodically a publicly available website to provide information with respect to resources and information for people with a disability and the caregivers and families of such people. Such website shall include—

(1) information on eligibility to receive medical assistance under a State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) (or a waiver of such plan) based on a disability, including general information about eligibility under subclauses (XIII), (XV), (XVI), and (XIX) of section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(ii));

(2) which States offer eligibility under subclauses (XIII), (XV), (XVI), and (XIX) of section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(ii));

(3) each State's specific eligibility requirements, if applicable, under subclauses (XIII), (XV), (XVI), and (XIX) of section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(ii));

(4) information about how to contact each State's Medicaid office for information about Medicaid, including links and phone numbers for State contacts;

(5) general information on Medicaid-covered long-term services and supports that may be available to individuals eligible for medical assistance under a State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) (or a waiver of such plan); and

(6) where applicable, the average amount of time that individuals newly enrolled in a State's waiver program for home and community-based services in the past 12 months were on the list of individuals waiting to enroll in such waiver program, in such a manner and process as described in section 441.311(d)(1)(iii) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) PROMOTION.—The Secretary shall, as applicable and appropriate, identify and disseminate promotional activities to improve, among people with a disability and the caretakers and families of such people, the awareness of the resources included in the website established under subsection (a), such as through collaboration with the Social Security Administration during its annual updates to the Red Book.

(c) MODEL.—In establishing the website under this section, the Secretary may use the website thinkdifferently.net as a model.

(d) NONAPPLICATION OF PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995''), shall not apply to the implementation of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 670, the Think Differently Database Act led by Representative MARCUS MOLINARO.

This legislation will make it easier for individuals with disabilities to understand what Medicaid covered services are available to them.

The Medicaid program provides health coverage to nearly 80 million people, and in 2021, an estimated 9.5 million people were enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of their disability.

As a jointly funded Federal-State program, Medicaid program eligibility and coverage can differ significantly from State to State. One caregiving report found that online information about caregiving services can be hard to find, confusing, inconsistent, and not consumer-oriented.

This bipartisan bill would direct HHS to establish a website that is designed to help people with disabilities determine their Medicaid eligibility, making it easier for them to get to the care they need.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MOLINARO for his tireless work as a champion for people with disabilities. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 670, the Think Differently Database Act. This legislation would require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a website to provide people with disabilities information about the different ways that they could be eligible for Medicaid, as well as the services and supports that they can access through each State's Medicaid program and whether there is a wait list to access the home- and community-based services that they often need.

Medicaid is really a lifeline for people with disabilities who are less likely to have access to other sources of coverage, and even when they do have employer-sponsored coverage or Medicare, that coverage typically does not cover the services they need, including home- and community-based services.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult for people with disabilities and their families and caretakers to access the information they need about whether they are eligible for Medicaid in the State in which they live, whether there are wait lists for the services they need, and how to apply for Medicaid.

This bill seeks to overcome some of those barriers by making information available to people with disabilities and their families and caretakers in a single, national resource.

I thank Representatives SHERRILL and MOLINARO for their leadership on this legislation and encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 670.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO), my good friend.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend (Mr. GUTHRIE) for his leadership on the Energy and Commerce Committee in support of this legislation. I certainly look forward to his leadership in the 119th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first bill I introduced when I came to the House of Representatives. As noted, I am the parent of four children, one of whom lives with a disability. My wife and I have navigated the Medicaid supported system like every other American, and it is confusing, it is burdensome, it is bureaucratic, and many times, it is just too difficult to find your way to Medicaid-supported services.

Let me assure you, there is always a waiting list, and most families around America with individuals that they care for with the intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities, don't have the time to find their way to local service providers and certainly don't always know the ins and outs of accessing those services.

It becomes a full-time job. That is why, by the way, most families that are caring for those individuals with disabilities don't have two parents working, and many rely on Medicaid for much broader support like SNAP benefits and other subsidies and social services because they just can't find their way to services and supports.

It is actually one of the last, in some ways, great prejudices in America, the bias of low expectation. The feeling that certain people can't achieve certain things because we perceive they can't based on their abilities and, sadly, accessing even the robust services supported by Federal and State governments through Medicaid is just insufficient.

This bill builds on the initiative I began in local government in Dutchess County, New York. Our ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative was a call to action. It was meant to break down barriers and create opportunities for all those of every ability.

In fact, if you go to thinkdifferently.net, you will see the county-level version of what this bill seeks to create. This bill requires HHS to create a database of all resources available to individuals of every ability and their caregivers in a searchable format.

The bill will now expand the county-level programs that we created to a Federal level for Americans of every ability.

Again, I thank incoming chairman, Mr. GUTHRIE, but also Chairwoman MCMORRIS RODGERS and her staff at Energy and Commerce for working with me and my staff over the past year to make this bill a reality and hopefully find its way into law.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to ask my colleagues to support the bill. I am grateful to Representative SHERRILL and, of course, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for embracing this much-needed next step. It is a minor step, but one that is necessary.

I can't, for me, think of any better way to close my service in the 118th Congress than passing what had become and is my top priority, this piece of legislation, which sets forth to break down barriers and create opportunities for everyone of every ability.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my good friend's leadership when he said everybody of every ability. He is here and he has served everybody in the 118th Congress. He is going to be missed and his leadership is going to be missed and we appreciate him very much.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any further speakers on my side, but I just want to express my appreciation to my colleague Representative MOLINARO for sharing that personal account of how this matters for his family, and that just expands to so many other families in this country who really deserve to be able to access all of the services they need.

That is why I would reiterate that I very much support the Think Differently Database Act and encourage my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote for this very important bill that will help so many families, people with disabilities across this country, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank my good friend from the Hudson Valley, my Rockbound Highland home, who, unfortunately, didn't beat Navy this weekend. He is from a great area of our country, a beautiful place, and has well represented the Hudson Valley. I look forward to working together again at some point in some place.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great bill. I encourage a ''yes'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 670, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ''A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a website to promote awareness of available resources for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STOP INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE ACT

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1351) to study and prevent child abuse in youth residential programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1351

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act''.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall seek to enter into a contract with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (referred to in this section as the ''National Academies'') to conduct a study to examine the state of youth in youth residential programs and make recommendations.

(b) STUDY COMPONENTS.—Pursuant to the contract under subsection (a), the National Academies shall, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act, and every 2 years thereafter for a period of 10 years, issue a report informed by the study conducted under such subsection that includes—

(1) identification of the nature, prevalence, severity, and scope of child abuse, neglect, and deaths in youth residential programs, including types of abuse and neglect, causes of abuse, neglect, and deaths, and criteria used to assess abuse, neglect, and deaths;

(2) identification of all Federal and State funding sources for youth residential programs;

(3) identification of Federal data collection sources on youth in youth residential programs;

(4) identification of existing regulation of youth residential programs, including alternative licensing standards or licensing exemptions for youth residential programs;

(5) identification of existing standards of care of national accreditation entities that provide accreditation or certification of youth residential programs;

(6) identification of existing barriers in policy for blending and braiding of funding sources to serve youth in community-based settings;

(7) recommendations for coordination by agencies of data on youth in youth residential programs;

(8) recommendations for the improvement of oversight of youth residential programs receiving Federal funding;

(9) identification of risk assessment tools, including projects that provide for the development of research-based strategies for risk assessments relating to the health, safety (including with respect to the use of seclusion and restraints), and well-being of youth in youth residential programs;

(10) recommendations to support the development and implementation of education and training resources for professional and paraprofessional personnel in the fields of health care, law enforcement, judiciary, social work, child protection (including the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect), education, child care, and other relevant fields, and individuals such as court appointed special advocates and guardians ad litem, including education and training resources regarding—

(A) the unique needs, experiences, and outcomes of youth with lived experience in youth residential programs;

(B) the enhancement of interagency communication among child protective service agencies, protection and advocacy systems,

State licensing agencies, State Medicaid agencies, and accreditation agencies;

(C) best practices to eliminate the use of physical, mechanical, and chemical restraint and seclusion, and to promote the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, culturally and linguistically sensitive services, mental health supports, trauma- and grief-informed care, and crisis de-escalation interventions; and

(D) the legal duties of such professional and paraprofessional personnel and youth residential program personnel and the responsibilities of such professionals and personnel to protect the legal rights of children in youth residential programs, consistent with applicable State and Federal law;

(11) recommendations to improve accessibility and development of community-based alternatives to youth residential programs;

(12) recommendations for innovative programs designed to provide community support and resources to at-risk youth, including programs that—

(A) support continuity of education, including removing barriers to access;

(B) provide mentorship;

(C) support the provision of crisis intervention services and in-home or outpatient mental health and substance use disorder treatment; and

(D) provide other resources to families and parents or guardians that assist in preventing the need for out-of-home placement of youth in youth residential programs;

(13) recommendations relating to the development, dissemination, outreach, engagement, or training associated with advancing least-restrictive, evidence-based, trauma and grief-informed, and developmentally and culturally competent care for youth in youth residential programs and youth at risk of being placed in such programs;

(14) recommendations on best practices regarding the health and safety (including reduction or elimination of use of seclusion and restraints), care, and treatment of youth in youth residential programs to convey to States;

(15) recommendations to improve the coordination, dissemination, and implementation of best practices regarding the health and safety (including use, reduction, or elimination of seclusion and restraints), care, and treatment of youth in youth residential programs among child welfare systems, licensing agencies, accreditation organizations, other relevant monitoring and enforcement entities, State child welfare agencies, State Medicaid agencies, State mental and behavioral health agencies, consumers, and State protection advocacy centers; and

(16) identification of aggregate data, including process-oriented data such as length of stay and use of restraints, and seclusion and outcome-oriented data such as discharge setting and ability to be safely maintained in school and community at least 12 months after discharge, including—

(A) recommendations on how such data should be shared across child-placing agencies and stakeholders, including individuals receiving services, families of such individuals, and advocates; and

(B) identification of barriers to sharing information across child-placing agencies.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the duties described in subsection (b), the National Academies shall consult with—

(1) child advocates, including attorneys experienced in working with youth overrepresented in the child welfare system or the juvenile justice system;

(2) health professionals, including mental health and substance use disorder professionals, nurses, physicians, social workers, and other health care providers who provide services to youth who may be served by residential programs;

(3) protection and advocacy systems;

(4) individuals experienced in working with youth with disabilities, including emotional, mental health, and substance use disorders;

(5) individuals with lived experience as children and youth in youth residential programs, including individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities and individuals with emotional, mental health, or substance use disorders;

(6) representatives of State and local child protective services agencies and other relevant public agencies;

(7) parents or guardians of children and youth with emotional, mental health, or substance use disorder needs;

(8) parents of children and youth with intellectual disabilities and autism;

(9) experts on issues related to child abuse and neglect in youth residential programs;

(10) administrators of youth residential programs;

(11) education professionals who provide services to youth with complex needs in youth residential programs;

(12) State educational agencies;

(13) local educational agencies;

(14) Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations;

(15) State legislators;

(16) State licensing agencies;

(17) the Administration for Children and Families;

(18) the Administration for Community Living;

(19) the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration;

(20) the Department of Justice;

(21) the Indian Health Service;

(22) the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services;

(23) the National Council on Disability; and

(24) others, as appropriate.

(d) REPORT SUBMISSION AND PUBLICATION.—The National Academies shall submit to the Secretary for dissemination to relevant State agencies, and make publicly available, a report on the comprehensive review conducted under subsection (b), including the findings of the National Academies under subsection (b);

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.—The term ''child abuse and neglect'' has the meaning given such term in section 3 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5101 note).

(2) CULTURALLY COMPETENT.—The term ''culturally competent'' has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002).

(3) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The terms ''Indian Tribe'' and ''Tribal organization'' have the meanings given such terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(4) PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEMS.—The term ''protection and advocacy system'' means a system established by a State or Indian Tribe under section 143 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15043).

(5) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(6) YOUTH.—The term ''youth'' means an individual who has not attained the age of 22.

(7) YOUTH RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''youth residential program'' means each location of a facility or program operated by a public or private entity that, with respect to one or more youth who are unrelated to the owner or operator of the facility or program—

(i) provides a residential environment, such as—

(I) a program with a wilderness or outdoor experience, expedition, or intervention;

(II) a boot camp experience or other experience designed to simulate characteristics of basic military training or correctional regimes;

(III) an education or therapeutic boarding school;

(IV) a behavioral modification program;

(V) a residential treatment center or facility;

(VI) a qualified residential treatment program (as defined in section 472(k)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 672(k)(4)));

(VII) a psychiatric residential treatment program that meets the requirements of subpart D of part 441 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations);

(VIII) a group home serving children and youth placed by any placing authority;

(IX) an intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities; or

(X) any residential program that is utilized as an alternative to incarceration for justice involved youth, adjudicated youth, or youth deemed delinquent; and

(ii) serves youth who have a history or diagnosis of—

(I) an emotional, behavioral, or mental health disorder;

(II) a substance misuse or use disorder, including alcohol misuse or use disorders; or

(III) an intellectual, developmental, physical, or sensory disability.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''youth residential program'' does not include—

(i) a hospital licensed by a State; or

(ii) a foster family home that—

(I) provides 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State child welfare services agency has placement and care responsibility; and

(II) is licensed and regulated by the State as a foster family home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. SCHRIER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. GUTHRIE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1351, the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act.

In 2022, there were approximately 34,000 children and adolescents placed in these youth residential treatment programs. These programs play a pivotal role in helping young people navigate mental health and behavioral health challenges. Unfortunately, there have been many instances of youth being mistreated in certain residential treatment programs. This is unacceptable.

S. 1351 will require the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a study examining the state of youth residential programs. It also requires recommendations on how to improve oversight, disseminate education and training resources, and enhance interagency coordination, among others.

Every residential treatment program should be a secure place for children to

heal. Parents and guardians deserve transparency.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1351, the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act. This legislation, sponsored by Representatives KHANNA and CARTER in the House, would direct the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a study on youth residential treatment programs.

These programs offer a variety of services to adolescents, teens, and young adults with emotional, mental health, or substance use disorder needs.

Residential treatment can play a pivotal role in helping young people navigate serious behavioral and emotional challenges, but too often these programs only harm these children, subjecting them to abuse and neglect.

Young people deserve to be safe and properly cared for and to receive treatment in the least restrictive environment that meets their needs.

Youth residential treatment programs need proper oversight to ensure that young people are protected against abuse and neglect. This legislation would provide greater transparency around the prevalence of abuse in youth residential treatment programs, as well as recommendations to improve the implementation of best practices regarding the health and the safety of young people in these systems.

In carrying out the study, this legislation would require the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine to consult with a wide range of stakeholders. This would include health professionals, individuals who have lived in youth residential programs, parents, child abuse experts, program administrators, and State and Federal agencies, among others.

I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort to strengthen accountability and transparency in youth residential treatment programs.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on S. 1351, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), my good friend.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act, which I am proud to lead with Senator MERKLEY and Representative KHANNA.

Before I begin, I will start by thanking Paris Hilton for her hard work, her bravery, and her vulnerability in sharing her story about abuse at the hands of a youth residential treatment facility. This truly was a courageous act on her part.

Mr. Speaker, Paris is already making a difference, and I applaud her for using her voice to advance such a critical cause.

When Paris first met with me last Congress and shared her story about being in institutional care as a child, I will be quite honest, I was horrified. I believe the words out of my mouth were: This sounds like it is being run by the cartel.

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Let me tell you, everything that I have heard since that meeting—from policy experts, advocates, and survivors—has confirmed this terrifying truth. One child, just one child experiencing abuse, is too many.

Thousands of children are being funneled into seemingly safe institutional care facilities only to be dehumanized and abused in a crisis, one that I am so glad there is bipartisan and bicameral support to address.

There are as many as 200,000 minors in youth residential programs or facilities across the country. At their best, youth residential programs provide counseling, treatment, and care for struggling teens and children. At their worst, they subject innocent children to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, which has led to hospitalizations, prolonged trauma, and even death.

Disgustingly, far too many of these centers are operating at their worst.

The Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act, which I am proud to be the Republican lead of in the House of Representatives, would increase transparency and accountability for these programs so that parents and children alike have an accurate understanding of the practices, goals, and ethics of these centers.

It will also help to establish best practices for health, safety, care, and treatment so that there is a Federal standard for how institutionalized youth are treated. This will also give parents the information they need to make an informed decision about whether institutional care is the best option for their child.

Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to intervene on State rights here. Yes, they are regulated by the States, and I want to be clear to my colleagues that the States will continue to regulate them. This simply calls for more transparency, responsibility, and accountability. It gives parents the opportunity to see if these centers truly are using seclusion or physical restraints. It does not intend to interfere with the States regulating these facilities.

As you know, I am a healthcare professional, and we abide by the Hippocratic oath, do no harm. It is time institutional care facilities were held to that same standard.

There are a lot of good facilities out there, there is no question about that, but there are some bad ones. That is what we are trying to identify here. Every profession has bad actors.

I am a pharmacist, the second most well-respected profession in America. We have bad actors, just like every profession does. That is what we are trying to identify here.

It is time that institutional care facilities were held to the same standards of the Hippocratic oath, do no harm.

This bill has already passed the Senate, and I thank Speaker JOHNSON, Leader SCALISE, and many others for bringing this bill before the House here today. We have the votes, and it is time to get this done.

Who would vote against this? We all want our children safe. This is simply calling for more accountability and more transparency. This is simply calling for best practices. This is an attempt to identify bad actors.

The children in these facilities can't wait another Congress for change. Sunlight is the best disinfectant there is, and we are going to light the institutional care industry up with transparency and oversight because our children deserve it.

I commend Senator MERKLEY and Representative KHANNA for working on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA), to whom I am so grateful for sponsoring this legislation with Mr. CARTER.

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SCHRIER for her leadership, Representative CARTER for working across the aisle, and the leadership for bringing this bill on the floor for a vote.

I join Representative CARTER in thanking Paris Hilton and her husband, Carter, both up in the gallery as we speak. They really helped drive this and start this.

I had coffee with Carter 4 years ago, and we were talking about technology in my district. At the end of it, he says, ''By the way, I am married to Paris Hilton,'' like you just drop that at the end of a conversation.

I said: Paris Hilton. Okay. That is interesting.

Then he said: There is this issue I want to talk about.

I thought: Here we go. Here is some celebrity issue, and the person will fly in, do PR, and leave.

I said: Carter, what is it?

He talked about the institutional facilities, these congregate care facilities and the thousands of American kids who go there hoping to get assistance, hoping to get support, and instead face sexual abuse, horrific discipline, conditions where they aren't given enough food.

He said: You know, Paris went through that.

I was immediately struck by his vulnerability in sharing that. Then I met Paris, I met her mother, and I saw the emotion that she had. I also met so many survivors who told their stories. Representative CARTER knows this. Paris and Carter, her husband, and these survivors came to our offices again and again for years because they

wanted to do something with these experiences to make it better for America's children.

We are often so polarized in this Chamber. We disagree sometimes on, it seems like, everything. As we approach Christmas and approach these holidays, I think we can feel good that when it comes to America's children, we put them first. We did something right. We did something to help the American people, and we did that because of the commitment and leadership that Paris and so many survivors have shown.

I feel good today about being a Member of Congress, working with Representative CARTER, and proud of being part of this institution. I appreciate the leadership for allowing this bill to come. I hope it will pass unanimously.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members that the rules do not allow references to persons in the gallery.

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

As a pediatrician, I reiterate my support for S. 1351, the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act.

This is so important, as we have already heard through these stories, and we want to make sure that when our adolescents and young adults are sent off for care, they receive the best care and not abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying that there has been quite a bit of hard work put into this bill and quite a bit of persistence. Without referring to anybody in the gallery, I know there are people here who have worked really, really hard to get to where we are now.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to vote ''yes.'' I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1351.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

9/11 MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5401) to provide a one-time grant for the operation, security, and maintenance of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center to commemorate the events, and honor the victims, of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5401

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''9/11 Memorial and Museum Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM.—The term ''National September 11 Memorial & Museum'' means the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center Foundation, Inc., established to commemorate the events of, and honor the victims of, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, at the site of such attacks.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means the official organization, as in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, that—

(A) operates the National September 11 Memorial & Museum; and

(B) is an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

SEC. 3. ONE-TIME GRANT FOR NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose to the Office of the Secretary and Executive Management of the Department of Homeland Security, the Secretary shall award to the eligible entity a grant in an amount determined by the Secretary subject to subsection (c), to be used by such entity solely for the purposes described in subsection (b), if upon review of the application submitted pursuant to subsection (d), the Secretary makes a determination pursuant to subsection (e) that such entity satisfies the criteria required under subsection (f).

(b) PURPOSE.—The one-time grant awarded under subsection (a) shall be used by the eligible entity for the operation, security, and maintenance of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.

(c) GRANT AMOUNT.—The one-time grant under this section may not be for less than $5,000,000 or more than $10,000,000.

(d) APPLICATION.—To be considered for an award of the one-time grant under this section, the eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(e) REVIEW; DEADLINE FOR AWARD.—If the Secretary, after review of the application from the eligible entity, determines that the eligible entity satisfies the criteria under subsection (f), the Secretary shall award the one-time grant to the eligible entity, not later than 90 days after the date of receipt by the Secretary of the completed application submitted by such entity.

(f) CRITERIA.—In determining the amount of the one-time grant consistent with subsection (c), the Secretary shall consider the following:

(1) The needs of the eligible entity, and ability and commitment of such eligible entity to use grant funds, with respect to ensuring the security and safety of visitors at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.

(2) The number of visitors to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum who would benefit.

(3) The ability and commitment of the eligible entity to use grant funds to—

(A) preserve the facilities and grounds of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum; and

(B) educate future generations.

(4) The ability and commitment of the eligible entity to use grant funds to increase the numbers of economically disadvantaged visitors to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.

(g) CONDITION ON RECEIPT OF GRANT.—As a condition on receipt of a grant under this section, the eligible entity shall—

(1) provide for—

(A) free admission to all facilities and museums associated with the National September 11 Memorial & Museum for active and retired members of the Armed Forces, individuals who were registered first responders to the attacks of September 11, 2001, and family members of victims of such attacks; and

(B) dedicated free admission hours for the general public at least once a week; and

(2) allow for annual Federal audits of the financial statements of such entity, including revenues associated with ticket sales, charitable donations, grants, and all expenditures on salaries and operations, which shall be subject to review by the Secretary and made available to the public.

(h) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year for which the recipient obligates or expends funds made available to the recipient pursuant to this section, the recipient shall submit to the Committees on Natural Resources and Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Energy and Natural Resources and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that includes, for the fiscal year covered by the report, each of the following:

(1) Information relating to the amount of grant funds obligated or expended for the preceding fiscal year.

(2) Information relating to any purposes for which such funds were obligated or expended.

(3) Any other information the Secretary may require to effectively administer the one-time grant program under this section, as determined by the Secretary, if not later than the last day of the fiscal year the Secretary notified such entity of such requested information.

(i) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this section, and the activities authorized by this section are subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5401, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Representative D'ESPOSITO's bipartisan bill, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum Act.

This legislation provides a one-time grant to assist with the security costs for the 9/11 Memorial & Museum.

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum occupies the site of the former World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan. This unique facility serves as the principal tribute of remembrance and honor to the nearly 3,000 people killed in the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and February 26, 1993.

One of the focal points of the museum is an art installation with the quote, ''No day shall erase you from the memory of time.'' This is not merely a quote. It is a promise from each and every American that we will never forget the tragic events of 9/11. More than 23 years after these horrific attacks, we still remember the innocent men, women, and children who perished on that day.

Representative D'ESPOSITO's legislation will help ensure that the memories of those we lost on 9/11 remain eternal by providing a one-time grant, ranging from $5 million to $10 million, to assist with security costs for the memorial and museum.

As the location of one of the most high-profile terrorist attacks in American history, the museum shoulders more than $1 million in security costs per month. This important grant coming from the Department of Homeland Security's existing appropriations would help defray those significant security costs.

I thank Representative D'ESPOSITO for his efforts to advance this legislation. Yet again, he has proven himself to be a tireless advocate for his constituents and the people of New York. His important bill would help the 9/11 Memorial & Museum continue operations, increase safety measures, and provide free admission for military veterans, first responders, and victims' families.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this bill and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum Act.

This bill would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide a one-time grant to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City, as the chairman just mentioned, if future legislation authorizes such activity and if future legislation appropriates such funds.

This museum and memorial is the principal tribute of remembrance and honor for the nearly 3,000 people killed on 9/11. Over the years, Congress has provided significant financial support for the site and recognized it as the National 9/11 Memorial & Museum.

Though I rise today in support, I would like to highlight that the 9/11 museum has faced criticism since its opening related to some terminologies used in some of the exhibits. Organizations such as the Muslim Community Network and a coalition of prominent academics have raised concerns that the terminology used for Islamic extremism and terrorism is sometimes generalized, improperly defined, and excludes necessary context. In response, these groups have requested that an interfaith advisory council be established for the memorial and museum to increase inclusive representation, content review, and educational initiatives.

I acknowledge and deeply understand the significance and importance of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. It is a site for remembrance and mourning. Members of the House Natural Resources Committee will continue to support the ongoing management needs of the museum, but we encourage the museum's management to engage with stakeholders to develop an interfaith advisory council to ensure that the site is welcoming and representative of all.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1800

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, the chairman mentioned a quote that is affixed to the wall when you enter the 9/11 Memorial & Museum: ''No day shall erase you from the memory of time.''

That quote is affixed to 2,983 tiles, all painted with watercolors, a different shade of blue, to represent that clear blue sky on that Tuesday morning. The 2,983 tiles represent the victims of September 11, 2001, as well as the 1993 bombing.

On September 11, 2001, we lost thousands of people to an attack on our homeland. These individuals were mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and their absence is felt every single day.

Among those we lost were heroes who stared danger in the face and chose to run into peril to save their fellow man. Even now, more than two decades later, we continue to lose people to 9/11-related illnesses. As of today, there is someone suffering from a 9/11-related illness in every congressional district in the United States of America.

These were firefighters, cops, ironworkers, first responders, people just going to work in the financial district, everyday Americans.

Since that day, we have promised to never forget, to never forget those whose lives were cut short, never forget those who selflessly ran toward danger, never forget the resilience of this beautiful Nation in the days that followed, never forget the loved ones left behind, and never forget those who continue to suffer.

How do we keep this promise to never forget?

One important way is through continued support of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City. For years, the museum has told the story of that tragic day from the clear blue sky that I referenced, to the people who remember waking up that morning, to the fear and confusion that gripped the Nation, and to the rescue efforts that followed.

Outside the museum, two memorial pools are surrounded by the names of each and every victim on bronze parapets, making sure we never forget one single victim. I encourage everyone to visit this site.

No American under the age of 22 was alive during 9/11, and it is critical that we continue to teach our children and generations to come about the events of that day and how it changed our world forever. We must continue to teach them who was responsible for that attack on this Nation and hold them accountable.

The museum does this critical work every day, both on-site and around the world, through the development of lesson plans and curricula for kids of various ages. Congress must support this work.

Additionally, the threat to this site did not end on September 11, 2001. The museum remains a target to this day. Just 2 months ago, a man was sentenced to over a decade in prison for trying to help ISIS attack New York City, including the 9/11 Museum. This is unacceptable.

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum must have the resources it needs to ensure that all visitors are safe. I am proud to introduce and support this legislation that will authorize a one-time grant for the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. Ensuring that they have the resources they need to continue the programs and keep visitors safe is of paramount importance to this Nation.

I am calling on all my colleagues to support this and keep our promise to never forget. As I close, I would like to read a part of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's mission: ''May the lives remembered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit reawakened be eternal beacons, which reaffirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance, and intolerance.''

May we help them accomplish this mission today by passing this legislation.

When those of us who take oaths to protect and serve, we take that oath and we swear on the Bible. We also make a promise in our hearts, a promise to never ever forget.

Mr. Speaker, today I am asking all the Members of this distinguished body to follow that lead and never forget.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, we support this legislation. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes,'' and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill with strong bipartisan support. It offers a one-time grant to help the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in New York City fulfill its crucial educational mission and ensure no

American forgets the tragic events of 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5401, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JACKIE ROBINSON BALLPARK NATIONAL COMMEMORATIVE SITE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8012) to establish the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site in the State of Florida, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8012

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act''.

SEC. 2. JACKIE ROBINSON BALLPARK NATIONAL COMMEMORATIVE SITE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) SITE.—The term ''Site'' means the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site designated by subsection (b).

(3) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Florida.

(b) DESIGNATION.—Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach, Florida, is hereby designated as the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site.

(c) AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS NETWORK.—The Site shall be part of the African American Civil Rights Network established under the African American Civil Rights Network Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–104).

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with appropriate public or private entities for interpretative and educational purposes related to the Site.

(2) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—The Site shall not be a unit of the National Park System.

(3) LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this Act—

(A) authorizes the Secretary to interfere with the rights of any person with respect to private property or any local zoning ordinance or land use plan of the State or any political subdivision thereof;

(B) affects the administration of the Site by any owner of the Site; or

(C) authorizes the Secretary to acquire land or interests in land through condemnation or otherwise.

(e) SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the Site to evaluate the national significance of the Site and determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the Site as a unit of the National Park System.

(2) ALTERNATIVES.—The Secretary shall consider alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the Site by Federal, State, or local government entities, or private and nonprofit organizations.

(3) CONDUCT OF STUDY.—The study shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which funds are made available to conduct the study, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress that describes the results of the study and any recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the Site.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 8012, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Representative WALTZ' bill, the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act.

By designating the Jackie Robinson Ballpark as a National Commemorative Site, this bill recognizes the ballpark's important role in advancing civil rights and ending racially segregated sports in 20th century America.

In 1946, Jackie Robinson played in the first racially integrated spring training game at what is now named the Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach, Florida.

At the time, Jim Crow laws prevented integrated baseball throughout the South. A year later, Robinson would make his major league debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers where he broke the MLB's color barrier and became the first African American to play in a modern-era MLB game.

Robinson would eventually finish his career as a six-time all-star while amassing over 1500 hits and maintaining a .311 batting average. Throughout his career, Robinson demonstrated courage and excellence on and off the field, opening the door of opportunity for generations of athletes who succeeded him.

By designating the ballpark a National Commemorative Site, this bill recognizes the facility's historic role in advancing civil rights without adding to the Federal estate or using taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. It would designate the Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach, Florida, as a National Commemorative Site to honor the legendary baseball player, Jackie Robinson.

I did not know this, but this park is the oldest active ballpark in minor league baseball. It opened in 1914. The historic significance, of course, is that heading into spring training in 1946, every other minor league park locked their stadiums and canceled games rather than allow Jackie Robinson to play as part of the Montreal Royals in that minor league season. So only Daytona Beach set side segregation laws to permit Robinson to play at the ballpark that now bears his name. A year later, he was called up to the Brooklyn Dodgers, and the rest is history.

The park was renamed the Jackie Robinson Memorial Ballpark in 1990 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. By designating it as a National Commemorative Site, we would continue to honor and bolster Robinson's legacy, which is a good thing.

I appreciate this bill. I appreciate that it is sponsored by the entire Florida delegation, displaying not only the truly bipartisan nature of this effort, but also a universal understanding of the importance of memorializing Jackie Robinson for the contributions he made to the civil rights movement.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WALTZ), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Speaker, I am excited to rise today in support of this bill, H.R. 8012, the bipartisan, bicameral Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act to honor the location where Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier and played his first game.

This bill would designate Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach as a National Commemorative Site and add the ballpark to the African American Civil Rights Network.

Additionally, this bill would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a feasibility study to give the site the designation of a national historic landmark.

H.R. 8012 honors the location where Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier when he played his first professional game with the Montreal Royals on March 17, 1946, in Daytona Beach, at the then-named Daytona City Island Ballpark.

This is the first time in modern baseball that a Black player and a White player played on the same team. Incidentally, it is just down the street from the HBCU Bethune-Cookman. Its founder, Mary McLeod Bethune represents Florida just down the hallway here in Statuary Hall.

Jackie Robinson then led the Montreal Royals to a minor league championship the same season, and the next year, he was promoted to the Dodgers making modern Major League Baseball history.

In his book, Mr. Speaker, ''My Own Story,'' Jackie Robinson reflected on the importance of this game, stating that: I knew, of course, that everyone was not pulling for me to make good, but I was sure now that the whole world wasn't lined up against me, and when I went to sleep, the applause was still ringing in my ears.

Since that day, Daytona Beach's ballpark has been a historic landmark and a reminder of Jackie Robinson's impact, of the civil rights movement, and of the integration of modern professional baseball.

Its preservation and recognition are even more important and more crucial now following the demolition of Ebbets Field, home to the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1960, which again, was the first Major League Baseball team to sign Robinson, but now that that stadium is destroyed, we must preserve and honor Jackie Robinson's legacy.

I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor, so that we can pass it into law and protect and commemorate the Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona for all future Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I, again, commend Representative WALTZ for his efforts in leading this important bill. This is a straightforward way of recognizing a historic venue that played a critical role in the fight for equality for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8012, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1815

JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE LAND TRANSFER ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3857) to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3857

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act''.

SEC. 2. TRUST LAND FOR THE JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE OF CALIFORNIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The approximately 172.10 acres of land described in subsection (b) is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California.

(b) LAND DESCRIPTIONS.—The land referred to in subsection (a) is the following:

(1) PARCEL 1.—The parcels of land totaling approximately 161.23 acres, located in San Diego County, California, that are held in fee by the Jamul Indian Village of California, as legally described in Document No. 2022–0010260 in the Official Records of the Office of the Recorder, San Diego County, California, and recorded January 7, 2022.

(2) PARCEL 2.—The parcel of land totaling approximately 6 acres, located in San Diego County, California, that is held in fee by the Jamul Indian Village of California, as legally described in Document No. 2021–0540770 in the Official Records of the Office of the Recorder, San Diego County, California, and recorded July 29, 2021.

(3) PARCEL 3.—The parcel of land totaling approximately 4.03 acres, located in San Diego County, California, as legally described in Document No. 1998–0020339 in the Official Records of the Office of the Recorder, San Diego County, California, and recorded January 15, 1998.

(4) PARCEL 4.—The parcel of land comprised of approximately 0.84 acres, located in San Diego County, California, as legally described in Document No. 2017–0410384 in the Official Records of the Office of the Recorder, San Diego County, California, and recorded September 7, 2017.

(c) ADDITIONAL TRUST ACQUISITION.—The Secretary of the Interior shall accept title in and to, and place into trust by the United States for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California, the land depicted as ''Proposed 1.1. acres'' on the map of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife entitled ''Amended Acres Proposal'' and dated May 2023 if that land is conveyed or otherwise transferred to the United States by, or on behalf of, the Jamul Indian Village of California.

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—Land taken into trust under subsections (a) and (c) shall be—

(1) part of the reservation of the Jamul Indian Village of California; and

(2) administered in accordance with the laws and regulations generally applicable to property held in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe.

(e) GAMING PROHIBITED.—Land described in subsections (b) and (c) shall not be used for any class II gaming or class III gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) (as those terms are defined in section 4 of that Act (25 U.S.C. 2703)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 3857, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3857, the Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act, which would place approximately 173 acres of land into trust by the United States for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village.

The Jamul Indian Village is located in San Diego County and is part of the Kumeyaay people of southern California, otherwise known as the Mission Indians.

While the Tribe's history dates back 12,000 years, they only received Federal recognition in 1981. The Tribe's reservation consists of approximately 6.04 acres, but the Tribe has continued to work to restore its land base.

This legislation would place certain parcels into trust for the Tribe's benefit. The legislation also would prohibit Class 2 or Class 3 gaming on the parcels placed into trust consistent with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) for his work on the House companion to this legislation that passed the House earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage adoption of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of Senator PADILLA's Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act. This would designate approximately 172 acres of land located in San Diego County, California, into trust for the benefit of the federally recognized Tribe of the Jamul Indian Village of California.

This land is within the Tribe's ancestral territory and is located near their existing reservation. This Tribe has fought for years to restore their homelands and protect and preserve their cultural sites.

With this land, the Tribe will be able to increase Tribal housing, preserve and protect cultural sites, and better provide essential government operations, including healthcare services, administrative offices, law enforcement, and other community resources, such as a grocery store and educational services.

Earlier this year, we passed the House version of this bill by voice vote. I ask my colleagues to support the bill once again so that we can send it to the President for his signature, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this legislation would take approximately

173 acres of land into trust for the Jamul Indian Village for the benefit of the Tribe.

I again thank Mr. ISSA for his hard work on behalf of his constituents. I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3857.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REVERSIONARY INTEREST CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8946) to convey the reversionary interest of the United States in certain land in Sacramento, California.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8946

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Reversionary Interest Conveyance Act''.

SEC. 2. CONVEYANCE OF UNITED STATES INTEREST IN CERTAIN LAND.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED LAND.—The term ''covered land'' means the approximately 8.43 acres of land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management in Sacramento, California, as generally depicted as ''Proposed Easements to be Released'' on the map titled ''Lands Proposed for Release from Any and All Reversionary Interests of the United States, including interests under the Act of July 1, 1862 (12 Stat. 489)'', dated November 7, 2022.

(2) BUYER.—(A) The term ''buyer'' means the owner of record of any of the parcels included in the covered land at the time of the requested conveyance.

(B) Buyer may only request and purchase the covered land's reversionary interest for the parcels of which the owner is the owner of record at the time of request.

(3) REVERSIONARY INTEREST.—The term ''reversionary interest'' means all reversionary interests of the United States in the covered land.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Land Management.

(b) CONVEYANCE.—Not later than two years after the Secretary receives a request from the buyer, the Secretary shall offer to the buyer the applicable reversionary interest subject to the requirements in subsection (c), and shall convey the lands to buyer upon payment of the appraised value.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Any conveyance under this section—

(1) shall be subject to valid existing rights; and

(2) shall be for not less than fair market value.

(d) PAYMENT OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.—The Secretary shall determine the fair market value of the applicable reversionary interest—

(1) in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(2) based on an appraisal that is conducted in accordance with—

(A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and

(B) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(e) COSTS.—In addition to the fair market value determined under subsection (d), the buyer shall pay all costs related to the applicable conveyance of the reversionary inter est, including all surveys, appraisals, and other administrative costs.

(f) PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF LAND.—The proceeds from the sale of the applicable reversionary interest shall be—

(1) deposited in the Federal Land Disposal Account established by section 206(a) of the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (43 U.S.C. 2305(a)); and

(2) used in accordance with that Act.

SEC. 3. STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act shall—

(1) diminish the right-of-way associated with the covered land in section 2 to a width of less than 50 feet on each side of the center of the main track or tracks established and maintained by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company on the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) validate or confirm any right or title to, or interest in the land referred to in section 2 arising out of adverse possession, prescription, or abandonment, and not confirmed by conveyance made by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company before the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 8956, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Representative MATSUI's bill, H.R. 8956, the Revisionary Interest Conveyance Act.

This bill will resolve a stubborn property law issue that has long afflicted a small parcel of land in California.

The private owners of an 8-acre property in Sacramento recently discovered a revisionary interest on their land, which was originally conveyed by a railroad company. The interest, which dates back to the days of the transcontinental railroad, technically requires the land to revert to the United States since it is no longer used for railroad purposes. With their land encumbered, the owners of this property are limited in their ability to develop or sell the land.

The Bureau of Land Management, which would receive the property through the reversion, does not want to manage the land in question. Since the agency can't extinguish the revisionary interest unilaterally, the BLM has encouraged Congress to pursue a legislative solution.

H.R. 8946 would resolve this conflict by requiring the Bureau of Land Management to convey the reversionary interest to the private landowners for fair market value. In so doing, this bill will free up the land for economic development and prevent further Federal interference.

That is a good governance bill that supports a local community, encourages economic development, and reduces the burden on the Federal Government. I applaud Representative MATSUI for advancing this solution on behalf of her constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the Reversionary Interest Conveyance Act, introduced by my colleague from the Sacramento area in California, Representative MATSUI.

Her bill would allow for the conveyance of certain Federal Government claims associated with approximately 8.43 acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Sacramento.

It is currently encumbered by what is known as a reversionary interest, in this case dating back to the 19th century.

The original conveyance of the land from the Federal Government stipulated that it must be used for specific stated purposes or ownership would revert back to the United States.

Lands with reversionary interests like these have what is called a clouded title, which limits allowable uses and development.

In this case, the reversionary interests originate from the initial conveyance that provided public land for railroad purposes in the 19th century, but the land changed hands over the years, eventually without knowledge of this requirement.

The bill aims to clear up the land ownership issue by resolving the Federal Government's ownership claims on these parcels. Under the sale authorized by the bill, landowners would be given the opportunity to purchase the reversionary interests from the government so that they can pursue development or future conveyances of the land.

Importantly, this bill has standard conveyance language, including a requirement to sell the interest at fair market value, and the authorized conveyance is supported by the Department of the Interior.

This is a win-win for the government and the community in Sacramento. Mr.

Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), the author of this bill.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 8946, the Reversionary Interest Conveyance Act.

This bill provides a technical correction that will help unlock the innovative potential of Sacramento. It provides the BLM with the clear authority to convey 8½ acres of former railroad right-of-way in Sacramento.

This will allow the city of Sacramento, Sacramento State University, and their partners to continue moving forward on the Sacramento Center for Innovation, a research park that will allow Sacramento to retain and grow the level of talent the region needs to attract investment and business.

We support our innovators, our educators, and our businesses because we know that these economic drivers don't just support job and community growth today, they sustain them for generations. Because of this, I really support this bill. It is something that is very, very needed.

I thank the chair and ranking member for their support of this bill. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a great bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is straightforward legislation that will extricate property owners and the Federal Government from a legal quagmire. I support this bill and note that it passed out of the Committee on Natural Resources by unanimous consent.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8946.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SARATOGA NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8931) to redesignate Saratoga National Historical Park as Saratoga National Battlefield Park.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8931

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SARATOGA NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—Saratoga National Historical Park shall hereafter be known and designated as ''Saratoga National Battlefield Park''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to Saratoga National Historical Park shall be deemed to be a reference to Saratoga National Battlefield Park.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 8931, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Representative STEFANIK's bill, H.R. 8931, which will redesignate the Saratoga National Historic Park as the Saratoga National Battlefield Park.

On September 19, 1777, General Horatio Gates led the Continental Army troops against the British Empire in present-day Saratoga County, New York. In the ensuing Battles of Saratoga, American colonists would rout a British invasion force and create a turning point in the Revolutionary War.

Today, the site of these battles is conserved in the 3,400-acre Saratoga National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park System.

There, visitors can explore trails and tour routes to experience the historic battlefield, which includes landmarks, fortifications, and other important structures. The park also hosts artifacts, exhibits, historical reenactments, and guided tours.

While the current site was originally named ''Saratoga Battlefield Park'' by New York State, the ''battlefield'' nomenclature was dropped in 1938 when the area became part of the National Park System.

With the battles' upcoming 250th anniversary, however, residents of Saratoga County and New York State have called for renaming the park to clarify its place in the heroic struggle of American independence.

Accordingly, Representative STEFANIK's legislation would redesignate the site as the ''Saratoga National Battlefield Park,'' thus identifying its importance as a historical battlefield and emphasizing the sacrifices of soldiers who fought there.

I thank Representative STEFANIK for her leadership on this issue and for working tirelessly this Congress on behalf of her constituents. We will all miss Representative STEFANIK next Congress, but in the meantime, I am pleased to be working with her in advancing this important legislation through the House.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 8931. It is unclear to me why when this park changed from being a State park to part of the National Park Service the word ''battlefield'' was dropped, but, obviously, the Battles of Saratoga are a very important part of history. This is where American Revolutionary forces won decisive victory in 1777.

The change proposed in this legislation is appropriate, I support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK), the lead sponsor of the bill.

□ 1830

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair and ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bipartisan legislation, the Strengthening America's Turning Point Act.

I am always so proud to share with my colleagues in Congress and the American people that upstate New York and the North Country are known as the cradle of the American Revolution, home to numerous battlefields and historic sites that were critical in shaping our Nation's founding and history.

I grew up going to these historic sites like generations of upstaters and, for years, I have been proud to lead the charge in their preservation in Congress. Preserving and championing our battlefields and historic areas is one of my greatest privileges as the Representative of New York's 21st District and co-chair of the Congressional Battlefield Caucus.

The Battles of Saratoga were the most significant turning point and one of the most decisive American battles of the American Revolution. The American defeat of British forces at Saratoga marked a changing of the tide in the Revolutionary War, securing foreign support from France and bolstering domestic support for the American patriots and our righteous cause.

This bipartisan legislation would rename Saratoga National Historical Park to Saratoga National Battlefield Park to more accurately reflect the historical significance of the site and emphasize the crucial military engagements that took place there.

The historic site was originally named the Saratoga Battlefield Park.

When it became a national park in 1938, the word ''battlefield'' was left out of its name. Unanimously supported by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, this significant fix will help increase public understanding of the deep significance the site holds in our military history and honor the site where so many gave their last full measure of devotion, especially important as we are celebrating our Nation's semiquincentennial.

I want to express my immense gratitude to my great friend and classmate Chairman BRUCE WESTERMAN and Subcommittee Chair TOM TIFFANY and for their partnership ensuring our battlefields and historic sites in upstate New York and across America are preserved and protected for generations to come, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a simple, bipartisan bill that will distinguish an important site for its pivotal role in the American fight for independence ahead of our Nation's 250th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8931.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUTRIA ERADICATION AND CONTROL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8308) to reauthorize the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8308

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Nutria Eradication and Control Reauthorization Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NUTRIA ERADICATION AND CONTROL ACT OF 2003.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(e) of the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 8102(e)) is amended by striking ''2025'' and inserting ''2030''.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 3(a) of the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 8102(a)) is amended by striking '' 'Secretary'),'' and inserting '' 'Secretary')''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 8308, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Representative HARDER's legislation which would reauthorize the nutria eradication program and existing funding levels through 2030.

Nutria are invasive rodents native to South America that were imported to the United States in 1899 for fur production. Since then, the nutria population has exploded in places like northern California, Oregon, the Louisiana bayous, and the Chesapeake Bay. These rodents eat, dig, and trample healthy wetland habitats, causing significant erosion and habitat damage to native ecosystems.

When this legislation was first enacted in 2003, an estimated 17 percent of the Chesapeake Bay's marshlands were estimated to have been destroyed by nutria. Due to the aid of this program, nutria eradication efforts have been very successful.

For example, in Maryland, they have been declared eradicated. In Louisiana, where more than 423,000 acres were damaged or destroyed between 2002 and 2021, over 5 million nutria have been taken.

I thank Representatives GARRET GRAVES and DAVID VALADAO for co-leading this bill with Congressman HARDER.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation by my colleague from northern California, Representative JOSH HARDER.

This bill would reauthorize the Nutria Eradication and Control Act through 2030. This will benefit Maryland, Louisiana, and California, enabling them to manage and eradicate this destructive, invasive species.

The chairman described a little bit about the nutria and how it came to the United States. The reason it is such a problem is it breeds very rapidly, has destructive tendencies towards native wetland vegetation, which has led to erosion and displacement of native species. It can lead to levee breaches and the introduction of diseases and parasites that threaten humans, livestock, and pets.

These effects pose severe threats to our national wetlands which are essential habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife and which act as buffers from extreme weather events.

To give you an example, according to estimates, had measures not been adopted to control and eradicate the species in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, nutria could have destroyed 17 percent of the bay's marshes in just 50 years.

In 2003, the Nutria Eradication and Control Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance to Maryland and Louisiana for a program to eradicate or control nutria and restore marshland that they had damaged.

In 2020, my friend, Representative JOSH HARDER, passed a bill through Congress that amended that legislation to include California. That was a very timely law because California faced a rapidly expanding breeding population of nutria in the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent areas.

The Nutria Eradication and Control Act has significantly reduced nutria populations in all three States. In Maryland, they were entirely eradicated from the Chesapeake Bay in 2022. In California, nutria captures peeked in 2020 and have been steadily declining, but they are not yet fully eradicated. That is why this bill is needed. It would ensure the critical work of eradicating this destructive, invasive species can continue through fiscal year 2030.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), my good friend who I believe may be wearing, if I am not mistaken, a nutria hide suit tonight.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for the recognition.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California, Mr. HUFFMAN, and I legislatively agree on approximately nothing. This is truly an anomaly. This legislation is something that he and I absolutely agree upon. We have worked together on it. I thank the other gentleman from California, Mr. HARDER, for the introduction. We have worked together on this legislation for years.

Nutria are an unbelievably invasive species. Coastal Louisiana loses a football field of wetlands approximately every 90 minutes. A football field of land is lost, which is a result of wave action and it is a result of saltwater intrusion, a result of subsidence, a result of replumbing of coastal Louisiana in a destructive manner. Nutria absolutely contribute to that.

Mr. Speaker, what happened between probably the late 1950s to the early 1990s, there was a huge fur trade. Tens of millions of nutria were actually harvested to provide fur coats. That market declined. As a result, the population of nutria just absolutely exploded. In fact, one nutria can provide on average about 13 offspring a year.

You do the math very quickly. Mr. Chairman can do the math very quickly. Actually, I take that back. The gentleman is from Arkansas. I will do it for him.

They can proliferate very, very quickly and have a profound impact. They will burrow into levees. They found that they have made these 150-foot burrows that actually compromises flood protection infrastructure like levees. It actually puts our communities in jeopardy. They will eat the vegetation. They will eat all the way down to the roots, and the roots are actually what hold everything together, what hold our coastal landscape together.

What this legislation does is that it helps to put a bounty program, to ensure that we can come in and we can actually harvest and we can retrieve these nutria to prevent the proliferation that goes today from Maryland all the way to California, down to the coast of Louisiana, to prevent this impact to habitat that exacerbates our coastal resiliency and ecological productivity all across the United States.

I thank Mr. HARDER, my friend from California, for working with us on this. This is a reauthorization bill. Members all across the political spectrum support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I will say it again. My good friend, Mr. HUFFMAN, from California and I rarely agree on legislation. We absolutely, absolutely agree on this one. I ask all Members to please support this. This is very helpful. It actually prevents disaster dollars. It improves ecological productivity and certainly will help with the resiliency of my home State of coastal Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, the chairman commented on my attire. I want to remind him it is Christmastime. It is Christmastime, and these are colors that are festive and relevant to the time of year.

I think he might have noted that I resemble a nutria or something like that. Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the gentleman from Arkansas is talking about. This is absolutely topflight attire for Christmas 2024.

While I respect my friend, the chairman of the committee, sometimes he is simply in error.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this legislation, and I thank my friend from California and my friend from Arkansas.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, when the last nutria in the United States is eradicated, it will not be missed, but the gentleman from Louisiana will be missed. It has been a pleasure serving with him. He is colorful, both in his rhetoric and in his fashion. We appreciate him and wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from northern California (Mr. HARDER).

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. HUFFMAN for yielding. I thank my friend from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), for his leadership and his sense of style. We are certainly going to miss him and all of the work that he has done to make this critical legislation a reality.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is dead simple. All it does is reauthorize funding to advance eradication efforts for this invasive rodent which is already causing millions of dollars in damage in 18 States including California, Louisiana, and Florida.

These swamp rats threaten our world-class farmland, our critical flood control infrastructure, and our water quality.

With their massive nacho cheese-colored orange teeth, nutria can eat 25 percent of their body weight in vegetation every single day, breaking down our levees and harming our waterways.

To make matters worse, these invasive rats weigh upwards of 40 pounds. One female nutria, to do the math for my friend from Louisiana, can reproduce 200 offspring every single year.

This means that if we don't get this bill done, these nutria will continue to expand and ravage our country, unless the strategic wildlife management plans actually reduce their growth.

This is our last chance to secure 5 additional years of nutria eradication efforts for affected districts across the Nation, and we know that it can work. Our efforts have already shrunk nutria populations across the country. In 2018, the Chesapeake Bay region successfully eradicated nutria from their communities after almost two decades.

□ 1845

We are learning from that in California and Louisiana. This shows that we have the wildlife management techniques that can ensure that we can continue to move forward.

We are reaching a critical point in nutria control efforts. This year alone, we have experienced a 55 percent increase in detected nutria cells, and we are on track to, unfortunately, have a record-breaking year for captive nutria right now.

We must reauthorize these eradication efforts so we can stop the destruction and damage in my district and others like it across the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill to keep our levees, waterways, and agricultural lands safe from these dangerous, invasive swamp rats.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this very important bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8308 would reauthorize a program that has proven to be very effective in protecting our country's vital wetlands and marshes from a destructive, invasive species.

While great work has already been accomplished in controlling these invasive pests, continuing to ensure our native species of plants and animals are able to recover and thrive is crucial for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank my colleagues for their diligent work on this bill. I urge all Members to support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8308.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPAYMENT ACT OF 2023

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3396) to require the standardization of reciprocal fire suppression cost share agreements, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3396

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CERTAIN FIRE SUPPRESSION COST SHARE AGREEMENTS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall—

(1) establish standard operating procedures relating to payment timelines for fire suppression cost share agreements established under the Act of May 27, 1955 (42 U.S.C. 1856a) (commonly known as the ''Reciprocal Fire Protection Act''); and

(2) with respect to each fire suppression cost share agreement in operation on such date—

(A) review each such agreement; and

(B) modify each agreement as necessary to comply with the standard operating procedures required under paragraph (1).

(b) ALIGNMENT OF FIRE SUPPRESSION COST SHARE AGREEMENTS WITH COOPERATIVE FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENTS.—The standard operating procedures required under subsection (a)(1) shall include a requirement that each fire suppression cost share agreement be aligned with each of the cooperative fire protection agreements applicable to the entity subject to such fire suppression cost share agreement.

(c) PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO COST SHARE AGREEMENTS.—With respect to payments made pursuant to fire suppression cost share agreements, the standard operating procedures required under subsection (a)(1) shall require that the Federal paying entity reimburse a local fire department if such fire department submits an invoice in accordance with cost settlement procedures.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretaries should carry out reciprocal fire suppression cost share agreement repayments to local fire suppression organizations as soon as practicable after fire suppression occurs but not later than 1 year after fire suppression occurs.

(e) SECRETARIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Secretaries'' means—

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(2) the Secretary of the Interior;

(3) the Secretary of Homeland Security; and

(4) the Secretary of Defense.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3396, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3396, the Fire Department Repayment Act. This is a bipartisan bill sponsored by Representative HARDER alongside Representatives CURTIS and LAMALFA.

H.R. 3396 would standardize cost-share agreements between the Federal Government and local fire departments to ensure safe and local firefighting partners are fairly and quickly compensated for fighting wildfires on Federal lands.

Because wildfires do not heed administrative boundaries, various State, Tribal, local, and private firefighting resources respond jointly to wildfires throughout the Nation. The costs expended by these resources are then reimbursed under preexisting arrangements known as reciprocal fire suppression cost-share agreements. These agreements enable firefighting entities to access resources and assistance from neighboring jurisdictions during large fires on Federal lands.

Unfortunately, the current reimbursement process is flawed. Payments are often delayed, imposing financial burdens on local fire departments and reducing their ability to respond to other emergencies.

The Fire Department Repayment Act addresses these challenges by establishing uniform reimbursement timelines for fire suppression cost-share agreements. This legislation would ensure local fire departments are paid promptly while still allowing the Federal Government to dispute any inaccurate invoices.

This is a good bill that would improve the reimbursement process for coordinated firefighting efforts. It thus takes a critical step toward strengthening shared resources and cross-boundary firefighting.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chair, Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR WESTERMAN: H.R. 3396, the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023'', was referred primarily to the Committee on Natural Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

H.R. 3396 contains provisions within the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Rule X jurisdiction. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will forego action on the bill. This is being done based on our mutual understanding that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with respect to the appointment of conferees, or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding and request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the committee report or in the *Congressional Record* during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2024.

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding H.R. 3396, the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023,'' which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on December 6, 2023.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will not formally consider H.R. 3396 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the *Congressional Record* during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 3396, the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023''. Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees should it become necessary and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3396 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

GLENN ''GT'' THOMPSON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2024.

Hon. GLENN ''GT'' THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding H.R. 3396, the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023,'' which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on December 6, 2023.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 3396 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, December 16, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WESTERMAN: I write concerning H.R. 3396, the Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023 by Representative Harder. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 3396 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Armed Services, I agree to forego any further consideration of this resolution so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Committee on Armed Services takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 3396 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this resolution or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction.

This legislation contains provisions that may require further modification prior to final consideration to ensure the support of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Finally, I ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included by House Committee on Natural Resources in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding. Thank you for the cooperative spirit in which you have worked regarding

this matter and others between our respective committees.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL D. ROGERS,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, December 16, 2024.

Hon. MIKE ROGERS,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding H.R. 3396, the ''Fire Department Repayment Act of 2023,'' which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on December 6, 2023.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Armed Services and appreciate your willingness to forgo further consideration of the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Armed Services will not formally consider H.R. 3396 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I will ensure that your committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this resolution or similar legislation moves forward so that you may address any remaining issues in your jurisdiction. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this Fire Department Repayment Act introduced by my colleague from California, Representative JOSH HARDER.

The bill would require the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, Homeland Security, and Defense to establish standard operating procedures for fire suppression cost-share agreements under the Reciprocal Fire Protection Act.

With the increasing threat of climate change and with wildfires becoming more rampant, it is critical that our local and State fire organizations are supported and continue to receive the resources that they need to fight wildfires.

That is why this bill would enable local and State fire departments to maintain their readiness and effectiveness by establishing standard operating procedures to expedite the process for reviewing and modifying existing fire suppression cost agreements to align with cooperative fire protection agreements.

Furthermore, the bill would require the Secretaries to complete second-level reviews of a fire suppression cost-share agreement following containment of a wildfire in consultation with State and local fire suppression organizations.

The establishment of standard operating procedures is a necessary step toward ensuring quicker and more efficient reviews so that local and State fire departments receive Federal reimbursements in a more timely manner.

As fire seasons continue to increase in frequency and severity, Congress needs to do everything we can to support our local and State fire departments and their firefighters.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HARDER), who is the author of this important bill.

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. HUFFMAN for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, the Fire Department Repayment Act. This legislation cuts red tape and fixes the burdensome fire department repayment system to ensure our local departments are repaid quickly for their work to keep our communities safe.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the wildfire crisis is getting longer and more intense every year. Sixty thousand communities in the United States are at risk for wildland fires in newly populated, recently developed areas that border fire-prone fields and forests.

My home State of California is on the front lines of this crisis with the most neighborhoods threatened by wildfires.

When a wildfire breaks out on Federal lands, our local firefighters are often the first on the scene, braving hazardous conditions to put out these blazes and protect nearby homes, families, and communities. Local fire departments deploy personnel, use fire engines, and spend thousands of dollars' worth of time and resources to fight fires on Federal lands.

Yet, the bureaucratic Federal reimbursement process is slow and covered in red tape. It often takes years for small fire departments to be repaid for their assistance on these fires.

In my own district, fire departments have waited years and years for repayment from Federal agencies. That has drained their budgets and restrained their resources to combat the fires that we are fighting just this year.

That is unacceptable. Our government must work better for the heroes who put their lives on the line to keep our families safe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill to ensure our local fire departments are paid back quickly so they have the tools they need to protect our communities from the next fire. I also thank my colleagues, Mr. CURTIS and Mr. LAMALFA, for their tireless leadership and support of this important bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, in closing, this is a commonsense, bipartisan bill that would benefit our local fire departments and improve our response to wildfires nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3396, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MILITARY FAMILIES NATIONAL PARKS ACCESS ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9516) to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for lifetime National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes for family members of members of the Armed Forces who lost their lives while serving their country, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9516

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Military Families National Parks Access Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. LIFETIME PASSES.

Section 805(b)(2) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6804(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) Any individual who is a survivor entitled to—

''(i) a death gratuity under section 1475 of title 10, United States Code; or

''(ii) dependency and indemnity compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 9516, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 9516, the Military Families National Parks Access Enhancement Act. This bill, which is led by Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER, expands access to free, lifetime passes to our national parks and public lands to Gold Star next of kin and families of veterans who pass away due to a service-related illness or injury.

Across the Nation, military families play a critical role in protecting our freedoms. They are the strongest base of support for the brave military servicemembers who risk their lives defending America.

When these troops make the ultimate sacrifice for our country, the emotional impact on their families is devastating. While nothing can replace a lost loved one, outdoor recreation has a proven track record of providing at least some measure of relief in times of profound tragedy.

In 2021, Congress permanently codified free lifetime passes to our national parks and public lands for Gold Star families in the Alexander Lofgren Veterans in Parks Act, a bill I proudly cosponsored and helped champion through the Natural Resources Committee.

Unfortunately, the eligibility for these passes excluded families whose relatives were killed in incidents such as hazardous training accidents or due to a service-related illness.

H.R. 9516, however, will expand access to free lifetime America the Beautiful passes to Gold Star next-of-kin family members and family members of fallen veterans. This legislation is a meaningful way to support additional families whose loved ones were lost in their selfless service to our Nation.

I commend Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER for spearheading this noble effort. Throughout this Congress, Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER has demonstrated exemplary public service by working tirelessly with Members on both sides of the aisle to better serve her constituents. She introduced this bill after receiving outreach from a constituent family whose loved one passed away on Active Duty but was not eligible for these passes. Her advocacy on behalf of her constituents and our military families is commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate my strong support for this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill. The America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass covers entrance fees and day-use fees at national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and other Federal recreational lands.

Of these, the military lifetime pass, or Gold Star pass, is a free lifetime pass available to our veterans and certain Gold Star families who have lost a family member during military service, the ultimate sacrifice, as the chairman mentioned. However, the Gold Star pass currently includes certain limitations regarding who qualifies.

This bill would expand eligibility for the lifetime Gold Star pass to include next-of-kin family members of fallen servicemembers who are not currently eligible. Specifically, this legislation would expand access to families of servicemembers who died in Inactive- or Active-Duty training or in travel to or from training or duty stations.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would ensure that all those who have lost a family member in connection to their military service have access to our national parks and lands.

Those who have sacrificed so much for our Nation deserve this access to appreciate the wonders of our parks, historic sites, and natural beauty across the country. It is imperative that we ensure this benefit is not limited based on how a servicemember died during their service.

Mr. Speaker, I support the passage of this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, in closing, once again, I thank Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER for her efforts to introduce this meaningful legislation. This bill would help reduce the financial burden on our military families who want to visit our national parks and expand their access to the healing powers of outdoor recreation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9516, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1900

RECOGNIZING HAL B. GOODE ON HIS RETIREMENT

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my good friend, Mr. Hal B. Goode of Washington County, on his well-deserved retirement as the executive director of the Central Kentucky Community Action Council.

Hal will be retiring after an extraordinary 6½ years of incredible leadership, where he has expanded vital community service outreach across multiple Kentucky counties, including many in the First Congressional District of Kentucky.

Under his direction, Hal has spearheaded numerous achievements, including opening two new Head Start facilities in my district, in Springfield and Lebanon.

The success of the Central Kentucky Community Action Council is a testament to Hal's belief that their service to those in need is a hand up, not a handout.

His ability to develop relationships with local communities has laid a strong foundation for the CKCAC's future progress.

I thank Hal for his dedication to central Kentucky and wish him nothing but the best in a well-deserved retirement.

CONGRATULATING SAVANNAH BUSINESS LEADER DAVID PADDISON

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Savannah business leader David Paddison, recipient of the 2025 Leadership Award from the Southeast Georgia Leadership Forum.

Mr. Paddison serves as the president of Sterling Seacrest Pritchard, a private insurance brokerage and employee benefits consulting firm in the southeastern United States.

Not only has David achieved business success during his more than 30-year career, but he has also advocated for community involvement and support of nonprofit organizations.

As a Savannah native, Mr. Paddison has been a leader on many boards within his community. He has served as the chair of the Savannah Economic Development Authority, Union Mission, the Armstrong State Foundation, and he currently holds numerous other board positions.

Along with his wife, Jeanne, Mr. Paddison founded the Savannah Wildlife Rescue Center to provide rescue and rehabilitation resources to the region's animals.

I sincerely congratulate Mr. Paddison for receiving this honorable award and for his outstanding contributions to the Savannah community. I congratulate my friend.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF SUWANEE, GEORGIA

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

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the city of Suwanee in Gwinnett County, Georgia.

Folks have called Suwanee home for over 200 years, with Suwanee Old Town dating back as far as 1817. Yet, it wasn't until 1949 that Suwanee was officially chartered. At that time, the city was roughly 3.1 square miles, consisting of just a few hundred residents.

In the 75 years since, Suwanee has flourished, more than tripling in size, and expanding its population to over 22,000 Georgians. The once small agricultural town now boasts a charming downtown community, many prosperous businesses, and beautiful parks, offering an exceptional place for families to live and work.

In fact, in Fortune's ''50 Best Places to Live for Families 2024'' in the United States, the city of Suwanee ranked 27th in the entire Nation. That is incredible. I congratulate Mayor Jimmy Burnette and the city of Suwanee on this exciting milestone.

I am honored to represent the great folks of Suwanee in Congress, and I look forward to seeing the city thrive for many years to come.

UNDO THE DISINCENTIVES TOWARD FORMING FAMILIES

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I had an interesting conversation today with someone who deals with people in the lower economic classes.

It was an interesting conversation because it was along the same theme that I often speak about behind this podium. That is the frustration she finds in the poor communities where the clergy again and again encourage young people to get married. The young people inform the clergy that they can't do it because the United States Government has established a bunch of programs that make it financially advantageous to not get married.

Indeed, it is not unusual to have $20,000 or $25,000 or $30,000-a-year penalties for couples who get married, as opposed to situations in which a man is not in the household.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues in this Chamber to, over the next few months, undo the horrid disincentives toward forming families that were put in by Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society.

CELEBRATING THE SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE MICHAEL C. BURGESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to celebrate the remarkable life and legacy of one of our good friends, a great Texan, a great mentor, a great Member of Congress, our friend and our colleague, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

Sadly, Dr. BURGESS is stepping away from these hallowed Halls to hang up his boots back home. I am not quite sure we are going to let him do that. We are going to give him grief over that, but he is leaving these hallowed Halls of Congress to hang up those great boots back home in the great State of Texas—check this out—after 22 dedicated years of service, not just to this institution, but to the people of America and the people of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS has exemplified the very best of what it is not only to be a Texan, but to be a physician, a husband, a father, and a Congressman. He is the real deal, Mr. Speaker, with unshakeable resolve and a servant's heart.

I have watched him up close and personal these last 12 years. With absolute unshakeable resolve and a servant's heart, MICHAEL BURGESS has tackled some of the most challenging issues facing our Nation. He has always had the needs of Texans and Americans at the forefront, both of those, Texans and Americans.

As one of the very few physicians in Congress, Dr. BURGESS' expertise has been an absolute guiding light on healthcare policy, and his unwavering advocacy for the unborn has been a testament to his absolutely deep moral convictions.

Dr. BURGESS, let me say: Thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I could tell you things about him from being with him in a Texas lunch and knowing him personally and watching him up close and personal as he sits on what we call ''The Texas Row'' back here. I don't have enough time to tell you about the stories and the discussions we have had and what it revealed about the man, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

I could be here for a long time. I don't know how much time you have, Mr. Speaker, but I can be here for a long time.

In Texas, we believe in rolling up our sleeves, getting the job done, and never backing down from a fight. Let me tell you all: That epitomizes one Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, who has done that right here in what I call these hallowed Halls of Congress.

His dedication to conservative principles and his commitment to values that make not only Texas strong, but this country strong, has left an indelible mark on this institution.

MICHAEL, we are sad that you are leaving. I am still not sure we are going to let that happen, but bless you, brother.

As you return to the Lone Star State, we know that you will continue to embody the spirit of Texas, where faith and family and freedom remain at the center of everything we do.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS epitomizes that. He really epitomizes that.

So, Dr. BURGESS, as you step into the well-deserved next chapter, we must also recognize the support of your beautiful wife, Laura, who has been your steadfast partner throughout these 22 years of service.

You know what they say, behind every great leader is a strong family, but it is one that he built. It is one that he built, and his bride, Laura, has shared in those sacrifices that come with public service, standing by him with grace and strength.

Before I begin to conclude, I do want to yield to my friend also from Texas, Dr. BRIAN BABIN, for his comments as we absolutely salute Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS and applaud him and just absolutely love the work that he has done.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Thank you, my friend, RANDY. I appreciate you having this Special Order for such a very, very close friend.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to recognize really a close friend, a fellow Texan, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for his distinguished career of 22 years, serving here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I thank you, MIKE, for being a wonderful mentor over the years, and for showing me and so many others of our colleagues just how to serve the American people with integrity and with honor and the shining example that you have been to all of us here.

No matter the topic, your position on the Energy and Commerce Committee, as the chairman of the Rules Committee, or at one of our Doctors Caucus meetings over the years, you have always been an invaluable resource to me and countless others. We will miss your knowledge, your expertise, your brilliant intellect, your wise counsel, and how well you represented our great Lone Star State.

Your legacy will carry on for many, many generations to come, and I thank you for being a dedicated public servant, a proud Texan, and a great American, without any question.

I also want to extend our deepest sympathies and our prayers at the recent tragic and untimely loss of your daughter, Christine.

We want to wish you, Laura, and your entire family all the best. Godspeed, my friend. May God bless you all. We will see you soon, and I want to keep in contact with you for the rest of our days.

God bless you. Thank you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank Chairman BABIN for his great remarks, his heartfelt words, because he shares the sentiment of all of us, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) for his remarks.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WEBER for the opportunity to participate in this important discussion this evening.

I can't think of a person who I have interacted with for the last 22 years that I have enjoyed any more than Dr. BURGESS.

Sitting in that general area back there, occasionally he would veer away from ''The Texas Row'' and interact with the Okies, where we analyzed the

leadership, analyzed the committees, and analyzed the work product.

His insights were just as amazing as his personality. Let's be honest. If you have toiled through the Budget Committee, as Dr. BURGESS did, as a good Member; if you worked diligently for decades almost on the Energy and Commerce Committee; and then had enough patience and grit and willpower to be a Rules Committee member for a number of years and chairman of the Rules Committee, that says something about your commitment to this body, this country, this Constitution, and, yes, Doc—I will admit it as an Okie—your commitment to the Republic of Texas.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman, an admirer of the Republic of Texas.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

I am here tonight, as we all are, to celebrate the career, the legacy, and the friendship of Chairman Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. We are going to miss you.

It has been an honor to serve alongside you in two committees, the Rules Committee and the Budget Committee, and an honor to work with you on healthcare policies and any number of things.

I have learned from you. I have probably made your life a little more interesting than you would prefer on the Rules Committee, but it has been an honor to serve alongside you. I truly mean that.

There are a lot of words that are thrown around about people who have an impact on us when we are here, but I will always remember your grace in front of a number of circumstances, but particularly in the last couple of weeks.

I will just say, as you said this last week: ''And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus,'' Philippians 4:7.

Your faith stands as a testament to all of us.

Godspeed.

□ 1915

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky, Mr. BRETT GUTHRIE.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to honor one of my dear friends. When I first got on the Energy and Commerce Committee, the battle that was going on in that committee was over healthcare policy, and Dr. BURGESS knew it frontward and backward.

As a matter of fact, I always liked looking at his copy of the Affordable Care Act. I think it was tabbed, and he even diagrammed sentences, I believe, in that to make sure he understood it and could explain it and tried to figure out how to fix it. He was always going that direction.

I was on the committee when he was chair of the subcommittee, and I became his vice chair. That is when he became more than a friend; he became a mentor. He was somebody that I just admired the way that he studied, he learned. He was an expert on whatever subcommittee you were on, particularly healthcare.

He mentored me. He set a standard that I tried to live by when I had the chance to become the subcommittee chair, now chairing the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is a privilege.

Congress truly is a snapshot of America. We come from all walks of life. We bring different perspectives. Chairman BURGESS being an OB/GYN, I will never forget the series of hearings we had on maternal health. If you controlled the studies for all the things you think was causing a problem in maternal health, we still were having issues with maternal health and the life expectancy of the mother.

We had detailed hearings because he brought his experiences, his care, and said this is a problem that should not exist in this country. One of the hearings I remember most is when we had Parkland Hospital from Dallas and other hospitals from New York talk about how we take care of the mothers of our children after they give birth and policies came out of that.

I think it is a legacy you will have about tying your career and your political drive, but, most important of all, you love Texas and you love this country, and that is infectious.

I appreciate your chairmanship in the Rules Committee and your mentorship of me.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) for his comments.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to just honor Chairman BURGESS. I thank you, Chairman BURGESS, for being just a good, solid, steady voice on a lot of complex issues. I thank your family. I will tell you, unless you have been here, nobody knows the toll it takes on your family. I was glad to see them here the other day when they unveiled your portrait that will hang in this Capitol for years to come.

I thank the people of Texas for sending you here. This place, this country, it is better because you have spent so much time up here in these hallways of Congress. You are just one of those people who always did right and was always working to find a way to get that good piece of legislation across the finish line, and we need more people like you up here. I am sorry to see you go, but just a good, solid American with good common sense standing up for the Constitution and our American way of life. Godspeed. I look forward to continuing our relationship for many years to come.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, thank you so much my colleague from Texas and all the people who have come here to praise Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. I join them in recognizing him on his pending retirement.

For over two decades, he has more than ably represented the people of the 26th District of Texas, as well as all Americans.

Alongside his outstanding service on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee, MICHAEL BURGESS was selected this year as the chairman of the Rules Committee where he and I served together in years past.

Having engaged with him many times this year in the hot seat opposite the dais where he sat, I can attest that he has done a fine job of leading the Rules Committee.

Dr. BURGESS is a person of strong intellect and wisdom, along with collegiality and good humor.

Dr. BURGESS, you will be sorely missed for all your wonderful traits. I also want you to know that you and your family are in my prayers. I know you are in the prayers of our entire Conference, as well as many others.

Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the other kind comments and positive comments and true comments that have been made about you tonight. My hope is that God will continue to bless you and keep you and your family in the palm of His hands. We really will miss you, MIKE. Thank you for your great service.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I now recognize our friend from California, Ms. BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me just say that I associate myself with the remarks that have been made tonight about my friend, the Honorable Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

A couple of things that I thought, since I am retiring also and we are here on the floor tonight, to take a moment to tell Dr. BURGESS how much I appreciate his leadership and his friendship.

It is not often you hear about stories of Republicans and Democrats working together, so I decided to tell a few stories about Dr. BURGESS.

First of all, we believe that the taxpayer dollars need to be protected and to be used for what we intend taxpayer dollars to be used for. We talked and realized that the only agency that had never been audited was the Pentagon.

Dr. BURGESS and I worked for years to finally get the requirement into a bill that the Pentagon be audited because we know that there are billions of dollars in waste, fraud, and abuse, but we did not know how much and we were shocked that this was the only agency that hadn't been audited.

This never would have happened had it not been for Dr. BURGESS and myself working together. We finally put a requirement into the bill that the Pentagon conduct an audit finally, but guess what? We talked the other day

about this, the Pentagon has flunked its seventh audit now.

I am originally from Texas. I represent the beautiful 12th Congressional District of California. Just know that I am going to continue to work, and I know Dr. BURGESS will work to make sure that we finally get a clean audit from the Pentagon. Taxpayers deserve to know where their tax dollars are going and that they are not being scammed by the Pentagon.

Secondly, I thank you for your work on diabetes. As a member of the Diabetes Caucus—I think for a while you were co-chair of the Diabetes Caucus with Congresswoman DIANA DEGETTE, and you have done remarkable work when you look at diabetes and the disproportionate impact on people of color, on African Americans especially.

We looked at ways to prevent amputations and ways to really make sure that the healthcare is there for those who are suffering diabetes to prevent the terrible consequences of that disease. I just want to take a moment to thank you, Dr. BURGESS, for your work on that.

I know that I will be seeing you in this next chapter of your life and of my life, and I wish you well. May God bless you. You are also in my thoughts and prayers as you go through this very difficult period.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH).

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I rise to thank Dr. BURGESS for his friendship and for kindness. I wish him a very happy and restful and well-deserved retirement. It has been an honor to serve with Dr. BURGESS, particularly on Rules. I joined Rules as a freshman, and he has been a steady, guiding hand and an excellent example of a statesman.

As chairman, he has been a kind and thoughtful leader, and I will certainly miss you in that role, Dr. BURGESS.

I am also grateful for the time that we spent on a trip to Canada, and I enjoyed being part of the visit to your grandfather's home in Montreal. I will sincerely miss seeing you at work, and I am happy about your next chapter and your retirement. I thank you for your service. I thank you for your service to the country, to Congress, and to your constituents, but, most of all, I thank you for your friendship, Dr. BURGESS.

Congratulations and God bless you and your family.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I now recognize the gentleman from Waco, Texas, Mr. PETE SESSIONS.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman, Brother WEBER, for you bringing tonight this conversation that Members of Congress on a bipartisan basis can have about the gentleman from Texas, MICHAEL BURGESS.

I am one of a few Members that remember well when he was running for Congress in a contested primary. I listened to Dr. BURGESS on the radio before I had met MIKE, and he was very clear and professional and straightforward about his idea of not only the rules that Congress should exist under, but also the American people. They should be able to count on Members of Congress who would come and do what they said they would do and work hard and do their best every day.

MICHAEL BURGESS became not just a standard operating procedure in the Energy and Commerce Committee for understanding healthcare and commerce and certainly the things that happen in this country, he became a stalwart for understanding the debate of leading America to understand what good healthcare would mean; how rules and regulations should be in their best interest; and how a market-based product, not just in healthcare, but what consumers would expect would be a part of that.

Knowing MIKE, in 2013, I asked MIKE to come and join the Rules Committee. We had changed up a little bit at that time. I became chairman of the Rules Committee and knew that we needed experts from across the Congress. We changed from making the Rules Committee an exclusive committee to one where we would ask Members to double down, in addition to their normal committee where they had extreme expertise, but also come and do double duty at the Rules Committee where we met many times late at night and certainly for hours at a time.

After just 2 weeks of being on the committee, then-Speaker John Boehner, who had called me earlier and told me he didn't really know MIKE very well, came back and said: He is a real asset to our Conference and to the Rules Committee. I congratulated MIKE behind Speaker Boehner's back only to find out later that John did approach MIKE and say: We are very proud of the job that you are doing.

MIKE, tonight, we stand in awe of you. I often spoke about you being one of the most distinguished Members of Congress, not only in your presentation, but also in your hard work back home.

Tonight, we say thank you. Tonight, we say job well done. Perhaps more than that, service to a grateful nation that not only listened to your words, but listened to your advice about making life better for people, because, in fact, you, like VIRGINIA FOXX and other members of the committee at the time, believed that there was no problem in America that we could not tackle, help resolve, and make better for the American people. Every bit of that you did through your devotion and dedication to the American people and your idea of what service meant.

Congratulations to Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. Thanks to his family, his beautiful young wife, Laura, for the service that he has given to the people of America.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) to come up and share with us.

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am thinking about the fact that I have probably known MICHAEL BURGESS longer than anybody here because we both ran for office the same year.

He ran against one of the sons of the leadership, and I ran against the chairman of Energy and Commerce's son, so we had very similar races. We got the heck kicked out of us, but we won. We immediately had a connection and that connection has kept us close friends ever since.

□ 1930

When people came to me with a question about healthcare, I would say: I am an old trial judge. You want to talk about justice, about the law, I can probably give you a hand. If you are going to talk about healthcare, I am going to yield to MIKE BURGESS. Go talk to MIKE BURGESS, and he can talk to me and tell me whether whatever it is you are doing is the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do. MIKE has never failed to give me the best advice.

He is a close friend, and he is very dear to me. We both made a pact that we would leave at the same time, and I tell you, I failed on this deal. He decided to leave, and I wasn't ready to leave.

Hold on, BURGESS, I am coming one of these days.

I wish he would stick around a little longer. He is such a friend and such a solid, solid human being.

We are blessed to have people like MIKE BURGESS in here. We can call him Doc. We can call him whatever we want to call him. He is always quietly ready to lend a hand on literally anything you want to do, as we heard about the conversation about looking at the Pentagon. I didn't know that. That was news to me, but a good idea, a dang good idea.

BURGESS, you and I know that we are friends. I am going to miss you, pal. I will miss you a lot. I may call you every once in a while just to make sure you are doing okay.

Please give my warmest sympathy to your wife during these trying times. You also have that sympathy.

You know that I consider you one of my very closest friends, and I am sorry to see you leave, but we will keep in touch, I promise. God bless you, buddy.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Will the judge yield for a question?

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Yes, sir.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I am like you with whatever pact you all made. We didn't want him to leave, but do you think his beautiful bride, Laura, had something to say about that?

Mr. CARTER of Texas. I think something like that, but I wouldn't guess.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia, BUDDY CARTER.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for hosting us here tonight.

I rise today in honor of my good friend and colleague and one of my mentors, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for his impactful time in Congress. Dr. BURGESS has dedicated his congressional career to bettering not only the lives of his constituents in Texas but also the lives of all Americans.

I have had the distinct privilege of serving with MIKE BURGESS on both the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee and together in the GOP Doctors Caucus.

In all of these roles, Dr. BURGESS has worked diligently to put America's patients first. He has worked on legislation to improve access to care for patients and improve the lives of those suffering from sickle cell anemia. Dr. BURGESS has also worked hard to increase maternal health outcomes and the enhanced quality of care for mothers.

I can confidently say that Dr. BURGESS has spent every second of every hour here in Washington, D.C., working toward the betterment of life for all of us. He has been a model Member of Congress, and we will certainly miss him.

I am excited for him to get to experience the relaxation of life after Congress. After the many years of service to our country, there are few more deserving of a great retirement.

Thank you, my friend. I really do appreciate all of your guidance, all of your work, all of your mentorship.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas, JAKE ELLZEY.

Mr. ELLZEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a full heart to honor my good friend, Chairman MICHAEL BURGESS.

For over two decades, he has been a true leader for Texas' 26th District and a steadfast voice for our State here in Washington. More than that, he has been a friend, mentor, and someone you can count on no matter what.

As a doctor, MICHAEL brought a special kind of care to his work here in Congress. His deep knowledge of healthcare shaped policies that have improved lives across this country.

Let me tell you, if you ever had a conversation with MICHAEL about infrastructure or energy policy, he dives in with the same kind of determination and expertise, and that is the man he is. He is focused, committed, and always looking out for the folks back home.

As a relatively new Member of Congress and of the Texas delegation, let me go off script here and just say that he is a giant. He has guided the Rules Committee for the last year in a way that I doubt very few people could. In turbulent waters, he has smoothed them with his composure, humor, knowledge, patience, and kindness. It is missing far too often in this place.

If you are looking on TV for MICHAEL BURGESS, you won't find him. You will find him in a committee room, the study room, or in the Texas delegation lunch, instructing us on what is good and what is bad. He never went off in sound bites. He knows what he is talking about.

I had a great, beautiful speech written for you, but let me summarize by saying that the first thing that came to mind when I knew we were talking about you today was a song from 1988. Not everybody has heard this song, but a band called Cinderella sang: ''Don't know what you got 'til it's gone.''

When you are gone, we will always be missing you, and our delegation will have empty shoes that cannot be filled. Thank you for everything that you have done for us and this country. God bless you, sir.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to another gentleman from Texas, KEITH SELF.

Mr. SELF. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas. It is a real honor to be here tonight. I thank you for hosting this important Special Order hour.

MICHAEL BURGESS and I have quite a history. We were primary opponents 22 years ago, and I finished third by 91 votes. MIKE went on to win the runoff election and provide exemplary service to our Nation and the constituents in Congressional District 26. Shortly after that, I was recalled to Active Duty for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. It was obvious that God had his hand in both of our directions.

My sister-in-law also worked for MICHAEL BURGESS for 18 years in your district office. You provided her the same leadership that you did your colleagues here in Congress.

I am grateful for your friendship and for your tremendous service to our Nation.

I am also proud of your track record of defending the Constitution and your bold leadership in the pro-life movement. I will tell you, abortion is a talking point for many Members of Congress, but not MICHAEL BURGESS. You delivered about 3,000 babies in your career as a physician. Let me tell you, most of them, along with their parents and siblings, voted for you, which I realized in 2002.

Taking care of those mothers and their babies over the course of your 30-year medical career gave you a unique perspective on the value of life that you brought with you to Congress. You provided a bright beacon of light to the right-to-life struggle against those who advocate for abortion.

You always showed up. You knew your stuff. You were prepared. I will tell you, we will strive to carry on the mantle of pro-life, pro-liberty, and freedom for the next generation of congressional Members.

They have not only been your values, but they are our Texas values, and they are proving recently to be America's values.

Dr. BURGESS, I join my colleagues in letting you and Laura know that our hearts are heavy with yours. I will quote C.S. Lewis: ''Her absence is like the sky, spread over everything.'' We are truly sorry for your loss. May God bless you and Laura.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman MORGAN GRIFFITH.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WEBER for yielding to me to say a few words about my friend, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

First, I rise to congratulate you. You are finally graduating from Congress. You have done a great job during your two decades here, and your record highlights a staunch advocacy for healthcare legislation that addresses a variety of issues. Such issues include reducing healthcare costs, improving choices, and ensuring there are enough doctors in the country to tend to the healthcare needs of America's patients and veterans.

Through the Energy and Commerce Committee, your keen intellect and institutional knowledge have served as invaluable resources to me and to all. I am proud to have worked with you on healthcare-related legislation.

I have to tell you, when I first got to the Energy and Commerce Committee, we were all talking about ObamaCare. I looked back, and there was this guy I didn't know from Texas. He had the code sitting there, and it was about yea thick. Every now and then, a debate would start up, and somebody would say something, often from the other side of the aisle. They would say that we didn't do this or we did do this in the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare.

Dr. BURGESS would be on point to respond because, notwithstanding the fact that he had the book there, he could immediately tell you whether or not what was being alleged was or was not in the act. On at least two or three occasions, I can recall him citing the page and then reading from it. We are talking about on the fly. We are not talking about 10 minutes to prepare or 20 minutes to prepare. We are talking about somebody finishes commenting, people yield time to Dr. BURGESS, and he tells them what for—not in a bad way, not in a mean way, just: Well, that is not accurate. If you look at page 1206, you will see, yada yada yada.

There is no one else in the United States Congress who has that kind of knowledge of our healthcare system. I wish I could say I did. I do not. I don't know anybody who knows the American healthcare system the way that Dr. BURGESS does. It is absolutely amazing the way his mind works. Of course, it takes hard work. Even when you have a good mind, it takes a lot of hard work, as well.

Further, I have to confess that not having as much to do when I first got here, I used to go hang out from time to time at the Rules Committee. Dr. BURGESS was always there and was always asking key questions and important questions. Then, when I occasionally appeared in front of the Rules Committee, not just being a geek, he always asked the best questions.

Dr. BURGESS, I greatly appreciate all of that. As you are leaving Congress, I don't think you can be replaced. There might be 2 or 3 or 10 individuals who can combine to replace your knowledge, but there is no one individual who can do that.

Now, I have to also confess to you tonight that it is not only that we share spots on Energy and Commerce, but we also share an affinity for country music. Earlier this year, at Dr. BURGESS' personal invitation—I don't want anybody else to get mad at him—he invited me to join him and country music legend Randy Travis to discuss some issues related to the rights of performers in receiving benefits.

We have heard about issues from our colleagues on the other side where he was helpful. We heard about the stuff that he has done that has been great. He also has been working right up to the end to try to make sure that, on a myriad of different issues, the American policy is the correct policy.

I can't say enough about what a great asset Dr. BURGESS has been to the United States Congress, to the Energy and Commerce Committee, to the Rules Committee. I am so thankful for his service and leadership.

Dr. BURGESS, I wish you peace, and I hope that your time in Texas or wherever you may end up is a good one. I also hope that you will not be a stranger in the Halls of the United States Congress because, I have to confess again, oftentimes I would receive a phone call: Hey, MORGAN, have you thought about doing this?

I hope to continue to get those calls, Dr. BURGESS. It is always helpful. Thank you very much. God bless you, and God bless your family.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to DANNY DAVIS from Illinois for his comments.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise to pay tribute to my longtime friend, associate, and office mate. His office is around the corner from mine. We meet each other in the hall almost every day.

I really want to thank him for the tremendous service that he has provided to the people of this country and especially the outstanding work that he has done in healthcare.

I also mention the fact that he is as much of a politician as he is a political person, but a doctor first and foremost.

□ 1945

I thank Michael for co-chairing the Congressional Sickle Cell Disease Caucus and working with Representative LEE and myself, all the many years that we have been a part of that.

I understand that our sickle cell bill is going to be in the CR whenever we get to it, and I also understand that one of the reasons that it is there is Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS.

As he goes, wherever he goes, however he goes in whatever he does, I will just leave him with this old Irish blessing, and that is:

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the Sun always be warm on your back.

May the wind push you forward; and until we meet again, may the good Lord hold you in the palm of his hand.

I wish Dr. BURGESS the best of wishes and good luck. I hope you enjoy your life. We will miss you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Dr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, this has all been so moving and so lovely, but if anyone tuned in late tonight in C–SPAN, they probably thought I passed because it really did sound like a eulogy.

I am still here, and I will continue to text and call and inform everyone, analyze, as I think Mr. LUCAS put it. I am good at analysis. I will still give the benefit of my insight. I thank Mr. WEBER for doing this. I didn't expect it.

I have got some of my great staff up there in the Gallery who have been watching and hanging on every word. This has been very, very kind. I really don't know what else to say, but I wanted to assure people that I was still here. It has been so moving. People might have thought I had left the building, but Elvis is still in the building.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, Dr. BURGESS has been quite a mentor, quite a friend, and quite an example. As he and Laura proceed on their next step in their history and their work for Texas, I want them to know from us, our deepest gratitude and thankfulness.

It has been an absolute pleasure to serve alongside him and get to know him and to watch him. He probably doesn't know this, but I have a little bit of a sense of humor, and he does too, and we really appreciate that.

Brenda and I will be praying for him and Laura, for his family, for God's blessings over this new chapter in his life. We hope it is filled with joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control, as Galatians 5 lays out in the fruit of the Spirit.

We love what he has done to serve this Nation faithfully, and he is leaving a legacy that will not soon be forgotten.

God bless Dr. BURGESS, and may God continue to bless Texas and the United States because of him. We are grateful for him.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand here today to express my gratitude to Chairman BURGESS for his years of dedicated service to our country.

Dr. BURGESS has maintained an unwavering commitment to public service, and his steadfast leadership has been a guiding light for many.

As both a skilled legislator and a respected physician, he has worked tirelessly to improve healthcare access and affordability. Blending his expertise with compassion, he has shaped policies that make a real difference in people's lives.

During the debate on the Affordable Care Act, Congressman BURGESS brought critical insights from his time before Congress.

Given both of our backgrounds in health care prior to coming to Congress, I can tell you firsthand that his efforts to prioritize patient-centered care and strengthen our medical systems will leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Chairman BURGESS has set a high standard for public service—one rooted in integrity, hard work, and a deep belief in the values that make our Nation strong.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate Chairman BURGESS for his 22-year career of dedicated public service.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to deliver my final floor speech as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

For 26 years now, it has been the privilege of my lifetime to serve my incredible constituents of California's 12th Congressional District.

I was sworn in on April 21, 1998. The late, great Ronald V. Dellums retired early. I was his former intern, his former staffer, and he was my former colleague, my mentor, and good friend.

Ron was actually the first African-American chair of the House Armed Services Committee, and I remember that day so well. He sat right here and encouraged me to give that first speech and to actually turn around and to sign a petition then calling for campaign finance reform. I was the 218 vote to sign the discharge petition on my swearing in day, which I was very proud of.

Let me just first and foremost start by thanking my staff and all of the members of Team Lee that have worked tirelessly to serve our district 24/7 and to help us achieve so much. These are truly dedicated public servants, and their commitment has undoubtedly left an indelible mark, not

only on myself, but on our district and our country. As I say constantly, once a member of Team Lee, always a member of Team Lee.

Also, let me take a minute to thank my family who has stood beside me through all of the triumphs and challenges of the last 26 years. I could not have done it without them. In 1998, my late mother, Mildred Parish Massey, my late father, Garvin A. Tutt, my stepmother, Reiko Tutt, my Auntie Juanita who passed away at 100, and my Auntie Lois who just passed away at 103, they all were with me. They are not here today, but they have been my guardian angels over the years to guide me and to keep me moving forward.

Also my sisters, Beverly and Mildred were with me, their husbands, Martin and Calvin, and my two sons, Craig and Tony—well, Carl a.k.a. Tony, Carl Anthony Lee. They both were with me. Now, they have their families, and I have five beautiful grandchildren.

Actually, I just have to say, on that day that I was sworn in, I was talking to my dear friend and colleague Congresswoman SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE who was the cofounder of the Congressional Slow Fashion Caucus, and I want to thank her so much because I am wearing the same thing that I wore on April 21, 1998, when I was sworn in.

This caucus is a caucus that is very important because it is creating climate-smart policies to reduce repair and wear and to recycle textiles. The only thing I have done with this outfit is to just shorten it a bit, but it is the exact same outfit I wore on April 21, 1998. I thank Sydney for her leadership. I am the OG of that caucus.

As I look back on my time, though, I feel a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to not only serve my community, but to advance justice, equity, and peace throughout our country and the entire world.

I am a woman of faith. I attended St. Joseph's Catholic School in El Paso, Texas. I was taught by the Sisters of Loretto whose motto is ''Going where the need is the greatest'' and whose work—and they have acknowledged this since they have been founded—they work for peace and justice, which has informed me since my childhood.

I must, tonight, as I give my last speech on this floor after over 25 years of service, I am reminded of a Scripture, Galatians 6 verse 9, which says: And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

Madam Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues who are with me tonight. I want to really say that I love them, I appreciate their support, and that I could not do anything without the support of Democrats and Republicans, friends and colleagues.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus from Nevada, someone who is my sister's Congressional Member, someone who has done a phenomenal job as our chair in leading up to new heights, Chairman STEVEN HORSFORD.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to first give honor and to acknowledge a dear friend, a colleague, and a mentor as we take this Special Order hour to thank Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. She truly is a gift. She is a treasure, and her service is an example for all to follow.

For 26 years, Representative BARBARA LEE has been an advocate for justice, equality, and peace, both at home and abroad. Her commitment to these principles has set a standard for all of us in this Chamber.

I have had the privilege of collaborating with her on many initiatives, from expanding healthcare access to advancing racial and economic justice. Her leadership within the Congressional Black Caucus as a former chair herself has amplified the voices of marginalized communities and ensured that their concerns are addressed at the highest levels.

Representative LEE's dedication to peace is shown by her consistent stance in foreign policy matters, and it was her lone vote against the authorization for the use of military force in 2001 that showed how she will always stick to her convictions. Representative LEE's impact on Congress, on our communities, on our country, and really on all of us will be felt for generations to come. Her legacy continues to inspire us as we work to uphold the values that she has championed.

I say on behalf of the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we thank her for her service, for her leadership, and for her commitment to justice. She is a dear friend. She is a true colleague, and she has been a mentor.

I wish her all the very best in her future endeavors, and I know that her influence will remain with us for years to come. God bless her. BARBARA LEE speaks for me.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Congressman HORSFORD, for that very sincere and very humbling statement and remarks. I thank him, again, for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Mrs. LEE CARTER), who has made her mark in this Congress, not only on behalf of her dear late mother, Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas, who we all know that this is her twin right here, but she is doing a great job here. I thank her for being here and upholding her mother's spirit and legacy, but also for charting a course forward.

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, her last name is Lee, and her and my mother were like sisters from another mother. I thank her for being that to my mother, the Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee, for her entire term of service, standing up for Progressive values, being part of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, for holding that organization up, and taking it forward and making it so impactful in this body.

I thank her for being there for the first Juneteenth, her family down in Texas, in Galveston. She was so excited. They were both so excited to see each other, to celebrate freedom, the real freedom for Black people in this Nation.

I hope that we continue—I will continue—I know you will continue to uplift that holiday and make it important for all Americans to understand how we make this a more perfect Union.

I know many will tell of your many accomplishments in working on HIV/AIDS, which is so important, being the lone vote after 9/11, always standing in truth and power, always standing up and never being afraid, never backing down, always being unbossed.

I thank her on behalf of myself, since she has always been an inspiration to me, watching from behind the scenes, intergenerational leader, guiding the next generation of women, Democrat women, and women across this Nation. I thank her for traveling with my mother, loving my mother, voting with my mother, fighting with my mother, taking pictures of my mother. We will miss her. BARBARA LEE speaks for me.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LEE CARTER for her leadership and her friendship. I was her mother's personal photographer, and we did travel the world. What Sheila wanted, Sheila got because she was a true warrior woman, as is Mrs. LEE CARTER.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague and very good friend from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE). I visited her district several times as she actually was in a film, a documentary. I thank her for that, the name of it was: ''Barbara Lee: Speaking Truth to Power,'' but she was the star of that documentary.

□ 2000

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. This is a very emotional moment for me to see you leaving this body. You will never leave my presence. You will be part of my life. I am going to follow you wherever you go, BARBARA LEE.

I want to say that BARBARA LEE has always been kind of a broker-dealer to me. She is someone, as her sisters of her Catholic training encouraged her to do, to go where the need is the greatest.

I remember one of my earliest memories of BARBARA LEE was 20 years ago when I went to the first Democratic Caucus and almost got into a fistfight with STENY HOYER as the consultants were urging us not to use the word ''poor.'' Don't talk about poverty. That is kind of a bad message. That won't help us win.

Let me just tell you, I was ready to fight and argue. I mean, I had decided to try and reinvent myself coming from the Wisconsin State legislature to be a kinder, gentler lady from Wisconsin, but already I was stepping into big doo-doo with STENY HOYER, the Caucus minority leader, as STENY HOYER defended our consultant's admonition that we don't use ''poor'' as a word.

BARBARA LEE not only came alongside me to encourage me and to try and validate me as I argued in my very strident, loud, obstreperous, disruptive way, not only did she come alongside me, but she worked Steny into putting together a task force on poverty and worked him into committing himself on a weekly basis to bringing in speakers, to bringing in experts, to bringing in people to talk about poverty in a way that ultimately, I believe, led us to one of the most revolutionary bills that has ever been passed in this House of Representatives: the child tax credit, as it was envisioned under the American Rescue Plan.

Literally we were able to cut the poverty of Black children in half and cut poverty among all children by 40 percent. We were able to establish and prove and demonstrate that an investment in our children was an investment unlike all the other stuff we talk about like tax cuts are going to pay for themselves. We saw in a very short period of time the return on investing in children. That conversation really was made manifest by BARBARA LEE bringing the issue of poverty to the front.

I was on welfare, and BARBARA was, too. It wasn't something that we talked about. It was kind of an embarrassment; is that right, BARBARA?

Ms. LEE of California. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE of California. That is right. It was an embarrassment, and it was a stigma on us. Welfare queens, that is what they tried to call us.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. It was a stigma, and I was the welfare queen. BARBARA came and befriended me, and she went where the need was the greatest.

BARBARA LEE was our United Nations representative. We talked about all of her international impact, and BARBARA LEE was our Congress United Nations representative.

BARBARA, you did so much in that space to bring the American side to have us visiting the U.N. because there are so many people in the United States that are not necessarily as supportive of the world and the United Nations, but you represented us so well.

We have a country in our own hemisphere, Cuba, that is right in our hemisphere, Haiti, right in our hemisphere, full of people who are poor and destitute and marginalized, and BARBARA LEE being that broker-dealer was not ashamed of them. She was not someone who shied away from them even though there was not only stigma but contempt and disdain and disbelief in them.

BARBARA went to Cuba. She has been to Cuba so many times. The last time she went to Cuba, I went with her, and as she was introducing all of us there, she introduced me and said, well, the reason that GWEN MOORE is here is because she said that if I came back to Cuba one more time without her, she was going to kill me. That is how I got a chance to go to another country in our hemisphere and really see the resources that this country could bring to us.

That is where BARBARA learned about how people from the United States were going to Cuba—and maybe you could just share with us—becoming doctors at state expense, how they were providing care for people with diabetes without those folks getting amputations.

BARBARA, can you share a little bit about that? This was just revolutionary to me to experience that with you.

Ms. LEE of California. Well, let me just say to Representative GWEN MOORE, I am so happy you came to Cuba in spite of no option for me except to invite you to Cuba because you came back and continued to do the work to help normalize relations with Cuba. All we want are normal relations.

There are so many scientific discoveries that Cuba has developed that Americans could benefit from, and there is much we have developed that the Cuban people could benefit from.

Let me tell you, there is a treatment that prevents amputations from diabetes. Representative BURGESS, who we honored earlier knows about that treatment, Heberprot-P. We saw in the clinics 80 to 90 percent effectiveness used all around the world, but because of the embargo, we weren't able to get a clinical trial here in America.

Well, let me just bring you up to date very quickly. This procedure prevents amputations for those who have diabetes, and, of course, the Black communities, the Brown communities have a disproportionate rate of amputations. This is 90 percent effective. Finally, we got clinical trials here. You talk about not giving up. Finally, finally, there is a company now that is in phase 3—I believe it is phase 3—of the clinical trials, so hopefully we will be able to have this treatment in America. Can you imagine us taking 25, 30 years just to get this far and how many people could have benefited from it?

While we are talking about Cuba, I was recently there, and I will include in the RECORD, Representative MOORE, on your time a letter to President Biden. Many of us have been trying to remove Cuba from the state-sponsored terrorism list. This is from over 130 civil society organizations of Cuba—not the government, civil society. I am going to read one paragraph: ''Cuba is not a terrorist state. There is absolutely no evidence that may support a claim otherwise, as has been recognized by the overwhelming majority of the international community and many sectors in the U.S., including a number of U.S. Government specialized agencies that, by the way, attach great value''—mind you, great value—''to their professional cooperation with Cuba in their fight against this scourge.''

Mr. Speaker, I include this letter in the RECORD.

ASOCIACIÓN CUBANA
DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS,
Havana, November 8, 2024.

Mr. JOSEPH BIDEN,
President of the United States.

ESTEEMED MR. PRESIDENT: The purpose of this letter, signed by organizations movements, networks, groups and social actors that widely represent the Cuban civil society, is to request that Cuba be removed from the list of terror sponsoring states.

This measure defined the Cuba policy pursued by your predecessor. It was not introduced by your administration; however, your administration has enforced it; therefore, your administration is held responsible for its serious consequences.

Cuba's designation in that list is arbitrary, and as it is well known, was driven by political motivations. It is also contrary to the norms of civilized coexistence among nations and has highly unfavorable consequences for the operation of the Cuban economy and the well-being of the Cuban people. This action has compounded the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the U.S. government and in place for many years now, and which accumulated financial, social and human damages are beyond calculation. A recently observable consequence has been the surge of Cuban emigration to the U.S. using lawfully regular, as well as irregular channels.

Cuba is not a terrorist State. There is absolutely no evidence that may support a claim otherwise, as has been recognized by the overwhelming majority of the international community and many sectors in the U.S., including a number of U.S. government specialized agencies that, by the way, attach great value to their professional cooperation with Cuba in their fight against this scourge.

Further to denying the truth, this designation automatically triggers the application of coercive economic measures that preclude Cuba's access to foreign financial and banking institutions and payment agencies, as well as to sources of financing, technologies, and supplies and materials associated with public services in such basic areas as healthcare and education.

This designation also hiders Cuba's payments for raw materials, food supplies, medicines, fuel, and equipment and related parts and accessories. It also interferes with Cuba's foreign financial operations, including our country's debt settlement transactions. It deals a hard blow to the Cuban tourist industry and discourages Cuba's foreign business relations. And it halts productions and gives rise to supply gaps and shortages.

Our families are suffering the consequences of this unfair label. Our families have endured the wear, pain and loss caused by the application of the coercive economic actions derived from this description.

For decades, our capacity to normally and effectively satisfy the needs of their members and build, free from foreign intervention, a legitimate and collective project that contributes to our society has been damaged.

Cuba has recently faced a severe energy contingency. It has also been hit by two devastating hurricanes and two earthquakes, which caused additional suffering and material losses to its people and economy. Removing our country from the List of States that allegedly sponsor terrorism would contribute to the economic, social, and psychological recovery of the affected regions and populations, the improvement of our countrymen's living conditions, and the well-being of Cuban families.

Mr. President, all we are asking is that you do what is right before the end of your

term of office and let justice prevail by removing Cuba from the list of terror sponsoring States.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, we have forwarded this letter to President Biden asking him to remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list with at least 20 Members who have signed that letter.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Representative LEE, this is what I admire about you so much: We all go to the White House, and we are in awe, and we shake the hand of the President and the First Lady, and we meet up with them and take selfies with them, and you always put the Presidents to work.

We are going to continue on, and we can promise you that we are going to continue to make sure that we get to normalize our relations with Cuba. George W. Bush, a Republican, you got in his face. One of the things that George W. Bush will always be remembered for is his initiative on HIV/AIDS and saving millions of lives not only in Africa but all around the world. I just want to remind people that here, once again, was BARBARA LEE breaking down a door of stigma. While most people were distancing themselves from HIV/AIDS patients because, you know, people were saying they were in sin, and they had somehow deserved it somehow, BARBARA LEE was one of the people that marched right on up to the White House and made sure that someone in high places like George W. Bush, you gave him the cover to have the courage around this issue and break through that stigma. BARBARA, let me thank you for that. Let me ask you to share with us a little bit more about that journey.

Ms. LEE of California. Representative MOORE, thank you very much for reminding us of that, and let me just say because of Republicans and Democrats we have saved 25 million lives, and we must have a permanent clean extension of PEPFAR. President Bush and I disagreed on every single policy. I voted against everything that he put forward, but we came together to save lives, and I thank him. I thank all of those who up until this point have kept this bipartisan and encouraged Republicans and Democrats to continue to do that. I will be working on this from the outside.

I thank Representative MOORE very much for being here with us tonight, and I hope that you will be able to stay for a few more minutes as soon as I yield to someone else.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. You want me to stop talking?

Ms. LEE of California. No, I have to yield to a couple members, and then I will come back to you if you can stay.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. I will because I need to ask you about a couple more things. I will return to the mic.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH) who came to Congress hitting the ground running out of a very personal tragedy of gun violence in which she lost her son, and here she is moving forward being very successful and making sure that our young people are safe and that gun violence is no more.

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. BARBARA LEE speaks for me.

I do rise today to honor my dear colleague and friend, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE from California, who will be retiring at the end of a longstanding and extraordinarily remarkable career in Congress.

□ 2015

Ms. MCBATH. Congresswoman LEE, you are more than a servant-leader to America. You are an example by which countless women of color can seek to emulate as we step up to be the voices of our communities.

You are unabashed in speaking truth to power and unwavering in your convictions for change and your convictions for community and your convictions for helping the least of these. I truly wish there were so many more people here that would stand on those very convictions.

BARBARA, you have never been afraid to stand up and speak out, even when the odds are against you. You inspire me each and every single day. I mean, I see you running around here and making deals and dealing with the people and your bipartisanship and reaching across the aisle. I see you walking these Halls, I mean, literally running these Halls to do the work of the people with new fervor for progress in America.

I am truly going to be so sorry to see you leave. You are such a galvanizing voice. As you continue to transition away from the Halls of Congress, I know that your work is not finished yet.

I am encouraged by everything that you have done here, everything you have done preceding the time that I have come to Washington. I really look forward to everything that you are going to be doing going forward. I know that your work is not finished yet. God is not done with you yet.

I just look forward to the next chapter of leadership, you know, in your life and what that is going to look like for the communities that you represent.

Just as it was expressed even earlier, you know, just like Representative Shirley Chisholm who is, you know, our leader, you have always been unbought and unbossed. You are a light in this world. You are a city on a hill and a name that is never going to be forgotten.

I want to thank you very, very much. When I first came here, people kept telling me I couldn't be on the Judiciary Committee because I wasn't an attorney and I didn't have the experience and I didn't know how to fight for justice.

You said to me: If this is where you believe you need to be, and we know why you have come to Congress, I will make it happen.

Thank you for allowing me to use my voice in the Halls of Congress for reform and justice and gun safety and all the things that I so, so believe in. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be able to stand for justice and democracy in these Halls, and I am going to miss you.

Ms. LEE of California. I am going to miss you, too, Congresswoman LUCY MCBATH.

Just look at you and how far you have come in leadership now on that Judiciary Committee and where you are in honor of your son. Just look at what you have done to bring this House together, to focus on the issues of gun violence, working with many, many colleagues.

As I listen to you, I am very humbled by what you said, and I am reminded back of the Scripture:

Let us not grow weary of doing good.

I just want you to stand tall and continue to fight the good fight because the country needs you right here, fighting for life.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my sister, my Palestinian sister whose voice speaks for many, many people in our own country and throughout the world.

RASHIDA TLAIB is not only a voice for people who never had a voice in this body but she is also a great legislator. I always like to tell people, you know, RASHIDA TLAIB cares about clean water. She cares about public safety. She cares about housing. She cares about making sure that her constituents have the best constituent services in the country, as the best Representative who we all model our district offices after.

RASHIDA TLAIB.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman LEE for yielding. Of course, she cannot just let us speak about the incredible, powerful leadership she has had in this Chamber for 26 years.

Of course, I was blessed. I had no idea she was going to be assigned as a mentor to me and then birth the wonderful Grants E-Newsletters because she told me this is what you have got to do is fight for your access and fair share of our resources for our districts.

She got me right on the Task Force on Poverty. Thank you for that.

You have been incredible, again, the last 26 years. Your determination and what I have watched you do has changed this institution forever. You have not only created this amazing momentum and movement around talking about poverty in this institution that really wasn't ready for people like us, Congresswoman LEE, but you pushed back against the stigma in health disparities of our neighbors living with HIV and AIDS when it was unpopular; ending the discriminatory Hyde amendment that restricts access to abortion care when some people in this Chamber would not even say the word ''abortion.''

You have done so much for all the incredible residents of the city of Oakland and the surrounding communities. I want to take a moment and thank them, thank them for continuing to send you here to this body; to continue letting you change this institution to be better. It will be forever changed because Congresswoman BARBARA LEE served here for 26 years.

There is a saying, Audre Lorde's quote, and it just reminds me of you, BARBARA. She said: ''When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.''

BARBARA, you sat in that well with me when I got censured. You told me to keep my head held up high. In that moment it wasn't just about me but the fact that it was about your character and the fact that you understood what it meant to be feeling alone, even, again, standing up and saying it is okay to speak truth to power, that it is okay to be able to save lives, no matter faith or ethnicity. You did it in such a powerful, graceful way.

I will never forget you. You know I am going to call you all the time. You know I come from the most beautiful, Blackest city in the country. Even though you may not have been born and raised in Detroit, we are going to take you in as one of our own because you have been doing that here in this Chamber and teaching us from afar how to do it right.

Thank you. Thank you for, again, making this institution better. Congresswoman LEE, it is not the same. Because of you, it is now better. It has created space for people like myself, Congresswoman MOORE, Congresswoman MCBATH.

Again, you have opened doors for many of us in this Chamber. Thank you. Thank you for your service to our country.

God bless you.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you, my sister, RASHIDA TLAIB. Let me thank you for your strength and for again being a voice that has never been represented before on this floor. Also let me thank you for staying strong and not growing weary, RASHIDA, because you were my mentee. You were, but it didn't take long for you to get it.

I know you, and I see you. I know what it means to be here. Don't grow weary. Keep at it. Thank you again for being here.

PAUL TONKO, my relatives' Representative and my friend from New York, who I love dearly, thank you for being here this evening. I am going to miss you, but I will be seeing you.

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding.

Yes, they are a good family. I enjoy being their Representative.

It is absolutely a powerful moment this evening in the House to hear everyone, your friends, your colleagues, recap the history you have written as a Congress Representative and the service you have provided in this House.

It is my colleague, our colleague Congresswoman BARBARA LEE that has been a progressive champion and who is a fierce advocate and dear friend during my time in Congress.

BARBARA, what impacts me most is that you are a powerful voice, a very bold voice, a very determined voice, a passionate voice, and oftentimes a lone voice because you felt the moment that challenged you had to be addressed by your fierce loyalty to awesome causes.

Your efforts in this body will be remembered for your courage, your tenacity, and your strength of spirit. You have dedicated your time as an elected Representative to serving those in need, sometimes the voiceless, whether it be the global HIV/AIDS community, those in need of housing or reproductive healthcare rights, and certainly education and fairness in education.

Your advocacy for your constituents in the East Bay area spans decades, ranging from your time as a social worker, as a congressional staffer, as a small business owner, as a State legislator, and certainly your powerful record as a Member of Congress.

I have been honored to work with you on issues that are close to my heart including the entire climate issue, to make certain we hand over our planet in better stead to those who will follow us, certainly the addiction policy efforts that you have made treating those with the illness of addiction with high regard and high priority, and the expansion of STEM education. These are all important areas.

You, my friend, have been a titan of this body. I am honored to have served with you. I think in many of the gatherings that we have had and in offering the official goodbyes, it is so obvious that you are genuine. You are authentic.

As we have heard from your very first moments of life, there was a reason. Your mom shared with the world that you were saved in that moment to live a life of service. It has proven itself so true.

I am honored to be with you. I will take good care of those constituents in the 20th Congressional District.

God bless you, and God speed.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you so much, PAUL, for those words and for your friendship and for your leadership and for being someone who I can talk to confidentially.

You mentioned my mother. Actually, when she was giving birth, she needed a C-section. They would not admit her to the hospital because she was Black. The bottom line is she almost died in childbirth. The bottom line is I almost didn't get here. I almost didn't breathe. My mother almost died. That is where my fight for women's health, for justice, for gender equality began—at birth.

Thank you for that reminder, PAUL.

BOBBY SCOTT is another Representative who is a great leader, who supports and puts forth policies to help our working men and women, the middle class and low-income people, to really grow the middle class by moving into the middle class. He is also somebody who cares about our young people, education, HBCUs, minority-serving institutions. He is really a man of all seasons.

I just want to thank him. He represents another part of my family in Virginia. PAUL TONKO represents one part of the Lewis family in New York, and BOBBY is my family's Virginia Representative.

Thank you again, BOBBY.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman BARBARA LEE for yielding. This is not about me. This is about you, your legislative legacy. You have done a great job here as a legislator, and you will leave a great legacy.

□ 2030

There are two parts of that legacy that I wanted to emphasize. They have been mentioned already tonight, but the first is the advocacy that you had to create the poverty task force. We raised a lot of money to try to get elected, and poverty is rarely mentioned as an issue. You not only created the task force, but you have also used that task force to create targeted, effective ways to actually address the issue of poverty.

The other is the issue of global AIDS, the global AIDS crisis. Your work with the Bush administration has been phenomenal. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, AIDS anywhere is a threat of AIDS everywhere, and if we don't address it everywhere, it threatens the rest of the world.

Your work convinced the George W. Bush administration to actually allocate the order of magnitude of resources needed. There were discussions of a little here and a little there, but you kept on them until they actually put in the kind of money that was necessary. It is not an exaggeration to say that tens of millions of people are alive today because of your work.

So, I thank you, BARBARA LEE, for all of your work, especially the work for those who would not have a voice without you.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative and Ranking Member BOBBY SCOTT, the former chair. I thank him for his leadership. I feel that our children's future is secure with him here.

Again, as he spoke, I have to go back to Galatians 6:9, where I opened, because I am hearing this over and over again: ''Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.''

I think all of you have spoken to that not only about myself but yourselves, so I thank you. I just pulled the Scripture out of the clear blue sky tonight thinking about what to say, and all of you are validating this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), who is my

friend and my brother. He is somebody who has worked so hard to make sure that our young people have a second chance. So many have been unjustly incarcerated for nonviolent offenses who should be able to go through rehabilitation, get a job, and go on to live their lives. DANNY is the author of the Second Chance Act. He also has worked on sickle cell, diabetes, and all the healthcare issues. He is remarkable. Thank you for being my friend.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't let the evening go by without coming to pay tribute to BARBARA, one of the fiercest, most courageous, hardest working, and most energized persons I have ever known during my lifetime.

Seeing what you have contributed and the way in which you have done it, as I listen to each one of the people who spoke—World AIDS Day probably wouldn't be taking place. We just celebrated it on the 1st of December, and people all over the country and all over the Nation celebrated World AIDS Day. That is a part of your work.

The focus on SNAP and hungry people, people needing food, that is a part of your work, making sure that people got second chances and that they got money.

Every session, when we get to appropriations, we always say: Are we really going to get the money we need for people to have these programs?

BARBARA LEE is there, and we know that BARBARA has got our back.

The focus on international relationships, I think I got two boxes of Castro's cigars. I never smoked, but I got two boxes of Castro cigars. He would keep us up all night. He never wanted to quit and go to bed. Somebody would have to say: Mr. President, we have got other people to see tomorrow and other things to do.

The whole health arena, how much fun I had working with Clyde and the folks out in San Francisco and Oakland, where when we started with what is known as the federally qualified health centers. When I started, there were 10. Now, there are 1,400 all over America, taking care of more than 30 million low-income and moderate-income people in this country.

So, BARBARA, you have done it.

My mother used to tell us a little poem. She used to say: If you can't be a pine at the top of the hill, be a shrub in the valley. Be the best little shrub on the side of the hill. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be the Moon, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or you fail. But be the best, the very best, of whatever you are.

That is what you have been. That is what you are. God bless you. Keep on working.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend so much for those beautiful words.

You are the resident poet, we know, but you are able to articulate how the spirit moves in public policy.

So, I thank you for showing us where the North Star is so that we can move in that direction.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Do what the spirit says.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER), who is my neighbor and friend from next door.

MARK DESAULNIER has come to Congress, and we have become very good friends and colleagues. We really chartered some new courses and brought them to Capitol Hill to get our Democratic Caucus to talk about race and racism.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I was a work in progress sometimes. BARBARA would look at me and get that look on her face.

Ms. LEE of California. He has come around all the way, full circle.

Mr. DESAULNIER. I just don't get it sometimes.

BARBARA, as a neighbor, colleague, and friend, I just wanted to come down and thank you and talk about two specific instances where you made me a better person and, as an example of how you have illuminated this country, that if you can't talk about trouble, then you can't talk about love and you can't talk about making people better.

We were down here in the well when I first got here after Ferguson. Elijah Cummings and John Lewis were sitting right there. I can't remember which one of us started this, but the conversation was: If we can't talk about race in the bay area, and gosh knows we have enough trouble there, where the heck in the country can we?

So, we started that. You taught me so much. John Powell from the Haas Institute for diversity is just a wonderful man. All his staff would come to these townhalls. I don't know how many we had, but JUDY CHU, Karen Bass, and TED LIEU came to a very diverse area in our two districts. It was wonderful, and I learned so much about myself and my own biases and prejudices. It was illuminating, too, because I had liberal White Democrats come up to me, I told you this, and say: Why are you doing this?

You had one of those moments where: Why are you surprised?

Then, we brought John back here to the Democratic Caucus, and I am told that, at the time, it was the largest turnout the Caucus ever had because Professor Powell talked about his experience at Ohio State and Cal, his studies on diversity, and why confronting bias and racism was so important for the health of this country. That was wonderful and continues to be, and we are going to continue to do it.

Then, for people who don't know about the Port Chicago 50, it was the largest domestic loss of life in the United States during World War II, when the very segregated, racist Navy was having Black African-American sailors load ships at Port Chicago, which was in San Francisco Bay in my district, in our neighborhood.

These young men came from all over the country in the forties because they wanted to defend America in spite of all of our flaws, particularly from the South. They were told how to load munitions in such a way that was so dangerous and so different from the White Teamsters who did the same work. Because of this disregard, the White officers would actually bet on which group would load more, and they would just throw these weapons into these ships.

One morning, disaster struck. The ship exploded. You could hear the explosion 20, 50 miles away. It rattled windows in San Francisco 15 miles away. We lost over 300 African-American sailors that day.

They had to go down into that water the next day. The ship was gone, and the pier was gone. They went into the water under instruction from their White officers to get the bodies and the parts from their colleagues out of there.

Reading about that in the book and the history about it—anyway, for 80 years, this has gone on. Fifty of those young men who volunteered to serve this country in horrible conditions and who survived were taken to court-martial and got the worst possible sentence, 50 of them, for disobeying an order that they knew was dangerous. They didn't disobey it; they just said: We are brave men, but we don't want to go back to the same circumstances. So for that, they were court-martialed.

Thurgood Marshall helped defend them, and as part of what he said about similar cases: I come not just to defend these men, but I come to defend the sacred creed in our founding documents.

So for 40 years, my predecessor tried to get a change. With your help and for the 10 years I have been here, we have tried to get a change.

Toward the end, I was arguing with the Navy and with the White House. In the last conversation, I was emulating you. I was a little irritated.

I said: Goddamn it, can't we just do this for BARBARA LEE before she retires?

The secret weapon in that was, a month later, the Secretary of the Navy called me and said: We are going to exonerate those sailors.

Those are just two specific examples of how you have raised people up and raised me up, and there is so much more that everyone else has talked about, about poverty and your dogged determination for justice. You have done it in a way that has gone to people who a lot of us wouldn't go to, but you have gone to everyone and went after, as Lincoln said, ''the better angels of our nature,'' and you were able to persuade them.

So, I am going to miss you so much.

Ms. LEE of California. I am right next door.

Mr. DESAULNIER. I know. I know you are going to be coming and using that finger every once in a while saying: Come on, man.

In our districts, if you come to the bay area, you can still see bumper

stickers that say: ''Barbara Lee Speaks for Me.'' Indeed, BARBARA, thank you for speaking for so many Americans.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you what a pleasure it is to work with my friend, Congressman DESAULNIER, because there are very few people who will take on issues that they really aren't quite settled with, and he did.

Race, racism, and systemic racism, all the hate that surfaces as a result, really present a clear and present danger to our country. You as a White man really understood what privilege is and understood what the history is.

I thank my friend very much for being a partner because that is what this is. We all have to work together.

He is supporting my truth resolution, H.R. 40, calling for a truth, racial healing, and transformation commission. Hopefully, we would like an executive order, but what you just said is the rationale, MARK, for why we have to have the truth told about the history of Black people, especially in America, and why only with the truth can we heal, and only then can we move toward transforming this country.

My friend has been an example of exactly what we are talking about. I just want to thank you for your brilliance, your leadership, and your sensitivity.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GROTHMAN). The gentlewoman has 5½ minutes remaining.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL).

□ 2045

Ms. SEWELL. First, let me just say that we know that BARBARA LEE speaks for all of us. When I first came to Washington, BARBARA, you were a great mentor and friend.

Having studied about Shirley Chisholm, the stories that you told about her were so important. My favorite quote of hers is that: ''Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this Earth.'' Well, BARBARA, you have actually burned a mortgage. You have done so much great work over your time in Washington and in Congress.

Your legacy will loom large over this place. I thank you for guiding so many of us through the appropriations process. I still want a tutorial before you go.

Ms. LEE of California. Tomorrow. Tomorrow. Tomorrow.

Ms. SEWELL. But, when I think about being effective, BARBARA LEE's record is, bar none, one of the most important congressional records that we have.

Your track record on funding, whether that was all of the wonderful stuff you did for AIDS—and I could go on and on and on about how you have truly changed the world.

You have earned the right to retire, but we know that there is no such thing as retiring, that you go from project to project, and you excel in all.

Do know that this place will not be the same without you here.

I am sorry I am just running in, but I could not miss the opportunity to tell you how important you have been to me and to my office, and I thank you. Saying ''thank you'' doesn't seem adequate enough but do know that your legacy will live on through so many of the people that you touched. I am just grateful that I was one of the ones that you mentored, so thank you so much.

We love you, BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Well, Congresswoman SEWELL, let me just say thank you. I want to make sure everyone knows you represent Selma, Alabama. She represents the heart and soul of the civil rights movement.

TERRI SEWELL has put Selma and its aspirations and its dreams and its needs on the map of this House of Representatives, and I just wanted to tell you.

Ms. SEWELL. And there was never a time that you didn't come with John to Selma. How many times did you make that pilgrimage on faith and politics? I just want to say thank you. Not only did you bring it, but you brought children from your Martin Luther King Center in Oakland.

Ms. LEE of California. Yes.

Ms. SEWELL. And you also started a program with the children from my district.

Ms. LEE of California. That is right.

Ms. SEWELL. And they got a chance to come to Oakland on the tour.

Ms. LEE of California. So we have this Oakland-Alabama connection.

Ms. SEWELL. We do. We do.

Ms. LEE of California. We have an Oakland-Birmingham, Oakland-Selma connection, which is so important because of you, though, TERRI.

Ms. SEWELL. Well, it is important because of you. We are absolutely following in your footsteps, and you leave huge steps for us to follow. Thank you, and I love you.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you again, and thank you for being here.

Congresswoman MOORE, I have to say I am glad you stayed here throughout this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, let me, once again, thank everyone, all of my colleagues, but especially my constituents, who I considered the most enlightened, most diverse and most progressive, yes, congressional district, for giving me the faith and trust to fight alongside you for a better tomorrow.

Also, I just want to say I started with a Scripture, and I want to close with one as I leave this august body.

This is Proverbs 16:3. It reminds us of this. It says: Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans succeed. Now, this comes from the Bible: Even in retirement, we are called to commit our actions to God.

I believe in the separation of church and state. I also believe in those values that those Sisters of Loretto taught me, and that was to go where the need is the greatest, do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all of my colleagues for being here tonight, and thank you to the House of Representatives, both Democrats and Republicans, for, yes, being part of Team Lee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Okay. GWEN MOORE is going to close. Since we have 45 seconds, this is how we do it.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. BARBARA, let me just thank you.

Ms. LEE of California. This is how we play jazz, right?

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Just let me thank you.

You are that same cheerleader who fought to integrate the cheerleading team, but once you got on the team, you were a team player.

The thing that I love about you so much is that, even with how competitive this place is, you always tried to lift people up, to encourage them, to help them get in position. I know so much snot and tears came out of my eyes because I couldn't get on Ways and Means, but you told me: Just keep on and don't give up.

BARBARA, thank you for encouraging us, for loving us, for getting us out of Iraq, your leadership in everything, and bringing us together on a bipartisan basis.

I love you, BARBARA, and this institution will never be the same.

Ms. LEE of California. Thank you, GWEN MOORE, and I told you: Don't get weary, and you will get there, and you reap what you sow, and you got it.

Thank you for being our voice on the Ways and Means Committee. God bless you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver my final floor speech as a member of the United States House of Representatives.

For 26 years, it has been the privilege of my lifetime to serve my incredible constituents in California's 12th Congressional district.

I'd like to first and foremost thank my staff and all the members Team Lee that have worked tirelessly to serve our district and help us achieve so much. These are truly dedicated public servants, and their commitment has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on not only me, but on our district and country. As we say, once a member of Team Lee, always a member of Team Lee.

I would also like to thank my family, who have stood beside me through all of the triumphs and challenges of the last 26 years. I could not have done it without them.

As I look back on my time in Congress, I feel a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to not only serve my community, but to advance justice, equity, and peace throughout our country and the entire world.

It is a gift to serve, and with that gift, we were able to:

Save twenty-five million lives around the world from AIDS, through the bipartisan PEPFAR program—arguably the most successful foreign assistance program in American history.

Fight back against endless war by securing bipartisan votes to repeal Authorizations to Use Military Force.

As Chair of the Appropriations subcommittee on State & Foreign Operations, I worked to expand investments in diplomacy and development, to build a better, safer world. Specifically, I worked to strengthen our presence and partnerships with Africa and the Caribbean.

As the official Congressional Representative to the United Nations General Assembly, I worked to support greater international cooperation for fighting poverty, discrimination, and abuses of human rights, as well as working towards global peace and justice.

Urge the Surgeon General's office to highlight gun violence as a public health crisis in the U.S.

Author legislation to launch the American Women Quarters program, which honors the contribution of American women by featuring their likenesses on U.S. quarters.

Introduce the first-ever comprehensive sex education bill, aiming to ensure that students receive medically accurate information on sexual health.

Advocate for a shift in federal policy by reducing military spending and addressing the bloated Pentagon budget.

Launch the Ron V. Dellums Memorial Fellowship aimed at boosting the number of minority students in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM) fields through robust financial scholarships.

And help pass legislation that drastically reduced child poverty in the U.S. through my leadership as a member of the Appropriations committee, among many other things.

My final two pieces of legislation serve as bookend moments for me.

Last week, alongside former Senator LAPHONZA BUTLER, we were able to pass legislation that awarded my mentor and friend, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor bestowed upon a civilian from the Congress. The bill was signed by Vice President HARRIS, who is the pride of my Congressional district. It was truly a beautiful moment to witness.

And this week, I'll be introducing legislation to extend the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, otherwise known as PEPFAR. I worked alongside my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and President George W. Bush to establish this legislation over 20 years ago, and in that time the program has saved over 25 million lives around the world.

President Bush and I disagreed on virtually everything, but we came together to address one of the most deadly diseases in human history. And together we must continue forging ahead to achieve our goal of an AIDS-free generation by 2030.

I'd like to thank the constituents of California's 12th Congressional district, the most enlightened district in the country, for giving me their faith and trust to fight alongside them for a better tomorrow.

They elected me to strengthen our communities. To push back against oppression, militarism, and corruption. To fight for legislation that embodies our values of justice, equity, and peace for all people—no matter their race, religion, or sexuality.

Fighting this fight on behalf of the East Bay in Washington has been one of the greatest honors of my life.

We've made incredible progress—from critical health care reforms at home and abroad, to lowering costs for working families, to enacting historic climate and gun violence legislation.

We've got a long way to go. But I'm proud of the work we've accomplished together. Let us keep up the good fight.

STOP INSTITUTIONAL CHILD ABUSE ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1351.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate that the last presenter ended with a verse from the Bible. It was a marvelous verse, and that is what this Special Order is going to be about.

Recently, in November, we celebrated, once again, since the year 1941, National Bible Week. This is something that has been declared and proclaimed by every President since Franklin D. Roosevelt, who started this in 1941, just days before we were attacked at Pearl Harbor.

As the world was hurdling toward World War II, it was so appropriate that the country turned to the Bible for sustenance and guidance.

I have been leading this particular commemoration on National Bible Week for—I don't know—8 or 10 years on the floor of the House. This will be my last opportunity because I will be voluntarily retiring from Congress in January.

I want to thank so many people who have helped me during my career, but, most of all, I would like to first thank my Lord and Savior for the opportunity to represent Colorado's Fifth Congressional District for 18 years.

It is my relationship with Him, with God, who has provided any wisdom or success that I have experienced in my congressional career.

National Bible Week was in November, but that was during Thanksgiving, when we were all out of town, so we chose this week to actually formally celebrate it and commemorate it here on the floor of the House.

This was begun in 1941 as an official National Bible Week, and it is the Bible that led me to a relationship with my Lord and Savior.

I was a freshman at college, and some people talked to me, and they said: Have you ever read the Bible for yourself?

I said: No, but I think I know what is in it.

That is kind of an arrogant and foolish thing to say, but that is where I was coming from in my ignorance, my naivete.

They said: Hey, why don't you read the Gospel of John, and you will understand what the message of the Bible is.

So I did that, and, as I read the Gospel of John, I realized that this is a relationship with the living God that I did not have and that I needed and that I wanted.

John 14:6 is where Jesus says: I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.

That spoke to my heart, and that is when I began a personal relationship with my Lord and Savior.

My salvation came through reading the Bible, so I am so happy that we can celebrate and commemorate National Bible Week here tonight.

We have some Members of Congress who are going to be speaking about what the Bible means to them personally and what the Bible means to the United States of America, this special and marvelous country that we have the privilege of living in.

As David said in the book of Psalms: Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path.

That is ultimately what the Bible is about. It is a lamp to our feet and it is a light to our path. It guides us day to day as we take footsteps. It guides the path that we see in the future, the direction our lives should go in. So it is a lamp and it is a light. That makes it so special.

At this point, I yield 4 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from the great State of Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT).

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I thank my colleague, Congressman LAMBORN, for once again organizing this important Special Order, as he has done many times in the past. Not only that, but I thank him for his service to this legislative body.

He has been one of the good guys here in this body that has really stood for those principles that really, I think, date back to when our Founding

Fathers first envisioned this great Nation, the United States of America.

We thank our colleague from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, the Bible has been and, really, it still is more than just a book. It is the foundation of our moral compass. It is the inspiration behind our laws. It is the source of strength and comfort for countless families and individuals, literally around the world.

From the founding of our great Nation, we have seen how the truths that are found in the Bible have shaped our culture, have influenced our leaders, and have guided the hearts of our people.

Here in America, as in so many places around the world, we have been blessed with the freedom to worship and the right to hold our religious beliefs without fear and without persecution. Unfortunately, there are a lot of places in the world that don't have that freedom, but here in America, we do.

However, with all that is said about the Bible, let us not forget the power that is in the Word of God and how it always gives us a hope that instills so much into the lives of so many people across the world.

There have been many books that have been written over the ages, and a lot of books have sold literally millions and millions of copies, some 200 or 300 million copies. You think about books like ''A Tale of Two Cities,'' ''Don Quixote,'' ''The Lord of the Rings,'' those that rank up there, and perhaps maybe 300 or 400 million copies have been sold.

As far as I know, there is only one book that has sold into the billions, and it is estimated that over 5 billion copies of the Word of God, the Bible, has been printed and put out there, and I would say that is a very conservative number.

It is no wonder the Bible is the most popular book ever written, as it holds the key to life and actually to life everlasting, for in the New Testament, we read the words of Jesus of Nazareth, and we read about his life. The words of the Bible are different from all the other books that were written. The words of the Bible cut like a double-edged sword, yet its full life is found to its fullest, and those are the words of Jesus.

We hear the words of Jesus in John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

As a young boy, like Congressman LAMBORN, I realized what that meant and wanted to have that relationship with God myself, and realizing that I could have that directly through Christ, I asked him into my life through a simple prayer. That still holds true for any person today who wants to go down that road and take God up on that offer.

I thank Congressman LAMBORN this evening for his dedication, but, more than anything else, for recognizing the Bible is the book of all books. It is the Bible, for it is in the Bible that life is found.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those kind and gracious words and the insights that he shared with us.

Congress has changed over the years. I am really not telling a secret that anyone here doesn't already know but let me tell you the perspective that our first Congressmen and -women had in this country of ours. It would have been men at the time, and the women came later, as we know.

Many early-American settlers came to the New World wanting to live out their faith in God and his Word, and so Congress, as one of their first acts, authorized an American-published Bible. You see, they were at war with the British and, because of embargoes, shipments of the Bible, among other things, were not coming into the country.

In 1782, Congress reviewed, approved, and authorized the first known English-language Bible to be printed in America. The resolution said, in part: Resolved, that the United States in Congress assembled to recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States, and hereby authorize Mr. Aitken to publish this recommendation in the manner he shall think proper.

□ 2100

Congress authorized the printing of the Bible and recommended that everyone read it. Our country has changed over the years. I can't imagine us doing that now, but maybe we should. We have things in this country that are not going in the right direction and that could only help.

Mr. Speaker, I will now yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) to share his thoughts with us, please.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to serve with Doug, and I thank him for his great service to our country and for emphasizing the importance of the Bible.

It is an honor to stand here, but particularly tonight to commemorate National Bible Week along with my friends and colleagues. I am here to talk about what the Bible has meant to me and its impact on our Nation's history.

There are divisions across our country, including in this Chamber, that highlight the challenges that we are facing.

I was baptized in a small, rural church at 9 years of age and my parents raised me in the church there. I had a few other priorities in college, but after my marriage to my wife, we found a church home in Augusta and that church home has meant the world to our family.

However, it was almost 30 years later that I realized that maybe my priorities were not in order. I decided that I would make Bible study and prayer a priority in my life.

I started Bible study with a friend about 6 months later, and I realized that God was writing His Word on my very heart. I had this urge to know God and study His Word and understand His purpose and will for me. All of my life, as I look back, I had relied on God's Word for truth.

Twenty-three years ago, I joined a Bible study fellowship in my hometown of Augusta. It is an intense Bible study, but I am telling you it was life changing. I am currently reading the Change Your Life Study Bible with the Lead group here in Washington, D.C., and I am constantly reminded of the answers this book provides and to the current issues that we are dealing with today facing our Nation.

Since my time in Congress and meeting with people across the Nation and folks in our own district, unfortunately, we are becoming a Bible ill-literate society.

Just above our flag here in this body, we have ''In God We Trust,'' but how do you know how to trust God if you don't know God and don't know His Word?

I look at the full face of Moses in this House Chamber and I am reminded of the first five books of the Bible, the moral law.

George Washington himself in his farewell address said:

> Morality and faith are the pillars of our society. We confess these pillars are being eroded in an increasingly materialistic and permissive society.

And that is continuing today.

One of the Scriptures I memorized early on was Joshua 1:8. It says:

> Do not let this Book of Law depart from your lips. Meditate on it night and day. Be careful to do what it says and what is written in it, for then you will make your way prosperous and you will have success. This is a great promise from God.

This is a special time of year. There are over 11 times in the Old Testament starting 1,500 years ago predicting the birth, the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ whose birthday we celebrate here at this time.

Starting off in Genesis 3:15: ''And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.''

That was written 1,500 years ago.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we are about to witness another historic and important inauguration.

As I talk to you currently, most Americans believe our Nation is in serious moral, spiritual, and financial decline. Emotional health has become an epidemic because many do not know where to turn for hope.

I love the Bible, I love to pray, and I love to pray with those who believe in the values and the Founding Fathers' values in the truth that we behold in this country.

Especially during this important season, keep the hope and trust in Him and His Word. He will change the direction of this country and He will write His Word on your heart.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to ask Representative ROSE from the great State of Tennessee to come and speak.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for yielding and for claiming the time this evening to acknowledge and honor our Nation's 83rd National Bible Week.

I rise today the week before we celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ to celebrate and honor the book that reveals His life, His teachings, and His promise to save us if only we will accept and follow Him.

This amazing book is, of course, the Bible. You see, Mr. Speaker, there are many stories in the Bible, none arguably more important than the miracle of Jesus Christ's birth, death, and resurrection. However, the Bible also teaches us the story of God creating the Heavens and the Earth, of Adam and Eve, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, as well as recounting many fantastical miracles.

Eighty-three years ago, our country was reeling following the devastating attacks on Pearl Harbor, an attack unfathomable at the time. In the immediate aftermath, our country came together to worship and celebrate our first-ever National Bible Week held December 8–14, 1941.

It is no surprise that following those devastating days in the creation of the first National Bible Week, 83 years later, we still celebrate it every year.

It is because even on our darkest days, Mr. Speaker, the Bible will always be there for us. Look no further than Philippians 4:4, which says: ''Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.''

We are reminded that joy is constant and takes place at all times with the Lord.

Psalms 118:24 which says: ''This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.''

A reminder that the Lord gives us today and every day, and we should celebrate it as a gift from God.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on about the number of Bible verses that have inspired me from the time I learned them in Sunday school until this very day when I pass those inspiring words onto my two young sons. There is no doubt that the Bible has had a tremendous impact on my life and will continue to do so.

That is why I feel so deeply about the continued importance of teaching the Lord's Word. At a time in our country when it seems we are straying from the Lord, we must lean in and encourage the teachings in the Bible.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage Tennesseans to join me in studying the good word in the Bible, passing its lessons down to our children, and living our lives according to Bible teaching. After all, there is no better way to celebrate and honor National Bible Week than by reading or teaching the Bible and living according to its Word.

□ 2110

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Representative GLENN GROTHMAN from the State of Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is always enjoyable to speak to Bible Week and always enjoyable for DOUG LAMBORN to give me a couple of minutes.

National Bible Week, of course, begins every year on Thanksgiving and continues for the week after Thanksgiving.

One of the prior speakers, searching to say something unique about the Bible, talked about the number of books that have been printed. I would like to point out, since we are commanded under the Bible to share the Word of Christ and spread the Word of Christ around the world, the Bible, I believe, is the most translated book in the world. The Bible is right now translated into 3,700 different languages, which is a testament to the degree to which Christians are taking it to heart to spread the book throughout the world.

Now, the reason we have Bible Week in the United States is the Bible is more important than any other book in putting together our Constitution, putting together the laws we live under. There was a study done by something called the American Political Science Review in which they reviewed all the writings by our Founding Fathers: John Dickinson, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, the whole bunch. They found that the Bible was the most cited book of our forefathers.

That is not surprising. What I did find interesting is that one-third of the citations in the writings of our forefathers were from the Bible itself. I find this hard to believe, but in the article, they said the most cited book in the Bible was Deuteronomy. I would have guessed it was somewhere in the New Testament or Psalms. Even I will say that Deuteronomy is the most cited book in the Old Testament other than Psalms.

In any event, why was Deuteronomy so cited? I think Deuteronomy is so cited because Deuteronomy lays out the law that the Israelites were supposed to follow when Israel was founded. Our forefathers looked at Deuteronomy because they, as well, wanted us to form a country that God would bless and God would protect. That is why Deuteronomy was so cited.

This does not mean that they did not quote the New Testament. There are plenty of references from John, 1 Corinthians, from the other gospels that our forefathers mentioned because I think they felt it was of necessity to look at these quotations in learning how to live.

I should also point out that the Bible our forefathers read was largely from the English language. They lived at a time when we were having the American Revolution. America was being founded, and we read an English Bible. When the French Revolution was going on, it was somewhat the opposite of our country. The French revolutionaries were atheist. They were barbaric. They killed the nuns. They killed the priests. It was horrific. It was an interesting juxtaposition even at that time between what I guess today we would call maybe the communist element, the French, and what we have in America.

I should also give a couple of quotes from our forefathers showing how important they felt the Bible was. These quotes do not mean a political party. It means kind of an ideology or way to put together your country. John Adams said the Bible ''is the most republican book in the world.'' John Dickinson, who was the most important member of Delaware in our founding, said the Bible ''is the most republican book that was ever written.'' He even ups it one more.

You can see the degree to which our forefathers lived by the Bible. It is because they lived by the Bible and stuck by the Bible that we have become such a blessed country. We have to continue to follow the Bible if we kind of want to get back on the straight and narrow.

One more time, I thank Congressman LAMBORN for giving me a few extra minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, as the next speaker comes up, BUDDY CARTER from the State of Georgia, I want to mention something very personal that happened 2 years ago.

I was at this podium, and I told some people back in the district that we were going to have this Bible hour, and they wanted to tune in. They were watching on C–SPAN. What an amazing privilege it is to share important things from your life to a national audience.

Anyway, my dermatologist was watching, Dr. Reagan Anderson, and he noticed that I had a new spot on my temple, my left temple. He texted me as soon as I was off the floor and said to come in and see him tomorrow. Actually, it took me 2 days to finish voting and get back to Colorado Springs. He said: You have melanoma, and I am going to schedule surgery for tomorrow.

It was actually a couple of days later that I had the surgery. It was successful. They removed it. It has gone away, as far as I know. The cancer was taken from me, from my skin, but I think it is so interesting that it was during this Bible hour that a friend of mine who is also a doctor saw something that needed help, and I am so glad that it turned out that way. I had never experienced that before. I didn't know what to look for.

If you are in Colorado, which is a high-altitude State, be watching for changes in skin because at high altitude, it happens even more than in other places. All of us need to be watching for that.

BUDDY CARTER is a healthcare professional as a former pharmacist, and I welcome him to share his thoughts.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mr. LAMBORN, for hosting this tonight. I also want to pay tribute to him for his years of service as a Member of Congress and let him know that he has been an inspiration to many of us here, and we wish him well in his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Bible Week and to share with you that I am actually reading through the Bible this year. I am almost finished. We only have a few more days left this year. I am almost there. I am in Revelation, Micah. One of my favorite verses is Micah 6:8. It is very special reading through it.

I think it is important to note that the study that I am using was given to me, the book was given to me, by the chair of Energy and Commerce this year, CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS. She gave it to us. I really appreciate her doing that. She, too, is retiring this year. I certainly wish her well. She has done an outstanding job as a Member of Congress.

I want to rise today in celebration of what is one of my favorite times of the year for several different reasons: Christmastime, a time that brings family, friends, food, fun, and football, all of those things, but it is important that we remember during this time the reason that we are celebrating this holiday, and that is the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is easy to get wrapped up in the hustle and bustle of Christmastime and to forget about what is most important. I am certainly as guilty of that as I am sure all of us are. The Christmas season is a great opportunity for us to remind ourselves and each other that no matter what happens or what we do, we are surrounded by the love of God. There is no better exhibition of this than the Christmas story.

We are all familiar with the Gospel of John, chapter 3:16, that tells us: ''For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.'' This is one of the most popular verses in the Bible, and for good reason. It paints a clear picture of God's never-ending love for His creation, us.

No matter the sins that we commit—and we do—or how often we neglect the meaning of Christmas, God still loves us so much that He offers each of us a chance at eternal life. That is certainly a gift none of us deserve but all of us can have.

I hope everyone will join me in rejoicing in the love of God this Christmas season. I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Again, I thank Mr. LAMBORN for hosting this tonight.

God bless you, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2120

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his gracious words. He will be one of the people I miss when I retire in January after 18 years of being here. There are so many great people I will miss, and there are things I won't miss, but there are some people I truly will miss.

Representative ALLEN mentioned Biblical prophecies being fulfilled, and there are hundreds of very specific prophesies that you can find in the Bible that were fulfilled exactly as foretold. It may have taken years for it to happen, but they were fulfilled exactly.

If you were to put odds on that, it would become astronomical that all of that could be the case as opposed to something that are legends and fairy tales that were just made up by human invention.

Another source of verification, validation of the Bible, is archaeology. Every time there is an archaeological discovery in the Holy Land, it validates the Biblical accounts. It never contradicts the Biblical accounts.

One example from a few decades ago was the Dead Sea Scrolls. Those were exactly word for word what other sources had said was the book of Isaiah, the Book of Psalms, other Old Testament Scriptures, and they were exactly the same. There was a validation there.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude. It has been an honor to present this National Bible Week this week, and for so many years in the past.

I thank my colleagues who were here. I am thankful for the word of God in my own life and in the life of this country, and in the life of my wife and children and grandchildren as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER WEXTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GROTHMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to help manage the Special Order hour to recognize our wonderful friend who is now leaving us in the U.S. House, Ms. JENNIFER WEXTON. I rise with respect and admiration and love for JENNIFER.

Mr. Speaker, I first became aware of JENNIFER in December of 2013 when she won a crowded primary to succeed a State senator who had just been elected attorney general. I mostly saw her on local TV, these ads that showed up again and again.

That was a very cold month and a very special election. When she won, I was just starting this race for U.S. Congress, and she was a real inspiration to me at that very time.

A couple years later, GERRY CONNOLLY and I served with Barbara Comstock. We were a sometimes good, sometimes tense team from northern Virginia, but we really wanted to take back the House, and we thought the best possible candidate to take on Barbara Comstock was this wonderful State senator from Loudoun County. I remember calling JENNIFER and saying, why don't you—not give up your senate seat, but jump into this race and take on Barbara, she has only been in for 2 years.

JENNIFER has the wisdom of a great politician and knows that timing is everything in politics. She said, no, absolutely not. Donald Trump went on to win that election.

Barbara Comstock went on to win it easily. Maybe a bunch of us got something started in her mind because 2 years later, there was a tough, six-way primary, with a number of very good women in that race, and JENNIFER prevailed in that primary, went on to beat Barbara with 56 percent, a two-term incumbent. JENNIFER has just been a delight and a great resource for Virginia ever since.

Mr. Speaker, she actually went to the University of Maryland, but we forgive her because she went to law school at William & Mary. She redeemed herself. I am very proud to represent her parents that live in Alexandria, Virginia.

She has a great husband, two sons. Somehow, contrary to the two-parent working families that we have everywhere in America, she was able to work it out with Andrew so that he would be the full-time caretaker at home for the kids, which is relatively unique in current American culture, but it worked beautifully. They got the right people in the right jobs.

I am also thrilled that for many, many years, I worked on campaigns against Frank Wolf who actually was a distinguished Member of this House, but I started in 1982 and Frank served for 34 years.

All that just goes to say that this district was founded in 1952 at the postwar expansion. Joel Broyhill won in 1952 and held the seat for 22 years. For 66 years, only 6 of those 66 years was that seat held by a Democrat; Joe Fisher was only elected in the Watergate landslide of 1974 and ousted in the Reagan landslide of 1980.

Then, after 66 years, finally, we get JENNIFER WEXTON who comes back, turns the seat blue, gives us great representation, and I believe she is the first Loudoun County Member in the history of the country ever to represent Loudoun County in the U.S. Congress.

I have loved working with her, as has ABIGAIL SPANBERGER, TIM KAINE, MARK WARNER, GERRY CONNOLLY, all of us have come together on northern Virginia issues, and on Virginia issues, to make enormous progress.

She is tough, but kind, and the toughness has really come out in the last year when JENNIFER first believed

that she had been diagnosed with Parkinson's. We saw a toughness and a resoluteness, but then when that diagnosis turned out to be much more serious, she called all of us to let us know that she wasn't quitting, that despite the, at least short-term, deterioration in her physical condition, she was resolute.

She was full of courage. She was full of commitment, and through these long difficult days, she has been here every single day, cast every single vote, been here patiently listening, contributing whatever she could, using the latest technology to speak up. With her aide at her side, she has been a vital part of this Congress through the super nuclear policy.

We hate to see her go. It is a great loss to this institution. It is a loss to Virginia not to have her in this body.

She wisely looked at the next primary, the primary to succeed her, looked at all the different candidates and chose one that she thought would best represent her, and I think most people would believe that he only won that primary because he was blessed by JENNIFER WEXTON.

We will all have more to say, but I yield to our dear friend and colleague from across the aisle, our just newly reelected Member from Virginia Beach, Congresswoman KIGGANS.

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of my colleague and friend, Congresswoman JENNIFER WEXTON of Virginia's Tenth District.

I first met Congresswoman WEXTON not here in the Halls of Congress, but when I was elected to the Virginia State Senate in 2019. I remember the day that she first came and visited us on the floor and how she went around the room, and shook hands with every member, all 40 of us that day.

While our time in the Virginia General Assembly did not overlap, her legacy of serving her constituents lived on in the chamber. When I entered Congress, I was elected as the second of three Jennifers to be elected to the 118th Congress from Virginia.

I have enjoyed serving alongside these other two Jens as a member of the bipartisan Jennifer caucus. Like so many in Virginia and across the country, I was saddened by the announcement of Congresswoman WEXTON's diagnosis in September of 2023.

While she announced that she would not be running for reelection in 2024, she fought against the odds to fulfill her commitment to her constituents and serve for the remainder of the 118th Congress.

She also became an advocate for her disease process and a loud voice, she brought awareness to so many of us here in the House of Representatives.

Members of Congress will oftentimes stand here on the House floor and talk of the sacrifices they make to serve their districts, but Mr. Speaker, you would be hard-pressed to find someone who has sacrificed more for her constituents than Congresswoman WEXTON has over the past year and a half.

□ 2130

Rather than leave Congress to spend time with her family and friends in northern Virginia, she has remained here working every day.

Even when her physical voice left her, she got very creative, and with the help of technology, has continued to be a strong advocate for the residents of Virginia's 10th District with distinction.

The impact she left in Richmond and will leave in Washington is truly impressive and will be remembered by the citizens of Virginia for years to come.

I thank my friend for her eagerness to continue serving against all odds and for her years of selfless sacrifice to our Commonwealth and to the United States of America.

She will be missed by our entire Virginia congressional delegation, and I know that the Commonwealth of Virginia will be thinking of her and will be supporting her in the future.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for staying late and for her thoughtful remarks.

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the dean of the Virginia delegation, recently reelected by the steering committee this afternoon, and hopefully to be the next ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for organizing this Special Order hour and giving us an opportunity to say some nice things about our good friend JENNIFER WEXTON. She is retiring after many years of dedicated service to the Commonwealth of Virginia and our Nation.

Since joining the House in 2019, JENNIFER has been a relentless advocate for her constituents and a champion for equality, justice, and fairness.

Before serving in Congress, she was a leader in the Virginia State Senate where she led gun safety initiatives, expanded access to healthcare, and supported public education. Her legal background as both a prosecutor and an advocate for survivors of domestic violence still provides an important perspective to her service.

During her time here in Congress, she has fought for working families, reproductive rights, and transportation improvements. She has worked to expand broadband access, protect voting rights, and advance climate initiatives. During a time of bitter partisanship, JENNIFER has also focused on bipartisan cooperation in working across the aisle to bring people together.

Beyond her legislative accomplishments, her courage and resilience in facing her personal health challenges while continuing to serve her constituents exemplifies her strength, character, and grace. She is an inspiration to everyone who serves in this Chamber and many others across the country.

She has also placed a much-needed spotlight on the need for Congress to invest more resources in combating Parkinson's and other related neurodegenerative diseases.

As the dean of the delegation, I know as the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS) has just said, I know we will all miss her here in Congress, and I join a chorus of voices thanking her for her service, determination, and dedication to the Commonwealth of Virginia and to our Nation. Thank you, JENNIFER, for your dedication.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman once again for staying late and for his 32 years of service just in this institution not counting all the others.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), a force of nature and who many of us hope will be the first woman Governor in Virginia's history.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for the opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary work and the extraordinary example of our dear Congresswoman JENNIFER WEXTON.

I first had the experience of seeing JENNIFER when she was a State senator at an equal rights amendment event. I was a mom, a former public servant. I had just moved back home to Virginia, and I was at this advocacy day to see what was happening at the general assembly to see the good work of so many people who have become friends of mine.

I saw this woman with this beautiful, long hair and this effusive control of the room. She was talking about Virginia's role, and ultimately the goal that would be achieved, the goal of ensuring that Virginia became one of the States—at that time one of the final three required States—to ratify the equal rights amendment. Ultimately, Virginia became the last, the necessary.

I remember watching her speak full of vibrance and joy and humanity and humility, and I thought she is amazing. Little did I know that not only would she continue to be an example for me but that she would be a friend and someone who I would look up to throughout my time here in Congress.

What I know to be true about JENNIFER is she is an extraordinarily witty, sometimes sassy, and devoted colleague. For those who have the pleasure of knowing JENNIFER, you better know your facts, your details, your information, and be ready because just when you think you are having a serious-minded conversation about a serious topic she will come right into the conversation with her perspective. She is whip smart, and she is funny.

Even as this disease, this PSP, has taken her voice, for anybody on a text chain or anyone who is next to her and her technological devices, her wit is there, her wit is fierce, and it is extraordinary to see how she continues both to do the work for the people of

Virginia's 10th District but also to be a caring, focused peer and mentor to so many of us.

I am wearing this scarf today because while I met her many years ago when she was in the State senate, where we really became friends was when we were both running for Congress in 2018. This scarf shows so many of us who were on the ballot that year. There is a picture of JENNIFER right here with her gorgeous, long hair and bright smile that shows her as I know her to be right focused, thoughtful, and peering straight forward even in this drawing that is on a silk scarf. Her stare and her focus is clear.

Since the first day that we all arrived here, so many in our class didn't come from state legislatures, they came from a variety of backgrounds bringing different expertise, different types of passion to our work in the Halls of Congress, and at times it was JENNIFER who chose to kind of herd the cats of the class of 2018, making sure that we were getting some of the procedural language correct, making sure that we were kind of seeing the forest through the trees.

For me as a mother with three young daughters, our friendship grew as I have watched her navigate being a mother to two teenage boys, as we talked about the types of television commercials to do along the way. I saw her, I would say, essential minivan commercial which is like everything you ever want to see or need to see about moms and politics just getting it all done. I have been grateful for her friendship. It has been amazing to see you lead by example.

It has been amazing to see you fight for what you believe in. It has been amazing to see you live every single day full of vim, full of vigor and with deep, deep humility and a focus on serving others.

I want to continue focusing on all of your extraordinary bright spots, but I do think it is important to note that so many other people in your shoes, so many other people were they facing any type of challenge, let alone the health challenge that you face, would have made different decisions, would have stepped away. The fact that while you are in the fight of your life you have continued to fight for others, you have continued to be here day in and day out, you have continued to vote for your constituents, to work for your constituents, and lead by your extraordinary example, it means a lot to all of us. I know it means a lot to your constituents. I think you are teaching us all a lesson every single day that you show up and that you do the good work.

The team you have built and the extraordinary people who spend their days learning from you and learning with you will continue forward to do right hopefully by the Commonwealth of Virginia or in whatever other paths of public service they may pursue.

JENNIFER, as a friend, I am grateful for you. As a colleague, I have learned so much from you. As a woman in politics and as a mom you have been an extraordinary example for so many of us. I love you so, so very much. I look forward to continuing to celebrate you into the future, and I hope that by the end of this week we actually get a CR done on time so you can begin enjoying your retirement, my darling friend.

□ 2140

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SPANBERGER very much for speaking from the heart, as she always does.

I want to put just a little more context into Ms. WEXTON also because Congressman SCOTT mentioned that she had been a prosecutor. She was actually deputy Commonwealth attorney for 4 or 5 years in the early 2000s, with a number of major cases to her credit that she had prosecuted.

When she got to the Virginia Senate, she was one of the real champions for the Medicaid expansion because we had made that possible, but it had to be adopted State by State. It was JENNIFER's leadership in the State Senate that made that huge difference. She especially fought for people with disabilities.

Interestingly, when she was elected in 2018, we are very proud that was the day that JENNIFER WEXTON, ABIGAIL SPANBERGER, and Ms. Luria, three Virginia women, took back the U.S. House.

She was the first Member ever to put a transgender flag on the door of her office. This is a difficult thing even today, but then it was spectacular.

Most of us here have been involved in suicide prevention for a long time. When you realize that perhaps 75 to 80 percent of transgender teenagers have major suicide ideation, this was a bold and very loving thing to do.

I am particularly impressed because JENNIFER came with Abby, her chief of staff, the only chief of staff. This is an office famous for very low turnover because they all are dedicated and devoted to JENNIFER. JENNIFER even graciously has given Abby to her successor. She will be here to keep the 10th District running well.

Most people don't know this, but she is a proud citizen, an American of Italian heritage. She was born Jennifer Tosini. In a place run by NANCY PELOSI for all those decades, this was a very smart thing to be an Italian American here.

Her birthday is May 27, which means probably once every 6 years, her birthday is on Memorial Day, which is a very good thing, a time when we memorialize everyone who sacrificed for our country.

JENNIFER, I don't want to give away your birth year.

She was born in those tragic weeks between the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy.

I know that you were just a baby, but I sometimes think that, on some level, that notion of being born into the heritage of two of the great public servants, the great martyrs, the great people who lived their lives to serve others became part of who you are all your life.

I think that BOBBY SCOTT probably said it best. You are a woman of strength, character, and grace. I think I speak for all Virginians, maybe all Americans, in thanking you for your wonderful, grateful years of service for the people of Virginia and for all Americans.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, before yielding back, I would like to point out that JENNIFER WEXTON did an eloquent, beautiful speech today in the Virginia House. It is available on her Twitter account or her X account, @RepWexton.

To all of you watching, please look at this speech. That will be so much better than anything that we would have said tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ON THE INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025, SUBMITTED BY MR. TURNER, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The following is the Explanatory Statement to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (''the Act''), which has been included as Division F of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. The Explanatory Statement reflects the result of negotiations between the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (together, ''the Committees''). The Explanatory Statement shall have the same effect with respect to the implementation of the Act as if it were a joint explanatory statement of a conference committee.

The classified nature of U.S. intelligence activities prevents the Committees from publicly disclosing many details concerning their final decisions regarding funding levels and policy direction. Therefore, the Committees have prepared a classified annex—referred to here and within the annex itself as ''the Agreement''—that contains a classified Schedule of Authorizations and describes in detail the scope and intent of the Committees' actions.

The Agreement authorizes the Intelligence Community to obligate and expend funds as requested in the President's budget and as modified by the classified Schedule of Authorizations, subject to applicable reprogramming procedures.

The classified Schedule of Authorizations is incorporated into the Act pursuant to Section 6102 of the Act. It has the status of law. The Agreement supplements and adds detail to clarify the authorization levels found in the Act and in the classified Schedule of Authorizations.

This Explanatory Statement incorporates by reference, and the Executive Branch shall comply with, all direction contained in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (S. Rept. 118–181) and in the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Report to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal

Year 2025 (H. Rept. 118–662). The Agreement supersedes all classified direction in the classified annexes to accompany S. Rept. 118–181 and H. Rept. 118–662 related to programs and activities authorized by the Schedule of Authorization.

The Executive Branch is further directed as follows:

STUDY ON THREATS POSED BY CITIZENSHIP-BY-INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

The Committees are concerned with the threats to the United States posed by citizenship-by-investment programs operated by foreign governments. A recent Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report highlighted the ease of identity laundering, bribery and corruption that result from these programs, as well as the freedom of movement offered to malign actors, sanctioned individuals, weapons and human traffickers, and terrorists. The FATF and OECD report noted that these programs ''make it challenging for compliance professionals at [financial institutions] or other businesses to engage in accurate due diligence,'' undermine visa controls and sanctions enforcement, and facilitate the movement of individuals who have violated the law to other jurisdictions to avoid arrest.

The Committees therefore direct the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis of the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the heads of any other elements of the Intelligence Community the Director considers appropriate, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, to submit to the Committees a study on the threat posed to the United States by foreign citizenship-by-investment programs and the investments allowed under such programs; and provide to the committees a briefing on the results of the study.

The study shall include the following:

1. A detailed description of the threats posed to the national security of the United States by citizenship-by-investment programs;

2. The types of investments or contributions which an individual may make in exchange for citizenship under a foreign government's citizenship-by-investment program, including investments in, or donations or transfers to, the government of a foreign country or any person, business, or entity in such foreign country, or for the benefit of a foreign country;

3. The use of such programs to evade sanctions or taxes, facilitate or finance crimes related to national security, including terrorism, weapons trafficking or proliferation, cybercrime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and espionage, or any other activity which furthers the interests of a foreign adversary or undermines the integrity of the immigration laws or security of the United States, or undermines the United States and its interests through any other means identified by the Director;

4. The foreign countries whose citizenship-by-investment programs pose the greatest threat to the national security of the United States;

5. Recommendations for any additional resources or authorities necessary to counter such threats; and

6. A description of opportunities to counter such threats.

STUDY ON THREAT POSED BY FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL LAND

The Committees note that foreign ownership and investment in U.S. agricultural land—which includes farmland, pastures, and forest land—has grown almost 50% since 2017, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). While foreign investors in U.S. agricultural land are required to submit forms describing their transactions to USDA by the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. §3501) (AFIDA), AFIDA was not designed to identify potential national security concerns.

The Committees therefore direct the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in coordination with the elements of the Intelligence Community the Director considers appropriate, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, to (1) submit to the Committees a study on the threat posed to the United States by foreign investment in agricultural land in the United States, and (2) provide to the committees a briefing on the results of the study.

The study shall include the following:

1. Data and an analysis of agricultural land holdings, including current and previous uses of the land disaggregated by sector and industry, held by a foreign person from a country identified as a country that poses a risk to the national security of the United States in the most recent annual report on worldwide threats issued by the Director pursuant to section 108B of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. §3043b) (commonly known as the ''Annual Threat Assessment''), a nonmarket economy country, or any other country that the Director determines to be appropriate;

2. An analysis of the proximity of the agricultural land holdings to critical infrastructure and military installations;

3. An assessment of the threats posed to the national security of the United States by malign actors that use foreign investment in agricultural land in the United States;

4. An assessment of warning indicators and methods by which to detect potential threats from the use by foreign adversaries of agricultural products for nefarious ends; and

5. An assessment of additional resources or authorities necessary to counter threats identified during the study.

INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMIC COERCION BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION

The Committees direct that, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research shall submit a classified intelligence assessment to the Committees that (1) outlines economic coercion efforts by the People's Republic of China in the Indo-Pacific region, and (2) describes measures that have been, or could be, taken to enhance the resilience of countries in the region to such coercion.

CLASSIFIED ANNEX TO REPORT ON MISSION EFFECT OF CIVILIAN HARM

Section 6323 of the Act requires the DNI, acting through the National Intelligence Council, to submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report examining the extent to which civilian harm that occurs during counterterrorism operations informs analyses of the Intelligence Community on the mission success of campaigns to degrade, disrupt, or defeat foreign terrorist organizations.

The Committees direct that this report include a classified annex, to be submitted to the Committees, that provides an inventory of (1) collection gaps and challenges that may affect the analysis of the success or failure of campaigns against terrorist groups, and (2) actions taken by the DNI to mitigate such gaps and challenges.

REPORT ON ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER DEDICATED TO STRATEGIC COMPETITION

Section 6307 of the Act, among other things, codifies the National Intelligence Management Council and expresses the sense of Congress that the DNI should create a role in the Council for a National Intelligence Manager dedicated to the People's Republic of China.

The Committees direct the DNI, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and in consultation with the heads of elements of the Intelligence Community determined appropriate by the Director, to submit to the Committees a report that examines the potential effects of establishing a new national intelligence center dedicated to strategic competition, which would:

1. Integrate all-source intelligence on the plans and intentions of strategic competitors;

2. Synchronize intelligence collection efforts among the elements of the Intelligence Community;

3. Optimize resource investments made by elements of the Intelligence Community in support of strategic competition;

4. Integrate the work of other national intelligence centers that is relevant to strategic competition; and

5. Inform the President, Congress, and other policymakers as they craft and execute the United States' approach to strategic competition.

The report shall seek to incorporate lessons learned from previous Intelligence Community reorganizations, including those undertaken pursuant to the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (P.L. 108–458). The report shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE WORKFORCE

The Committees' find that—

1. From its inception, the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) has met joint warfighter requirements because of a workforce that includes Intelligence Community and Department of Defense civilians and uniformed service members;

2. The NRO has achieved success, in part, because the Department of Defense has consistently fulfilled its longstanding commitment to assign Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Guardians to positions at the NRO;

3. The NRO is negatively affected—and its ability to meet warfighter requirements diminished—when the United States Space Force does not assign Guardians to the NRO at a rate that meets the NRO requirements;

4. The NRO and the Space Force jointly benefit from Guardian assignments at the NRO; and

5. The NRO and Space Force are negatively affected by the Space Force's uneven emphasis on developing space operators without similar emphasis on developing Guardians with space acquisition and engineering expertise.

Therefore, the Committees direct the DNI and the heads of any other departments and agencies the Director deems relevant to provide quarterly updates to the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the Department of Defense fulfilling its commitment to assign uniformed personnel to the NRO.

INCREASED EFFORT AND RESOURCES IN THE FIELD OF GEOMATICS

The Committees find that—

1. The Intelligence Community and the broader United States Government require professionals with advanced training in geomatics and geodesy, and the preservation of these skillsets is crucial to advancing geospatial intelligence tradecraft for the United States for national security and military operations;

2. The Intelligence Community should use existing authorities to engage in novel ways

with academic and industry partners to ensure the Intelligence Community's demand signal for geomatics and geodesy professionals is received by the largest possible number of United States citizens while also seeking to foster a culture of academic excellence and research to propel the field of geomatics forward at the pace of innovation;

3. By engaging with academic and industry partners, the Intelligence Community can help speed the reversal of the current trend wherein the United States not only produces fewer geomatics scientists and engineers compared to its global competitors and potential adversaries, but such competitors and adversaries also provide them with training and expertise that could be used against the United States;

4. There is abundant opportunity for the Intelligence Community to advance its growing need for geomatics and geodesy professionals by partnering with American universities and researchers with proven experience in diverse fields who can lead the way to solving the United States most vexing geomatics challenges; and

5. The Intelligence Community must balance the increasing demand for recruiting the best geomatics and geodesy talent while still ensuring a dedicated and patriotic workforce with allegiance to the Constitution and the United States Government.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Kevin F. McCumber, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1097. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the Nation.

H.R. 3254. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3797. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an alternative manner of furnishing certain health insurance coverage statements to individuals.

H.R. 3801. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to streamline and improve the employer reporting process relating to health insurance coverage and to protect dependent privacy.

H.R. 5301. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to require agencies to include a list of outdated or duplicative reporting requirements in annual budget justifications, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6829. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize and support the creation and dissemination of cardiomyopathy education, awareness, and risk assessment materials and resources to identify more at-risk families, to authorize research and surveillance activities relating to cardiomyopathy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6960. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children program.

H.R. 7872. An act to amend the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act to modify certain requirements applicable to salinity control units, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 4199.—An act to authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

U.S. CONGRESS, OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS,
Washington, DC, December 17, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Re Biennial Report from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA) requires the Board of Directors of the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) to biennially submit a report containing recommendations regarding the applicability of Federal workplace rights, safety and health, and public access laws and regulations to the legislative branch. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the rights afforded by the CAA to legislative branch employees and visitors to Capitol Hill and district and state offices remain equivalent to those in the private sector and the executive branch of the Federal Government. As such, these recommendations support the intent of Congress to keep pace with advances in workplace rights and public access laws.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the Board's Section 102(b) report for the 119th Congress. The Board welcomes discussion on these issues and urges that Congress act on these important recommendations. As required by the CAA, we request that this publication be printed in the Congressional Record and referred to the Committee on House Administration as the committee of the U.S. House of Representatives with jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

MARTIN J. CRANE,
Executive Director,
Office of Congressional Workplace Rights.

Attachment.

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Required by Section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act

Issued at the Conclusion of the 118th Congress for Consideration by the 119th Congress

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) Board of Directors submits this report to Congress pursuant to section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA). In accordance with the CAA, the Board is to provide each Congress with recommendations regarding the applicability to the legislative branch of federal workplace rights, safety and health, and public access laws and regulations. The Board's fulfillment of this requirement provides Congress with information and recommendations necessary to ensure parity between the rights and protections applied to the legislative branch and those applied to the executive branch and the private sector.

Currently executive branch and private employees have protections and rights that legislative branch employees do not have. In this report, the Board addresses and recommends changes to the CAA's substantive protections and obligations and to the necessary implementing procedures and regulations. Adoption of these recommendations would ensure that Congress meets the goal that it set for itself: to apply to the legislative branch those workplace rights and obligations that it has applied to the executive branch and the private sector. The following is a summary of the Board's recommendations:

Create Parity with the Executive Branch and the Private Sector

Require legislative branch offices to maintain records of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Provide comparable parental bereavement leave for legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable nursing protections for legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable religious compensatory time for all legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable whistleblower protections to legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable protections from retaliation for non-employees under the CAA's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) public access provisions.

Provide comparable protections for legislative branch employees who serve on jury duty, declare bankruptcy, or have their wages garnished.

Require legislative branch offices to maintain records required under other federal workplace rights laws.

Improve Implementation of Existing Rights to Ensure Parity

Empower the OCWR General Counsel to seek a court order to temporarily enjoin unfair labor practices.

Allow disclosure of proceedings involving disability-related public access and labor-management issues.

Approve pending OCWR regulations in the legislative branch, including:

Fair Labor Standards Act regulations related to overtime pay.

Family and Medical Leave Act regulations related to paid parental leave and leave benefits for servicemembers and their families.

Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute regulations related to collective bargaining in the legislative branch.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act regulations related to workplace protections for servicemembers.

Americans with Disabilities Act regulations related to public access to facilities.

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act regulations related to protections for job applicants in the legislative branch.

More information about the Board's recommendations can be found on OCWR's website at www.ocwr.gov.

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 2025, the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) celebrates the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), which was enacted by Congress in 1995 with nearly unanimous approval. This milestone anniversary

marks the establishment of OCWR and reflects the steadfast commitment of Congress to the American public that it will apply to itself labor, employment, accessibility, and health and safety laws on par with those that apply to the executive branch and the private sector.

This commitment is an ongoing one. To ensure that it continues to be fulfilled, section 102 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1302, requires the Board of Directors of OCWR to issue a report to each Congress that describes: (1) to what degree such provisions of federal law are applicable or inapplicable to the legislative branch; and (2) whether any inapplicable provisions should be made applicable.

The Board believes that now is the time to celebrate the many accomplishments that Congress has made in the area of workplace rights and to acknowledge the many recommendations in previous Section 102(b) Reports that Congress has adopted. However, much work remains. We highlight in this Section 102(b) Report additional recommendations for amendments to the CAA to apply to the congressional workplace employee protections applicable to the executive branch or the private sector, as well as key recommendations that the Board has made in past Section 102(b) Reports that have not yet been implemented.

On the eve of this historic milestone, we are pleased to submit to Congress these 2024 biennial recommendations for amendments to the CAA. We welcome the opportunity to further discuss these recommendations and ask for careful consideration of them by the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,

BARBARA CHILDS WALLACE,
Chair, Board of Directors.
BARBARA L. CAMENS,
ALAN V. FRIEDMAN,
ROBERTA L. HOLZWARTH,
SUSAN S. ROBFOGEL,
Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 119th CONGRESS

I. Create Parity with the Executive Branch and the Private Sector

A. Require Legislative Branch Offices to Maintain Records of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses to Ensure Workplace Safety

The Board has long recommended amending the CAA to apply the critical recordkeeping requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) to the congressional workplace. Under the CAA, Congress and its instrumentalities are exempt from critical OSH Act requirements that apply to the private sector, including section 8(c) of the OSH Act which requires employers to make, keep and preserve, and provide, upon request, records necessary and appropriate for the enforcement of the OSH Act (29 U.S.C. §657(c)).

In enacting the OSH Act, Congress recognized that ''[f]ull and accurate information is a fundamental precondition for meaningful administration of an occupational safety and health program.''[1] Congress observed that a recordkeeping requirement should be included in that legislation because ''the Federal government and most of the states have inadequate information on the incidence, nature, or causes of occupational injuries, illnesses, and deaths.''[2]

Without access to such information, OCWR is unable to effectively enforce several critical safety and health standards within the legislative branch. For example, substantive occupational safety and health standards concerning asbestos in the workplace, providing employees with safety information regarding hazardous chemicals in their workspaces, and emergency response procedures in the event of the release of hazardous chemicals all rely on accurate recordkeeping to ensure that employees are not exposed to hazardous materials or conditions. But because the CAA does not contain section 8(c)'s recordkeeping requirements, employing offices may contend that they are not required to maintain or submit such records to OCWR for review.

Moreover, without the benefit of section 8(c) authority, OCWR is also hampered in its ability to access records needed to develop information regarding the causes and prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses. As the Department of Labor recognized, ''Analysis of the data is a widely recognized method for discovering workplace safety and health problems and tracking progress in solving these problems.''[3]

Recordkeeping improves safety. When conducting inspections of employers in the private sector, inspectors routinely request to view records of workplace injuries and illnesses at the outset of the inspection. This helps inspectors improve the focus of their inspection. For instance, if the records contain multiple instances of a particular type of injury, this may indicate to the inspector to investigate specific equipment and work processes that may have given rise to those injuries. Relatedly, if the records show that multiple employees have experienced similar work-related illnesses, this may indicate to the inspector a possible exposure to a hazardous substance in the workplace. In short, these records help inspectors determine which hazards may exist in the workplace and whether different controls or personal protective equipment (PPE) might reduce injuries and illnesses.

Because Congress is exempt from these recordkeeping requirements, OCWR occupational safety and health (OSH) inspectors—who are statutorily charged with annually inspecting the congressional campus to ensure workplace safety—are dependent on voluntary reporting by employees and employing offices to determine the types of injuries or illnesses that congressional workplaces are experiencing. From OCWR's experience, voluntary reporting is often insufficient to produce a comprehensive record of incidents.

The consequences of a lack of recordkeeping requirements were demonstrated during OCWR's investigation of occupational safety and health concerns arising out of the events of January 6, 2021. As an essential part of OCWR's OSH investigation of the events that day, the OCWR Office of the General Counsel requested that the USCP identify the types and causes of injuries sustained by United States Capitol Police (USCP) officers. However, because the USCP was not required to maintain a list of employees injured under the provisions of the OSH Act, as applied by the CAA, the information provided by the USCP was so lacking in detail, particularly as to the specific causes of the described injuries, that it was impossible for the General Counsel to determine precisely how each of these employees were injured.[4] As a result, OCWR's ability to prescribe appropriate remedies to keep the congressional workplace safe was severely hampered.

Accordingly, the Board again strongly recommends—as it has for years—that legislative branch employing offices be required to maintain records of workplace injuries and illnesses under OSH Act section 8(c). As demonstrated from experience, workplace injury and illness recordkeeping is essential to ensuring safety and health in the congressional workplace.

B. Provide Comparable Parental Bereavement Leave for Legislative Branch Employees

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 amended the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to establish a new paid leave category for most federal civilian employees, which was codified in title 5 FMLA (5 U.S.C. §6329d). Under section 6329d, executive branch employees are entitled to 2 workweeks of paid parental bereavement leave in connection with the death of an employee's child.

However, because legislative branch employees are not governed by the provisions of title 5 FMLA, but are instead covered by title 29 FMLA, as applied by the CAA, they are not covered by this important workplace benefit.

The Board recommends that the CAA be amended to provide paid parental bereavement leave for legislative branch employees. Such an amendment would help balance work and family responsibilities by allowing employees to take reasonable paid leave in the catastrophic circumstance of the death of a child and would ensure parity between the legislative and executive branches.

C. Provide Comparable Nursing Protections for Legislative Branch Employees

In December 2022, Congress passed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (H.R. 2617), which included the language of the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (or ''PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act''). The PUMP Act amended the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to expand protections for nursing employees. These employees are now entitled to reasonable break time and a private space to pump at work for up to 1 year after their child's birth.

Under the CAA, only certain sections of the FLSA apply to the legislative branch—specifically, sections 206, 207, and 212. Prior to the adoption of the PUMP Act, protections for nursing employees were included in section 207(r) of the FLSA. The PUMP Act struck section 207(r) and created a new section—section 218d—to contain the expanded protections. In striking section 207(r) from the FLSA and failing to amend the CAA to apply section 218d to the legislative branch, Congress removed the existing protections for legislative branch employees and failed to provide them the new protections.

Since 2022, Congress has introduced several technical amendment bills to apply the PUMP Act protections to the legislative branch.[5] The Board believes that the protections of the PUMP Act should apply to legislative branch employees and urges Congress to amend the CAA so that section 218d of the FLSA applies to the legislative branch. Such an amendment would ensure that the rights and protections of nursing employees in the legislative branch are equivalent to those of nursing employees in the executive branch and the private sector.

D. Provide Comparable Religious Compensatory Time for all Legislative Branch Employees

In 1978, to further the free exercise of religious beliefs by federal employees, Congress amended title 5 of the U.S. Code to establish a system of religious compensatory time off (5 U.S.C. §5550a). Section 5550a requires executive agencies, military departments, judicial branch agencies, the Library of Congress, the Botanic Garden, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, and the government of the District of Columbia to allow employees whose personal religious beliefs require them to abstain from work at certain times of the workday or workweek to work alternate work hours so that the employees can meet their religious obligations.

Although some legislative branch employees are covered by section 5550a, a substantial number—including those who work in offices in the House and Senate, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Government

Publishing Office (GPO), and OCWR—are not. As a result, a substantial number of legislative branch employees are not currently entitled to section 5550a's benefits and protections, despite the intent of Congress that section 5550a benefit all federal employees.[6]

The Board recommends that Congress amend the CAA to include section 5550a, thereby providing parity to all legislative branch employees regarding their ability to work alternate work hours so that they can meet their religious obligations. Such an amendment would enable legislative branch employees, especially those of minority faiths, to exercise their religious beliefs without being forced to lose a portion of their pay or use annual or other leave. And it would help ensure that all legislative branch employees ''are treated equally, regardless of their religion, and to make sure that no [legislative branch] employee is discriminatorily or unnecessarily penalized because of their devotion to their faith.''[7]

E. Provide Comparable Whistleblower Protections to Legislative Branch Employees

Federal law provides broad employment protections to executive branch employees who disclose information that the whistleblower reasonably believes evidences (1) a violation of any law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement; (3) gross waste of funds; (4) abuse of authority; or (5) a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.[8] However, there are no analogous protections for legislative branch employees, even for those who would raise an issue with a committee of jurisdiction or other appropriate legislative branch official. This lack of statutory protection leaves legislative branch employees, who would otherwise provide critical information, at risk for retaliation. The absence of whistleblower protections also risks depriving Congress of information it needs to oversee the entirety of the legislative branch in the public interest.

Statutory protections for legislative branch employees who disclose evidence of wrongdoing must be carefully drafted in light of the special constitutional role of Congress as the nation's forum for robust policy debate. To be effective, such protections must respect important legislative branch prerogatives, accommodate the need for confidentiality during congressional deliberations, and, more generally, protect the necessary confidentiality of sensitive information handled in many contexts across the legislative branch. Effective whistleblower protections must account for the wide range of workplace environments and job functions, from librarians to landscapers to law enforcement officers to committee staff, and accommodate the concerns unique to each position.

To achieve these important ends, the Board recommends that Congress amend the CAA to protect and provide parity to legislative branch employees who make whistleblower disclosures to officials or entities specifically designated to receive such disclosures, such as an instrumentality's Inspector General or an appropriate committee of jurisdiction. This approach would parallel laws in the executive branch designed to protect whistleblowers who work in special environments, who must also follow specific procedures to make protected disclosures to designated individuals or entities through designated channels.[9]

To facilitate compliance with the recommended whistleblower protections, the Board further recommends that OCWR be granted investigatory and prosecutorial authority over whistleblower reprisal complaints, by incorporating into the CAA authority analogous to that granted to the Office of Special Counsel for executive branch claims.

F. Provide Comparable Protections from Retaliation for Non-Employees under the CAA's ADA Public Access Provisions

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is unique among the laws applied by the CAA as it affords protections to members of the public as well as to employees. The rights and protections for the public are found in section 210 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1331), which incorporates titles II and III of the ADA. Section 210 requires that legislative branch employing offices make their public services, programs, and activities—as well as the facilities where these services, programs, and activities are provided—accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Section 208 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1317, prohibits employing offices from intimidating, retaliating against, or discriminating against employees who exercise their rights under the CAA. However, section 208 does not authorize ADA retaliation claims by members of the public who are not covered employees.

Section 503 of the ADA (42 U.S.C. §12203) prohibits retaliation, interference, coercion, or intimidation against ''any individual'' relating to exercising their rights under the ADA's public access provisions. Although section 503 covers both the public and private sectors, that section is not incorporated by the CAA, and thus does not apply to the legislative branch. Therefore, non-employee members of the public are unable to bring ADA retaliation claims under the CAA.

This parity gap is contrary to the purpose of the CAA and deters members of the public with disabilities from asserting their rights under the ADA in the legislative branch. Accordingly, the Board recommends that the CAA be amended to incorporate the ADA's section 503 anti-retaliation provisions.

G. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees Who Serve on Jury Duty

Jury duty is a fundamental civic responsibility. Section 1875 of title 28 of the U.S. Code provides that no employer shall discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any permanent employee by reason of such employee's jury service, or the attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with such service, in any court of the United States. This section currently does not cover legislative branch employees. For the reasons set forth in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

H. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees and Applicants who are or have been in Bankruptcy

Section 525(a) of title 11 of the U.S. Code provides that ''a governmental unit'' may not deny employment to, terminate the employment of, or discriminate with respect to employment against, a person because that person is or has been a debtor under the bankruptcy statutes. This provision currently does not apply to the legislative branch. Reiterating the recommendations made in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

I. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees who are or have been Subject to Garnishment

Section 1674(a) of title 15 of the U.S. Code prohibits terminating an employee because their wages have been garnished. This section is currently limited to private employers. For the reasons set forth in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

J. Require Legislative Branch Offices to Maintain Records Required under other Federal Workplace Rights Laws

The Board has also recommended in previous Section 102(b) Reports, and continues to recommend, that Congress adopt all recordkeeping requirements under federal workplace rights laws, including title VII. Although some employing offices in the legislative branch keep personnel records, there are no legal requirements under the CAA to do so. Records can greatly assist in the speedy resolution of claims. Moreover, both employers and employees benefit from the retention of documented personnel actions. Employers can use records as critical evidence to demonstrate that no violation has occurred, while employees can use records as critical evidence to assert their rights.

II. Improve Implementation of Existing Rights to Ensure Parity

A. Empower the OCWR General Counsel to Seek a Court Order to Temporarily Enjoin Unfair Labor Practices

Section 220 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1351) applies certain provisions of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (FSLMRS) to the legislative branch. In general, the OCWR General Counsel exercises the same authority delegated to the General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), under 5 U.S.C. §§7104 and 7118, in the executive branch, including the authority to investigate allegations of workplace unfair labor practices (ULPs) and to file and prosecute complaints regarding ULPs.

The CAA, however, does not incorporate the provisions of 5 U.S.C. §7123(d), which allows parties to ULP proceedings in the executive branch to request the FLRA General Counsel to seek appropriate temporary relief, including the issuance of a temporary restraining order. This important statutory provision in the FSLMRS allows the FLRA General Counsel to seek, in appropriate cases when a ULP complaint is issued, temporary relief in any United States District Court when it would be just and proper to do so and the record establishes probable cause that a ULP is being committed.

Granting the OCWR General Counsel the authority to seek appropriate temporary injunctive relief would protect parties from irreparable harm during ULP litigation.[10]

B. Allow Disclosure of Proceedings Involving Disability-Related Public Access and Labor-Management Issues

The CAA generally requires confidentiality in proceedings before OCWR to protect the privacy of individuals. However, Congress excluded proceedings under the OSH Act from these confidentiality provisions because it determined that the public interest in transparency concerning safety and health on Capitol Hill outweighed any value in keeping them confidential.

As with OSH Act proceedings, proceedings involving ADA public access and labor-management issues primarily involve public and institutional concerns, as well as concerns on the part of key stakeholders to labor-management relationships, with maintaining facilities, policies, and programs that are safe, healthful, accessible, and free from ULPs. The current lack of transparency in these matters is unnecessary to protect individual privacy and undermines the confidence of the public and of central stakeholders that those statutory mandates are being fully enforced.

Accordingly, section 416 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1416) should be amended to eliminate these unnecessary confidentiality restrictions and provide transparency to the public and to key stakeholders.

C. Approve Pending OCWR Regulations

Congress has not approved several substantive OCWR Board regulations necessary to fully implement workplace protections made applicable to legislative branch employees by the CAA.

As discussed below, the regulations that have been approved for the House but are awaiting congressional approval for the Senate and other employing offices in the legislative branch are the Board's (1) updated regulations concerning overtime pay; (2) updated regulations concerning paid parental leave and leave benefits for servicemembers and their families; and (3) regulations concerning collective bargaining.

The regulations awaiting congressional approval for all employing offices in the legislative branch are the Board's (1) regulations concerning employment and reemployment protections for servicemembers and their families; (2) amended regulations concerning the access rights of members of the public with disabilities; and (3) proposed regulations concerning protections for job applicants in the legislative branch.

The Board urges Congress to approve these regulations.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Regulations

The CAA's FLSA provisions provide for minimum wage and overtime compensation for certain legislative branch employees.[11] If nonexempt, these employees are entitled to overtime compensation when working over 40 hours in a workweek.

The FLSA's overtime exemptions are not defined in the FLSA itself but by regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor.[12] Through the CAA, Congress requires that OCWR's FLSA regulations substantially mirror regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor. Congress last approved OCWR regulations implementing the FLSA in 1996. Since that time, as the Secretary of Labor has updated its overtime regulations, OCWR has updated its regulations to reflect the Secretary's changes. The last such update was in September 2022, when OCWR revised its FLSA regulations to reflect the Secretary's substantial increase in the minimum salary test used to determine who may be exempt from overtime protections.[13]

In December 2022, the House of Representatives, by resolution, approved the Board's amended FLSA regulations, thereby applying them to House employees and offices.[14] The Senate must take similar action to apply those regulations to Senate offices and employees. Full approval by both houses is necessary to make these regulations applicable to legislative branch employees of instrumentalities, including the Library of Congress (LOC) and the USCP.

Until the 2022 OCWR regulations are fully approved by Congress, many covered employees in the legislative branch may be denied the overtime pay to which they would be entitled for comparable work performed in the executive branch or private sector. Approval of the regulations will ensure that Congress and the legislative branch at large are able to attract and retain a talented, motivated, and high-performing workforce.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Regulations

The CAA's FMLA provisions provide rights and protections for legislative branch employees needing leave for specified family and medical reasons.[15] In December 2021, the Board adopted FMLA regulations to implement recent amendments to the FMLA and transmitted the regulations to Congress.[16] These OCWR FMLA regulations would implement FMLA amendments that (1) provide up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave for the birth, adoption, or placement in foster care of a child[17] and (2) enhance leave benefits for servicemembers and their families. These regulations would further revise the definition of ''spouse'' to include same-sex spouses to remain consistent with Supreme Court precedent and the Department of Labor's definition in its February 25, 2015 Final Rule.[18]

In December 2022, the House of Representatives, by resolution, approved the Board's amended FMLA regulations, thereby applying them to House employees and offices.[19] As with the Board's modified FLSA regulations, the Senate must take similar action in order to apply the modified FMLA regulations to Senate offices and employees. Full approval by both houses is needed to make these regulations applicable to legislative branch employees of instrumentalities.

Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (FSLMRS) Regulations

Through the CAA, Congress made applicable to the legislative branch specific sections of the FSLMRS, which governs unionization and collective bargaining in the executive branch. In 1996, the Board adopted final regulations implementing those sections of the FSLMRS in the legislative branch. That same year, Congress approved these regulations for certain employees and employing offices covered by the CAA, such as the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) and the USCP.

However, at that time, Congress did not approve complementary regulations adopted by the OCWR Board necessary to implement those sections of the FSLMRS for most offices listed in section 220(e)(2) of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1351), i.e., most offices within the House of Representatives or the Senate, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and OCWR.

In May 2022, the House of Representatives approved the complementary regulations through a resolution, thereby extending the labor-management rights and obligations of the FSLMRS to House employees and offices.[20] Full approval by both houses would apply the regulations to employees and offices in both the House and Senate and to the additional legislative branch offices listed in section 220(e)(2), and ensure that the protections afforded by the FSLMRS apply to the entire legislative branch, similar to how they apply in the executive branch. Accordingly, the Board urges Congress to adopt resolutions approving these regulations.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) Regulations

The CAA's USERRA provisions protect servicemembers and veterans from discrimination on the basis of their service and allow them to regain their civilian jobs upon return from service. The Board's USERRA regulations, first transmitted to Congress over 15 years ago, have not yet been approved. In April 2023, the Board made minor amendments to its USERRA regulations and transmitted the amended regulations to Congress for approval.

Congressional approval of the USERRA regulations would signal a continued commitment to the welfare of servicemembers in the legislative branch—where they remain a significantly underrepresented percentage of the workforce—by granting them the same workplace protections and entitlements as servicemembers in the executive branch and the private sector.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Public Access Regulations

The CAA's ADA public access provisions protect the right of members of the public with disabilities, including constituents and employees, to accessible facilities, programs, services, activities, and accommodations in the legislative branch. In March 2023, the Board made additional modifications to the pending ADA regulations that it adopted in 2016 and transmitted the amended regulations to Congress for approval. In accordance with the CAA, the 2023 amended ADA regulations incorporate by reference the most recent comparable regulations issued by the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation. If approved by Congress, these regulations would provide much-needed guidance both to those charged with the legal duty to provide accessible services and accommodations, as well as to the members of the public who have the right to such accessibility.

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act (FCA) Regulations

The CAA's FCA provisions protect job applicants in the legislative branch by prohibiting employing offices from inquiring into an applicant's criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer of employment. The FCA, as applied by the CAA, provides that employees who inquire into an applicant's criminal history record information in a manner that violates the FCA may be subject to discipline including suspensions from employment and fines.

In June 2024, the Board issued a notice of proposed rulemaking for its regulations implementing the FCA in the legislative branch. In early December 2024, the Board submitted final regulations to Congress for approval. If approved, these regulations would provide necessary protections for job applicants in the legislative branch alleging a violation of the FCA.

ENDNOTES

1. Senate Report No. 91–1282 (October 6, 1970) respecting the recordkeeping and records provisions of now Section 8(c) of the OSH Act.

2. Id. See also Report No. 91–1291 of the House Committee on Education and Labor, 91st Congress, 2d Session, p.30, to accompany H.R. 16785 (OSH Act) (''Adequate information is the precondition for responsible administration of practically all sections of this bill.'').

3. See ''Detailed Frequently Asked Questions for OSHA's Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Rule for Federal Agencies,'' https://www.osha.gov/enforcement/fap/recordkeeping-faqs.

4. Office of the General Counsel, Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, Special Report: Occupational Safety and Health Concerns Arising out of the Events of January 6, 2021, https://www.ocwr.gov/publications/reports/other-reports/special-report-occupational-safety-and-health-concerns-arising-out-of-the-events-of-january-6-2021-july-2-2021/ (citing U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Committee on Rules and Administration, Examining the U.S. Capitol Attack: A Review of the Security, Planning, and Response Failures on January 6, Staff Report at 1 (June 8, 2021), https://www.rules.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Jan%206%20HSGAC%20Rules%20Report.pdf. According to the General Counsel's Special Report, of the approximately 1,200 officers defending the Capitol on January 6, fewer than 300 were equipped with much in the way of PPE.

5. See PUMP Technical Correction Act, S. 2219, 118th Cong. (2023); PUMP Technical Correction Act, H.R. 3585, 118th Cong. (2023);

Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2025, S. 4768, 118th Cong. (2024) (containing the language of the PUMP technical correction acts).

6. See Comptroller General Decision B–193636 (January 9, 1979) (finding although legislative history indicated Congress intended benefit to apply to all federal employees, section 5550a covers only employees of the agencies specified in section 5550a).

7. 124 Cong. Rec. 15435 (1978).

8. See, e.g., the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, 5 U.S.C. §2302(b)(8), as amended by the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, Pub. L. 112–199.

9. See, e.g., the Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. App. §8H, 50 U.S.C. §3033, 50 U.S.C. §3517; and the FBI Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2016, 5 U.S.C. §2303(a).

10. See, e.g., United States Capitol Police v. Office of Compliance, 916 F.3d 1023 (Fed. Cir. 2019) (affirming the Board's determination that the USCP had committed a ULP when it refused to participate in an arbitration concerning an officer's termination, where two Federal Circuit Court of Appeal decisions had already flatly rejected the statutory interpretation arguments made by USCP that termination decisions were not subject to arbitration).

11. See at 2 U.S.C. §1313.

12. See 29 U.S.C. §213; 29 C.F.R. part 541.

13. The 1996 FLSA regulations exempt from overtime any employee whose salary (exclusive of board and lodging) is ''not less than $155 per week'' or ''not less than $250 per week'' if their primary duty involves management of the employing office and includes the customary and regular direction of two or more employees. The 2022 OCWR FLSA regulations pending congressional approval increase the salary test to not less than $684 per week (exclusive of board, lodging, or other facilities). See generally, 168 Cong. Rec. H8203, S5148 (Sep. 28, 2022).

14. See H. Res. 1516 (117th Cong. 2022).

15. See 2 U.S.C. §1312.

16. See 167 Cong. Rec. H7224, S8966 (Dec. 7, 2021).

17. See Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (subtitle A of title LXXVI of division F of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, Public Law 116–92, Dec. 20, 2019).

18. See 162 Cong. Rec. H4128, S4475 (June 22, 2016).

19. See H. Res. 1516 (117th Cong. 2022).

20. See H. Res. 1096 (117th Cong. 2022).

(AMENDED) REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO JAPAN, EXPENDED BETWEEN SEPT. 29 AND OCT. 6, 2024

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Vern Buchanan	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
Barbara Lee	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
Terri Sewell	9/29	10/1	Japan		863.50		5,952.80				6,816.30
Dan Kildee	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		10,335.30				11,081.22
Claudia Tenney	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
John Rutherford	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
Victoria Spartz	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
Neal Dunn (Did not travel)			Japan		187.17						187.17
Anna Luna (Did not travel)			Japan		233.96						233.96
Derek Luyten	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.92		[3]				745.92
Leslie Reagan	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.91		[3]				745.91
Mitchell Moonier	9/29	10/1	Japan		745.91		[3]				745.91
Sean Brady (Did not travel)			Japan		187.17						187.17
Committee total					8,185.06		16,288.10				24,473.16

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. VERN BUCHANAN, Dec. 3, 2024.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO ITALY, TANZANIA, AND KENYA, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 22 AND OCT. 29, 2024

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Courtney Butcher	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		6,513.80				7,333.16
Philip Bednarczyk	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		9,538.10				10,357.46
Rachel Walker	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		6,513.80				7,333.16
Michael Reed	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		6,513.80				7,333.16
Meghan McCann	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		9,538.10				10,357.46
Kate Knudson	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		9,538.80				10,358.16
James Walsh	10/22	10/23	Italy		819.36		9,538.80				10,358.16
Courtney Butcher	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Philip Bednarczyk	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Rachel Walker	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Michael Reed	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Meghan McCann	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Kate Knudson	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
James Walsh	10/26	10/28	Tanzania		1,314.00						1,314.00
Courtney Butcher	10/23	10/29	Kenya		917.96		6,050.61				6,968.57
Philip Bednarczyk	10/23	10/29	Kenya		730.48		4,670.81				5,401.29
Rachel Walker	10/23	10/29	Kenya		730.48		4,910.11				5,640.59
Michael Reed	10/23	10/29	Kenya		917.96		4,910.11				5,828.07
Meghan McCann	10/23	10/29	Kenya		730.48		4,670.81				5,401.29
Kate Knudson	10/23	10/29	Kenya		730.48		4,670.81				5,401.29
James Walsh	10/23	10/29	Kenya		730.48		4,910.11				5,640.59
Committee total					20,421.84		92,488.57				112,910.41

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MIKE JOHNSON, Dec. 2, 2024.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO AZERBAIJAN, EXPENDED BETWEEN NOV. 14 AND NOV. 18, 2024

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. August Pfluger	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Frank Pallone	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Morgan Griffith	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Troy Balderson	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Jay Obernolte	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. John James	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Kathy Castor (Did Not Travel)					1,600.00						1,600.00
Hon. Scott Peters	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00
Hon. Carol Miller (Did Not Travel)					1,600.00						1,600.00
Sydney Greene	11/14	11/18	Azerbaijan		3,780.00		[3]5,831.10				9,611.10
Katelyn Roberts	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		[3]				1,890.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO AZERBAIJAN, EXPENDED BETWEEN NOV. 14 AND NOV. 18, 2024—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Tiffany Guarascio	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		([3])				1,890.00
Caitlin Haberman	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		([3])				1,890.00
Mary Martin	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		([3])				1,890.00
Peter Spencer	11/16	11/18	Azerbaijan		1,890.00		([3])				1,890.00
Nate Hodson	11/14	11/18	Azerbaijan		3,780.00		([3])7,925.10				11,705.10
Committee total					33,440.00		13,756.20				47,196.20

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. MIKE JOHNSON, Dec. 11, 2024.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO BARBADOS, EXPENDED BETWEEN NOV. 25 AND DEC. 1, 2024

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Hakeem Jeffries	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Amata Radewagen	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Maxine Waters	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Gregory Meeks	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Barbara Lee	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Steven Horsford	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Yvette Clarke	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Joyce Beatty	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Robin Kelly	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Hon. Stacey Plaskett	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Emily Berret	11/25	12/1	Barbados		3,172.00		449.30				3,621.30
Dr. Brian Monahan	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Tasia Jackson	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Gideon Bragin	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Wayne Williams	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Wyndee Parker	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Andy Eichar	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Kalise Dickerson	11/29	12/1	Barbados		1,176.00		([3])				1,176.00
Committee total					$23,164.00		449.30				$23,613.30

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. HAKEEM S. JEFFRIES, Dec. 3, 2024.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC–6362. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Policy Analysis and Program Standards, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Black Lung Benefits Act: Authorization of Self-Insurers (RIN: 1240-AA16) received December 12, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–6363. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Administrative Simplification: Modifications of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) Retail Pharmacy Standards; and Modification of the Medicaid Pharmacy Subrogation Standard [CMS-0056-F] (RIN: 0938-AU19) received December 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–6364. A letter from the Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Connect America Fund [WC Docket No. 10-90]; Alaska Connect Fund [WC Docket No.: 23-328; Connect America Fund — Alaska Plan [WC Docket No.: 16-271]; Universal Service Reform — Mobility Fund [WT Docket No.: 10-208]; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications [WC Docket No.: 14-58]; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to received Universal Service Support [WC Docket No.: 09-197] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–6365. A letter from the Assistant Division Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's Major final rule — Call Authentication Trust Anchor [WC Docket No.: 17-97] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–6366. A letter from the Policy and Rules Division Chief, Office of Engineering and Technology (OET), Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's Major final rule — Use of the 5.850-5.925 GHz Band [ET Docket No.: 19-138] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–6367. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.622(j), Table of Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations (Lubbock, Texas) [MB Docket No.: 24-224; RM-11988] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–6368. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31576; Amdt. No.: 4140] received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6369. A letter from the Executive Director, OICTS, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain [Docket No.: 241112-0292] (RIN: 0605-AA51) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–6370. A letter from the Assistant Chief Counsel, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Minimum Standards for Driver's Licenses and Identification Cards Acceptable by Federal Agencies for Official Purposes; Waiver for Mobile Driver's Licenses [Docket No.: TSA-2023-0002] (RIN: 1652-AA76) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

EC–6371. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Island Pelagic Fisheries; 2019 U.S. Territorial Longline Bigeye Tuna Catch Limits [Docket No.: 190325272-9537-02] (RIN: 0648-XG925) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6372. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Program, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary emergency rule — Temporary Rule To Increase the Commercial Trip Limit for Atlantic King Mackerel [Docket No.: 190924-0037] (RIN: 0648-BJ19) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6373. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Western Pacific Pelagic Fisheries; U.S. Territorial Catch and Fishing Effort Limits [Docket No.: 130708597-4380-01] (RIN: 0648-BD46) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6374. A letter from the Fisheries Regulations Specialist, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; 2024 Management Area 1A Possession Limit Adjustment [Docket No.: 230316-0077] (RTID: 0648-XE470) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6375. A letter from the Fisheries Regulations Specialist, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2024 Commercial Closure for Snowy Grouper in the South Atlantic [Docket No.: 231127-0277] (RTID: 0648-XE316) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6376. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; 2020 Red Snapper Recreational For-Hire Fishing Season in the Gulf of Mexico [Docket No.: 140818679-5356-02] (RTID: 0648-XS026) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6377. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Re-Opening of Commercial Longline Fishery for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish [Docket No.: 120404257-3325-02] [RTID: 0648-XS027] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6378. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; 2019-2020 Commercial Hook-and-Line Closure for King Mackerel in the Gulf of Mexico Southern Zone [Docket No.: 160426363-7275-02] (RTID: 0648-XS025) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6379. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Revisions to Red Snapper and Hogfish Management Measures [Docket No.: 180724688-9135-02] (RIN: 0648-BI39) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–6380. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Chenega Bay Airport, Chenega, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2024-0183; Airspace Docket No.: 23-AAL-67] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6381. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Embraer S.A. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2020; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00303-A; Amendment 39-22877; AD 2024-22-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6382. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1888; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00190-T; Amendment 39-22879; AD 2024-22-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6383. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31571; Amdt. No.: 4135] received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6384. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31572; Amdt. No.: 4136] received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6385. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's issuance of final airworthiness criteria — Airworthiness Criteria: Special Class Airworthiness Criteria for the AgustaWestland Philadelphia Corporation Model AW609 Powered-Lift [Docket No.: FAA-2022-1726] received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6386. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of Class E Airspace; Manchester, NH [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1361; Airspace Docket No.: 24-ANE-5] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6387. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; South Haven, MI [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1912; Airspace Docket No.: 24-AGL-16] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6388. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Claremont, NH [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1650; Airspace Docket No.: 24-ANE-6] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6389. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Asheville, NC [Docket No.: FAA-2023-2254; Airspace Docket No.: 23-ASO-51] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13,2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6390. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's notice of proposed rulemaking — Modification of Class E Airspace; Colusa County Airport, Colusa, CA [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2048; Airspace Docket No.: 24-AWP-101] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6391. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Jet Route J-133 and Establishment of Area Navigation Route Q-801 in the Vicinity of Anchorage, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2023-1957; Airspace Docket No.: 23-AAL-28] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6392. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of VOR Federal Airways V-68, V-76, V-212, V-222, and V-558, and United States Area Navigation Route T-220 in the Vicinity of Industry, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1707; Airspace Docket No.: 24-ASW-4] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6393. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of VOR Federal Airways V-216 and V-380, and Revocation of VOR Federal Airways V-549 and V-551 in the Vicinity of Mankato, KS [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1364; Airspace Docket No.: 24-ACE-1] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6394. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes Q-117 and Q-135; Eastern United States [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2525; Airspace Docket No.: 24-AEA-13]

(RIN: 2120-AA66) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6395. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Various Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1004; Project Identifier AD-2023-01058-R; Amendment 39-22866; AD 2024-20-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6396. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Lycoming Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1695; Project Identifier AD-2023-00783-E; Amendment 39-22869; AD 2024-21-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6397. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Canada Limited Partnership (Type Certificate Previously Held by C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership (CSALP); Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2415; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00545-T; Amendment 39-22874; AD 2024-22-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6398. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2008; Project Identifier AD-2024-00122-T; Amendment 39-22876; AD 2024-22-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6399. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Canada Limited Partnership (Type Certificate Previously Held by C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership (CSALP); Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-0468; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-00762-T; Amendment 39-22898; AD 2024-24-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6400. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Canada Limited Partnership (Type Certificate Previously Held by C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership (CSALP); Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1285; Project Identifier MCAI-2023-01146-T; Amendment 39-22872; AD 2024-22-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6401. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited (Type Certificate Previously Held by Bombardier, Inc.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-1692; Project Identifier MCAI-2024-00050-T; Amendment 39-22878; AD 2024-22-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6402. A letter from the Management Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Cirrus Design Corporation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2024-2546; Project Identifier AD-2024-00574-A; Amendment 39-22902; AD 2024-24-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received December 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6403. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Child Support Services, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program (RIN: 0970-AD00) received December 11, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–6404. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Disclosures of Return Information Reflected on Returns to Officers and Employees of the Department of Commerce, Including the Bureau of the Census, for Certain Statistical Purposes and Related Activities [TD 10013] (RIN: 1545-BQ74) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–6405. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Federal Income Tax Treatment of Certain Amounts Paid or Incurred Pursuant to Agreements with the Department of Commerce Required Under the CHIPS Act of 2022 [Announcement 2024-40] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–6406. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Second Remedial Amendment Cycle for Sec. 403(b) Pre-approved Plans: Issuance of Opinion Letters, Plan Adoption Deadline, Opening of Determination Letter Program, and Related Issues [Announcement 2024-38] received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–6407. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Recourse Partnership Liabilities and Related Party Rules [TD 10014] (RIN: 1545-BL21) received December 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–6408. A letter from the Executive Director, Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, transmitting the Biennial Report from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 1331(f)(2); Public Law 104-1, Sec. 210(f)(2); (109 Stat. 13); jointly to the Committees on House Administration and Education and the Workforce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 5840. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to streamline the enrollment processes for individuals applying for a Transportation Security Administration security threat assessment for certain programs, including the Transportation Worker Identification Credential and Hazardous Materials Endorsement Threat Assessment programs of the Administration, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–888). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 7983. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to define the term free trade agreement for purposes of the clean vehicle credit; with an amendment (Rept. 118–889). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 7986. A bill to modify and reauthorize the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–890). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 8261. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend certain flexibilities and payment adjustments under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–891, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 8291. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit certain tax-exempt organizations from providing funding for election administration; with an amendment (Rept. 118–892). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 2407. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests; with an amendment (Rept. 118–893, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 8914. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose penalties with respect to civil rights violations by certain tax-exempt educational institutions; with an amendment (Rept. 118–894). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 7981. A bill to ensure that goods made using or containing cobalt extracted or processed with the use of child or forced labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo do not enter the United States market; with an amendment (Rept. 118–895). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 8293. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the public reporting of data on certain contributions received by tax-exempt organizations from foreign sources, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–896, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability discharged from further consideration. H.R. 8293 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII, the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 8261. Referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mrs. LEE CARTER, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, and Mr. IVEY):

H.R. 10442. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to adjust the penalty for unjust conviction and imprisonment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 10443. A bill to amend title 28, to provide for a district court for the district of the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BERGMAN (for himself and Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina):

H.R. 10444. A bill to clarify that States do not have authority to establish or continue in effect any requirement with respect to the sale, distribution, possession, or use of less harmful alternatives to traditional tobacco products to protect public health, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COLE (for himself and Mr. EDWARDS):

H.R. 10445. A bill making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROY:

H.R. 10446. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to reduce the fiscal year 2025 discretionary spending limit for revised nonsecurity category, to rescind funds appropriated for the Department of Commerce Nonrecurring Expenses Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Transportation and Infrastructure, Science, Space, and Technology, Natural Resources, Oversight and Accountability, Foreign Affairs, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. AUCHINCLOSS (for himself, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. DUNN of Florida, and Mrs. STEEL):

H.R. 10447. A bill to authorize sanctions relating to the production and distribution of illicit synthetic narcotics by the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, and Oversight and Accountability, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. BALINT (for herself and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 10448. A bill to combat loneliness and increase social connection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Education and the Workforce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CROW:

H.R. 10449. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide funding for innovations in community policing, mental health care, and community safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania (for herself, Ms. LEE of Florida, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. BACON):

H.R. 10450. A bill to regulate monitoring of electronic communications between an incarcerated person in a Bureau of Prisons facility and that person's attorney or other legal representative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUNN of Florida (for himself, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mrs. STEEL, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. TORRES of New York):

H.R. 10451. A bill to establish requirements and impose civil penalties on certain entities of the People's Republic of China that do not employ appropriate safeguards to prevent fentanyl trafficking; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ESCOBAR:

H.R. 10452. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit certain types of fraud in the provision of immigration services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FALLON (for himself, Mr. ALFORD, and Mr. ELLZEY):

H.R. 10453. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Defense from entering into information technology contracts with entities that provide certain services to China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FLOOD:

H.R. 10454. A bill to repeal section 138 of the Clean Air Act, relating to environmental and climate justice block grants; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 10455. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish the Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KHANNA (for himself, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. COHEN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POCAN, Ms. TLAIB, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 10456. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to assess the unintended impacts on the health and safety of people engaged in transactional sex, in connection with the enactment of the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 and the loss of interactive computer services that host information related to sexual exchange, to direct the Attorney General to submit a report on human trafficking investigations and prosecutions in connection with the same, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. LEE of California (for herself, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H.R. 10457. A bill to amend the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 to extend the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief program; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MURPHY:

H.R. 10458. A bill to exempt diesel-fueled emergency vehicles from certain air pollution requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Mr. DUNN of Florida, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. STEEL, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI):

H.R. 10459. A bill to establish the Joint Task Force to Counter the Illicit Synthetic Narcotics; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Foreign Affairs, and Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PANETTA (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. MULLIN):

H.R. 10460. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land in California as the Monterey Bay National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PANETTA (for himself, Ms. CHU, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. SUOZZI, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 10461. A bill to set minimum standards for tax return preparers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROY (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. JACKSON of Texas):

H.R. 10462. A bill to modify a provision relating to adjustments of certain State apportionments for Federal highway programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SELF:

H.R. 10463. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to relocate to the State of Texas the headquarters of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. STRONG (for himself and Mr. FONG):

H.R. 10464. A bill to amend chapter 511 of title 51, United States Code, to modify the authority for space transportation infrastructure modernization grants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. PFLUGER (for himself and Mr. ARRINGTON):

H.J. Res. 228. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8

of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Waste Emissions Charge for Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems: Procedures for Facilitating Compliance, Including Netting and Exemptions''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BOWMAN (for himself, Ms. BUSH, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. MENG, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Ms. PRESSLEY, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. CARSON, Ms. CHU, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OMAR, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. TLAIB, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H. Res. 1617. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that it is the duty of the Federal Government to dramatically expand and strengthen the care economy; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, Financial Services, Agriculture, the Judiciary, and Oversight and Accountability, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. PRESSLEY (for herself, Mr. COSTA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. EVANS, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. TONKO):

H. Res. 1618. A resolution expressing support for the designation of November 20, 2024, through December 20, 2024, as ''National Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND SINGLE SUBJECT STATEMENTS

Pursuant to clause 7(c)(1) of rule XII and Section 3(c) of H. Res. 5 the following statements are submitted regarding (1) the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution and (2) the single subject of the bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. WATERS:

H.R. 10442.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Judiciary.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 10443.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To provide for a district court for the district of the Northern Mariana Islands.

By Mr. BERGMAN:

H.R. 10444.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

Ensuring all nicotine products are treated equally.

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 10445.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: ''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . . .'' In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: ''The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . . .'' Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

The single subject of this legislation is:

The subject of the bill is the making of continuing appropriations and disaster relief supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2025.

By Mr. ROY:

H.R. 10446.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution—to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To reduce discretionary spending.

By Mr. AUCHINCLOSS:

H.R. 10447.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To authorize sanctions relating to the production and distribution of illicit synthetic narcotics by the People's Republic of China.

By Ms. BALINT:

H.R. 10448

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Mental health

By Mr. CROW:

H.R. 10449.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide funding for innovations in community policing, mental health care, and community safety, and for other purposes.

By Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 10450.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Criminal justice reform and access to counsel

By Mr. DUNN of Florida:

H.R. 10451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To establish requirements and impose civil penalties on certain entities of the People's Republic of China that do not employ appropriate safeguards to prevent fentanyl trafficking.

By Ms. ESCOBAR:

H.R. 10452.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS

CLAUSE 18

The Congress shall have the power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all the other vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To prohibit fraudulent immigration legal services.

By Mr. FALLON:

H.R. 10453.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Defense IT

By Mr. FLOOD:

H.R. 10454.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

To repeal section 138 of the Clean Air Act, relating to environmental and climate justice block grants.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 10455.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish the Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center, and for other purposes.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 10456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Judiciary

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 10457.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To reauthorize the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

By Mr. MURPHY:

H.R. 10458.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To exempt diesel-fueled emergency vehicles from certain air pollution requirements, and for other purposes.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.R. 10459.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

A bill to establish the Joint Task Force to Counter the Illicit Synthetic Narcotics.

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 10460.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land in California as the Monterey Bay National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

By Mr. PANETTA:
H.R. 10461.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
Requires tax preparers to demonstrate competency in preparing returns, claims for refund, and associated documents.
By Mr. ROY:
H.R. 10462.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution—to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.
The single subject of this legislation is:
To improve the Department of Transportation's highway funding formula.
By Mr. SELF:
H.R. 10463.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
To direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to relocate to the State of Texas the headquarters of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and for other purposes.
By Mr. STRONG:
H.R. 10464.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States
The single subject of this legislation is:
To amend chapter 511 of title 51, United States Code, to modify the authority for space transportation infrastructure modernization grants, and for other purposes.
By Mr. PFLUGER:
H.J. Res. 228.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
Disapproval of the EPA's Waste Emissions Charge final rule.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 394: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 492: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 724: Ms. ROSS.
H.R. 808: Mr. CROW.
H.R. 854: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 1002: Mr. MCGARVEY.
H.R. 1077: Ms. PORTER, Mr. LIEU, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1182: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 1235: Mr. MCGARVEY.
H.R. 1249: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 1465: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1529: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 1619: Mrs. MCIVER.
H.R. 1716: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 1770: Mr. MOORE of Utah.
H.R. 1781: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 2742: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 2771: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 2830: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 3333: Mr. CROW.
H.R. 3409: Mr. KEATING, Mr. BERA, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 3481: Mr. IVEY and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 3579: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 3628: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3781: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 3940: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 4002: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 4020: Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 4050: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 4117: Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.R. 4274: Mrs. BICE.
H.R. 4333: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. RYAN, Mr. BERA, and Mr. HIMES.
H.R. 4400: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 4706: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 4886: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 4896: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 4897: Mr. AMO.
H.R. 4942: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
H.R. 4974: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 5027: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 5074: Mr. AMO.
H.R. 5141: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 5172: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 5196: Ms. ESCOBAR.
H.R. 5419: Mr. SUOZZI.
H.R. 5633: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 6052: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 6873: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 6888: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 6961: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
H.R. 7011: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 7012: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 7039: Ms. CRAIG.
H.R. 7142: Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 7165: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 7238: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 7248: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.
H.R. 7288: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 7297: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 7361: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 7515: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 7516: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 7634: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 7635: Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 7920: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 8061: Mr. GOTTHEIMER and Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 8126: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 8147: Mr. CISCOMANI, Ms. LEE of Florida, and Mrs. HINSON.
H.R. 8478: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 8622: Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 8665: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 8843: Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 8886: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
H.R. 8977: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 8994: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 9003: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9060: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
H.R. 9101: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 9119: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9172: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9183: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9188: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9324: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9390: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9399: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9449: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9480: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9556: Mr. CARSON and Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 9693: Mr. CASTEN.
H.R. 9819: Mr. OBERNOLTE.
H.R. 9855: Mr. IVEY.
H.R. 9856: Ms. STRICKLAND.
H.R. 9945: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 9950: Mr. TIFFANY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. OMAR, Mr. BALDERSON, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 10038: Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 10156: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 10172: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 10181: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 10326: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 10349: Mr. BANKS and Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 10366: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 10367: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, and Mr. IVEY.
H.R. 10384: Mr. IVEY.
H.R. 10404: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 10426: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 10432: Mrs. SYKES.
H.J. Res. 72: Mr. AMO.
H. Res. 561: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H. Res. 668: Mr. FROST, Mr. ALLRED, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. SORENSEN, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mrs. PELTOLA, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mrs. SYKES.
H. Res. 1048: Ms. PINGREE.
H. Res. 1601: Ms. NORTON.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *118th* CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024 *No. 187*

Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, December 16, 2024)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Lisa Wink Schultz of the Senate Chaplain's Office here in Washington, DC.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord, we come to You today full of gratefulness. We thank You for the staff who work in this Chamber, for the Capitol Police who keep us safe, for the pages who are eager to help, and for the doorkeepers who love this institution.

May we not take for granted the craftsmen and women who are building the inaugural platform, for the food service workers and the appointment desk employees and the staff at Capitol facilities.

Most of all, we praise You for the life of Chaplain Black. We pray for him and his continued recovery and for Dr. Monahan and the Attending Physicians Office who cared for him so well.

We are all members of Your body with different gifts and roles. As we work, please remind us that it is better to serve than to be served. We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

WILDLIFE INNOVATION AND LONGEVITY DRIVER REAUTHORIZATION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the pending business.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 5009, a bill to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Schumer amendment No. 3317 (to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill), to add an effective date.

Schumer amendment No. 3318 (to amendment No. 3317), to add an effective date.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, negotiations continue between both parties on a temporary extension of government funding. There continues to be good progress, but appropriators are still working on finalizing an agreement. Obviously, we are getting closer to the December 20 deadline. So time is of the essence for Republicans to reach an agreement with us that we can act on quickly. Democrats will continue working in good faith with our Republican counterparts on a strong CR that will prevent a shutdown, while also delivering critical disaster relief for the American people.

On the NDAA, last night, the Senate voted to advance the NDAA by a strong margin of 83 to 12. The NDAA is now on a glide path to final passage. Everyone knows this NDAA is not perfect, but it still takes a strong stand against the Chinese Communist Party. These are things that I have pushed very hard for. It boosts the use of AI for our national defense—another thing I care a lot about—and expands tech innovation programs for communities across the country—a third thing that is very, very important and good.

It has many good things Democrats fought hard for. I am gratified it has all these: the Chinese Communist Party, the use of AI for national defense, and expanding tech innovation. Of course, it has some bad provisions that we Democrats would not have added and other provisions that we would want left out entirely.

I am particularly glad that this year's NDAA expands the Tech Hubs Program I created with Senators YOUNG, CANTWELL, and others in the bipartisan Chips and Science Act. These funds will transform communities in Upstate New York, the Midwest, and across the country into the next epicenters of innovation.

It also includes bipartisan measures on AI to expand our AI infrastructure and strengthen America's edge against the CCP, the Chinese Communist Party, in this critical technology—so important to our national security and to the United States' technological leadership.

I thank my colleagues from both sides for their good work on the NDAA, especially Chairman REED and Ranking Member WICKER. We hope to send the NDAA on the way to the President's desk as soon as possible.

DRONES

Mr. President, on drones, this afternoon, I will come to the Senate floor to stand with Senator PETERS to pass legislation I have cosponsored to respond to the recent reports of unusual drone activity. The FBI, DHS, and DOD—the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Defense—support this bill. Our legislation will explicitly authorize State and local authorities to conduct drone detention and help them better coordinate with Federal law enforcement. With the multiplicity of drone sightings and so many drones in the area—many harmless, for recreational use, but many that there are still many questions about—Federal authorities agree that they can't respond to these incidents alone, and they need help from local authorities. But, unfortunately, the local authorities do not have the authority right now. It is only in the domain of the Federal Government.

For all we know, the recent drone incidents are, for the most part—or maybe all part—benign. But even so, in some cases, they can be disruptive, like when they impact airport operations or approach bases, and people are understandably anxious about seeing things in the night sky without clear answers to what is going on. The people in New York and New Jersey have a lot of questions and still haven't gotten answers from the Feds.

The worst part is that, right now, local officials have very little in terms of resources and oversight authority to do anything about these incidents. So this afternoon, I will join Senator PETERS to try and fix that, and I thank my friend from Michigan for his good work on this bill.

TRIBUTE TO SHERROD BROWN

Mr. President, finally, on Senator BROWN's retirement, this afternoon, a beloved colleague of ours will deliver his farewell address, my dear friend Senator SHERROD BROWN of Ohio.

If there is one statement that captures SHERROD BROWN best, it is this: Workers look at SHERROD and say, ''He is one of us.'' Workers look at SHERROD and say, ''He is one of us.''

Now, elected office wasn't part of the Brown family tradition, but fighting for justice certainly was. SHERROD says, and he has said it many times—I have seen that smile on his face when he says it. He says he inherited his activist bent from his mother, a Georgia native who marched on the frontlines of the early civil rights movement. SHERROD's mom taught him and his brother Charlie the power of political activism and the moral duty we all have to serve our neighbors.

SHERROD got the message early. His first taste of politics came in high school, when he was elected president of the student council. Right away, he became a proud thorn in the side of the principal, organizing anti-Vietnam war protests and pushing for racial equality in the educational system.

During his senior year in college, SHERROD was recruited to run for State rep. Admittedly, his parents weren't thrilled about his decision. In fact, his dad told him, with a little tough love: I will not be voting for you; you are too young.

Do you think SHERROD listened? Would anyone who knows SHERROD today think he listened? Of course not. He didn't listen. He won in a stunning upset, also typical of SHERROD. So at 21, he became a State rep.

During those years, he would spend his Fridays not at home but at the local union hall in Mansfield, OH, of United Steelworkers 169. He did nothing but listen. He listened to the workers who dropped by before their shift. He listened to them talk about their jobs, their families, their kids, about the union. They would keep him abreast of the latest news about strikes and reminisce about heroes in the labor movement. They would talk literature together—''The Grapes of Wrath,'' Joe Hill—that depicted the struggle of American workers and the relentless drive to achieve the American Dream.

Those Fridays at the union reshaped Sherrod's world view forever. They taught SHERROD one of the great truths about America: Our country was built up from the middle class, and the middle class was built by unions and union workers. My family knows the same thing. Everything SHERROD did in politics from then onward was in service to this truth.

So when he came to Congress many years later, it is no surprise that one of his very first votes was opposing NAFTA, fearful of the devastating consequence it would have for Ohioans. Decades later, he has brought back jobs to Ohio, helping break ground on some of the largest manufacturing projects in the State's history, through the Chips and Science Act. And we made sure—SHERROD and I and some others together—that it will be done through union labor. I insisted on that in the Chips and Science Act, and SHERROD was in my ear, making sure that happened all the time.

Years before, we passed the ACA. Sherrod was also one of the leading proponents for healthcare reform and expanding access. He famously refused to get health insurance on his own as a Congressman and a Senator until the day we passed the ACA.

On infrastructure, SHERROD was the relentless force behind the ''Buy America'' provisions in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, ensuring that America's roads and bridges and highways were built from American-made steel and iron and concrete.

On pension reform—this is something we so much cared about—SHERROD was the author and champion of the Butch Lewis Act, putting money back in the pockets of retirees who faced the unthinkable prospect of seeing the benefits dry up. It was so typical of SHERROD. It wasn't an abstract idea for him; he knew the Lewis family. They came here and lobbied. It was all about people, and then, working out from people, how you could make their lives better and America better.

The record goes on. SHERROD is a leader for Wall Street reform, saving U.S. auto jobs, lowering prescription drug prices, protecting the right to organize at work, investing in apprenticeship programs, expanding the child tax credit, protecting workers on the job, and so much more.

It is amazing—amazing what he did. He was here 18 years, and it is amazing what he accomplished for working people. It is a record that anyone would be very, very proud of, and we are also proud of SHERROD's record.

The common theme to all this is a phrase SHERROD has embraced his entire life: the dignity of work. It is something he repeats again and again. He has even named his bus tours on it.

And he also talks about the canary in the coal mine—that when there are some bad signs coming from certain places about working people, we had better all listen because it is the canary in the coal mine. I think he wore a canary in the coal mine on his blazer every so often.

Finally, let me end at the beginning, with a quick and humorous moment from SHERROD's youth. As a high school senior, SHERROD, one day, got together with his friends Paul and John to organize a rally in Mansfield to honor the very first Earth Day, in 1970. This is what he did; he organized rallies. Some people went to ball games. Some people watched TV. Some people went out to restaurants. SHERROD organized rallies.

They expected a good turnout at this rally, but they didn't expect 1,000 people to descend on downtown Mansfield, which wasn't that big a city.

As SHERROD described: We did this really cool march, and we had really big crowds. But we got down to the square, and none of us had thought about what to do when you get down there. We didn't have any speakers. And so we said, ''Oh, shoot,'' and we just disbanded.

Now, he wouldn't—only in SHERROD's account he didn't use the word ''shoot.''

Isn't that a vintage Sherrod story? He never made that mistake again. He was the speaker at so many of the rallies.

You know, I recruited—I knew he would be a great Senator. And when, at first, he decided not run—he was a House Member in 2006. I spent a lot of time in the House gym, and we spent time on the bikes next to each other, panting and sweating, but also my convincing him that, with his great talent and his great passion for workers, he was so needed in the Senate.

I am so glad he decided to run because he has done so much and left such an amazing imprint on this body.

So the story SHERROD accounts for, with his rally in Mansfield, has always been who he has been—direct, unflinching, passionate; a man who is warm and welcoming down to his very core, yet rough around the edges in just the right way; a man who will shun an Italian-made suit in favor of the Cleveland shop just a few miles from his home; a man who can penetrate the

dense language of public policy but will always prefer to ponder a line from the Scripture, from Tolstoy, Martin Luther King, or a worker from whom he heard something; a man with a gifted mind but an even—and he has such a gifted mind, but this is a true compliment—an even more gifted heart.

Thank you, SHERROD, for everything. We wish you, Connie, and your entire family our very best.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO STEFANIE MUCHOW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for many years running, a familiar morning ritual has played out just a few steps from my desk here in the Capitol. A lamp turns on, illuminating a shelf where an embroidered pillow reads ''Not my circus, not my monkeys.'' Invariably, a cold Diet Coke is cracked open. Perhaps a moment of reflection on Peggy Noonan's timeless observation that ''the constant possibility of quiet revenge keeps one peppy.'' Then my deputy chief of staff for operations, Stef Muchow, opens her office for business.

Stef works at a busy crossroads. Just about everything time-sensitive, confidential, or otherwise important that is headed my way stops at her desk first, and that is by design. There is no one else who can spend and accumulate institutional capital in my name with Stef's confidence; no one else who commands such a comprehensive awareness of my interests and priorities; no one else who embraces ''other duties as assigned'' with her unwavering devotion.

Now, this might sound like the sort of high praise any one of our colleagues would hope to give to a close adviser of two decades. I am sure it is what each of them would want to say about a bright, instinctive, effusively patriotic staffer who finished college a year and a half early and poured herself into public service at the highest level. I don't doubt that each of our colleagues is fortunate to enjoy the fierce loyalty to their staff, but I am quite certain that I am the only one in the Senate who has been blessed by the furious loyalty of Stef.

There is no portfolio—or more accurately, no collection of portfolios—anywhere in Washington quite like the one I have handed to Stef. And that makes sense because there is no one else who could handle it quite like her.

Around my office, the bench in Stef's office is where colleagues come for guidance and gut checks. Across the entire Senate, any number of people can think of times when it was Stef's wisdom, discretion, candor, loyalty, diplomacy, tact, or political savvy that made all the difference. I can think of hundreds.

No one else sees the whole board—from policy objectives, to political considerations, to protocol sensitivities, to personal circumstances—like Stef does. That may have something to do with the fact that she has seen my Senate office operations from just about every vantage point over the years.

For Stef, there has been no task too small, no job that wasn't worth doing right. As it turns out, this approach has been contagious. Stef's role so often demands uncompromising efficiency and the utmost discretion, and yet she still seems to seize every opportunity to bring the McTeam closer together as family.

Of course, Stef's other duties as assigned include covering much larger groups than the professionals I am proud to call my staff. In every corner of the building, her name is synonymous with mastery of the ceremonial protocols that transform the Capitol into a national stage. This is the place where America inaugurates our Presidents, bids farewell to fallen heroes, and bestows our highest honors, and very little of it takes place without Stef's knowledge, input, orchestration, or blessing. When you think about it, this diplomatic grace and eye for detail make sense coming from someone who probably hasn't missed a British royal wedding or an Olympic opening ceremony in her entire life. Don't worry—Stef cheers for Team USA, loud and proud.

But I would be remiss in talking about grace without mentioning the ways she has shown it in the face of the most demanding challenges we have seen together.

When the pandemic arrived, Stef's ability to balance sensitive considerations and competing interests was invaluable—not just to me but to the entire Senate. Her approach to big, thorny questions about protecting Senators and staff while upholding our duties helped us make the right calls when there were any number of ways to make the wrong ones. In truly unchartered territory, Stef's poise was decisive. As leaders across the institution faced a blank page and a daunting, once-in-a-century task, she took action—not because it would be easy but because it had to be done.

For years, this has been something of a theme: If it had to be done, it had to be Stef. If it had to be airtight and discreet, it had to be Stef. If it had to navigate political and personal sensitivities just right, it had to be Stef.

In this job, it is important to have a few people around you who really do know every aspect of your life, who you can trust without question, who will guard your confidences, and who will give you honest feedback. I am tremendously fortunate and proud of the countless ways Stef rises to these responsibilities over and over again.

But I am hardly the only one who gets to take pride in what Stef has accomplished. I share that distinction with the family who makes Stef who she is today—with her parents Gary and Dianne, her sisters Abbey and Leslie, and with the ones she rushes home to when the immense demands of the Senate grant a brief respite: her husband Scott and their beloved daughter Lily.

I am not sure my words here can ever begin to capture the significance of the first and last person I speak to every day, but there is perhaps no better illustration of Stef's love for our country and for the Senate than her sacrifice of time with the ones she loves the most.

So, to Stef, I am so grateful to you for everything you have done both for the Senate and for me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

SENATE CALENDAR 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, my office recently released the 2025 Senate Calendar. As everyone now knows, our schedule next year will be aggressive: Friday votes will be the norm, and we are not going to be having much in the way of recess in the first 100 days. That is because we have a lot of work to do, and we are not going to get it done on the kind of abbreviated schedule that we have had in 2024.

One of our first priorities, of course, will be confirming President Trump's nominees. The American people handed President Trump and Vice President-elect VANCE a decisive mandate in November. We are going to honor that mandate by making sure that President Trump has the people he needs in place as soon as possible, starting with the heads of the Cabinet Departments.

Democrats can certainly make the schedule a little less painful if they accord the President some of the deference the Republicans accorded to Cabinet nominees under President Obama. But one way or another, we are going to get the job done, and if that means some nights and weekends, so be it.

Our other early priority—and another reason the schedule will be particularly aggressive in the first 100 days—is to pass a reconciliation package with a once-in-a-generation investment in border security and immigration enforcement. The border and enforcement crisis under President Biden has left a gaping hole in our national security and undermined respect for the rule of law. And that ends in January. Enforcing the law and protecting the integrity of our borders will become administration policy on day one, and the Senate will move quickly to back up the President's efforts.

The package we will be taking up will, among other things, include substantial resources to increase the number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and Border Patrol agents, increase detention space, and provide the barriers and technology we need to fully secure the border.

It will also focus on other key national security priorities, like addressing our lagging military readiness.

Other priorities for the first 100 days include kicking off our efforts to use the Congressional Review Act to undo some of the Biden administration regulations that are weighing down our economy and, of course, continuing work on our reconciliation package to extend the tax relief Republicans delivered for Americans during the first Trump administration.

I mentioned our national security priorities, and let me just say that national security is going to be a priority for Republicans throughout the year. We are finally now considering the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 here in the Senate this week—almost 3 months into the new fiscal year. Under Republican leadership, the NDAA will not be put on the back burner.

I am also committed to ensuring that we return to the regular-order consideration of appropriations bills. I will devote extensive time to the floor consideration of appropriations bills when they are ready in order to avoid an end-of-the-year pileup and problematic continuing resolutions, something with which, right now, we are very familiar.

Deciding how taxpayer money is spent is a serious responsibility, and it deserves serious floor time. Members should plan to take a lot of amendment votes during this process and throughout the year. That will mean taking tough votes at times, but that, folks, is what we were sent here to do.

Finally, Members should expect to take up a farm bill in 2025. We are now more than a year overdue on the next bill, and farmers and ranchers in my State and around the country are waiting for Washington to update farm programs to reflect current agriculture needs, and I am committed to bringing a bill to the floor in the coming year.

There are no two ways about it—2025 will be intense, but we have a real opportunity here to deliver for the American people on continued tax relief, on border security, on national security, and beyond. We are going to seize the day.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 5009

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the National Defense Authorization Act—a position I do not take lightly.

I have supported the final passage of each NDAA that has come before me in the Senate up until now. From my tenure in this body and well before me, there has been a productive bipartisan tradition when it comes to this bill that authorizes funding for our military, supporting those in uniform, and keeping our country safe. Most years, we come together on a very quintessential country-over-party deal—one that I would argue is all too uncommon; but, still, this was an important annual ritual that carried serious consequences.

This is not to say that we do not have our differences. Of course, we do. But we know our commitment is bigger than those differences. This year, that commitment to our servicemembers, to the people we all represent, and to our security and safety was broken. It has been broken because some Republicans decided that gutting the rights of our servicemembers to score cheap political points was more worthy.

Let's be clear. We are talking about parents who are serving our country in uniform having the right to consult with their family's doctor and get the healthcare they want and need for their transgender children. That is it. They want the right to get whatever healthcare is best for their child—something I imagine all parents want.

The healthcare we are talking about here can sometimes be lifesaving. Some folks estimate that this will impact between 6,000 and 7,000 families in the military. I, for one, trust these servicemembers and their families to make their own decisions about healthcare without politicians butting in. It is flatout wrong to put this provision in this bill and take away a servicemember's freedom to make that decision for their families.

Look, this problem has a solution—a simple one, at that. My amendment would strike this provision that guts our servicemembers' rights. And I was glad to have 20 colleagues join me in supporting it. We should pass it.

It is unfortunate that some of our colleagues decided to force this harmful provision in this National Defense Authorization Act because, otherwise, I would have been proud to support it.

This bill has some great things for our servicemembers, my home State of Wisconsin, and measures that I have long pushed for. This bill invests in our most valuable asset: our people. I am thrilled to see that we are giving our junior enlisted troops a well-deserved pay raise—more than 14 percent—and boosting pay for all others by nearly 5 percent.

This legislation invests in the health and well-being of our troops and their families, eliminating copays for contraception for our troops and their families on TRICARE, making telemental health care services available regardless of where the patient is, and so much more.

A longstanding priority of mine in this bill and beyond is ensuring that when we use taxpayer dollars, we are supporting American companies and American workers and the American economy. When it comes to our national defense, this notion is essential for our safety and security. That is why I am glad to see steps forward in supporting the made-in-America economy.

The NDAA puts strategies in place to make sure that we are sourcing things domestically, from high-tech batteries to Navy warships. These suppliers are not only providing the highest quality products but are also creating and supporting good-paying jobs across the country—and Wisconsin is home to many of them. Whether it be the iconic companies like Fairbanks Morse or Oshkosh Defense or military installations like Fort McCoy, Wisconsin is crucial in our country's defense, and I am excited to see that this bill recognizes our contribution, making sound investments in the Wisconsin Rapids Army National Guard Readiness Center to support the training our troops need to stay ahead of tomorrow's threats.

Despite all of the common ground we have found and all of the smart investments we are making in our troops, their families, and our security, some folks poisoned this bill and turned their backs on those in service and the people we represent.

This bill should embody the best of us as elected officials, coming together without partisan agendas to keep our country safe and support those in uniform. Sadly, that is not what happened. In turn, if we pass this bill as is, we are going to rip away the rights of our servicemembers to get the healthcare they want for themselves and their children. It is wrong, and I encourage my colleagues to vote no.

I am delighted this morning to be joined by colleagues who share these concerns and would yield to Senator KIM for his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. KIM. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues to call for section 708 of the NDAA to be removed from the final bill.

As you know, I am new to the U.S. Senate. I come to the floor today with great humility but also great urgency because, while I am new to the U.S. Senate, I have had the honor of serving the past 6 years as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, just on the other side of this building.

During my time as a Member of the House, one of the things I have been most proud to work on is issues involving our military servicemembers and their families. As a House Member, I represented Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, the only triservice joint base in the country. Because of that, I represented tens of thousands of military families who signed up to serve our country.

When you talk to military families, the last thing you hear about is politics. In fact, the last thing they want to talk about is politics. Military families often struggle with sufficient housing or putting food on the table. They

face inadequacies in healthcare. Military spouses often face barriers to finding work. While it is only the servicemember who swears the oath, it is the whole family that serves.

I come to the floor with great urgency because Speaker JOHNSON sought to politicize this important National Defense Authorization Act by inserting a dangerous provision after the Armed Services Committees in both the House and the Senate came to bipartisan agreement. This kind of action undermines trust in negotiations and sets a dangerous precedent for what is widely considered the last true space of traditional bipartisan legislation.

Let's be clear. Section 708 would harm those who serve by denying healthcare for military families. By banning TRICARE from covering gender-affirming care for minors, we are standing in the way of military families and the healthcare their doctors have prescribed. We are putting politics into a bill where it simply does not belong. We are sending a signal to our military families that if your loved ones are transgender, we don't have your backs or theirs.

As the former ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee on the House Armed Services Committee, there is a lot about this National Defense Authorization Act to support. Our junior enlisted servicemembers will receive a 14.5-percent pay raise, and all others will receive a 4.5-percent pay raise. Our servicemembers will have greater access to meal support so we can address hunger in our ranks. They will have additional funding to improve military construction of housing so they will have better roofs over their heads. And we have made real progress in improving access to healthcare.

These are all wins we should be proud of. They are bipartisan. They build a stronger national defense. That is all the more reason to strip this harmful provision, section 708, from the bill.

We shouldn't play politics with our national security. We shouldn't target transgender youth and further spread fear into a community that has seen so much hate directed toward it. We should pass an NDAA that supports our servicemembers and their families—all of them—without politics or prejudice. I hope my colleagues join me to that end.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the work we have done on a bipartisan basis to draft this year's National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA. At more than 1,800 pages, this bill contains wins for our country, our military, and our servicemembers. It provides a raise to all servicemembers, with an even bigger raise for junior enlisted troops. It invests billions in needed military infrastructure in Hawaii and throughout the Indo-Pacific region—investments that are critical as we work to counter China's influence and support our allies and partners in the region.

I am proud that it contains a provision I fought for to create a new ''major mishaps'' classification to ensure better oversight and accountability of major incidents like the 2021 fuel spills at the Red Hill fuel storage facility on Oahu, which impacted over 93,000 people.

All of these provisions and many more will support our military, our servicemembers, and their families. In fact, our priority should be supporting the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families, and that includes making sure they have access to quality healthcare.

But instead of focusing on the things that matter, such as healthcare, Republicans demanded the inclusion of a provision prohibiting TRICARE from covering gender-affirming care for minors. Despite efforts to stop this provision, to strip this provision from this bill during conference, it is in there.

By many estimates, there are thousands of transgender children of servicemembers who are currently receiving gender-affirming care from TRICARE. Under this bill, those children would not be able to access the healthcare they need despite their parents approving the care. We know what happens when transgender and nonbinary children are refused gender-affirming care. According to the Journal of Adolescent Health, rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide all increase.

There is no question that this provision will cause concern for servicemembers worrying about their children not getting the healthcare they need, and of course this will cause trauma to servicemembers, their children, and the entire family.

We didn't have to do this, Mr. President. We didn't have to impose this cruelty on our servicemembers and their families. I thank Senator BALDWIN for introducing an amendment to stop this unnecessary, cruel provision, to strip this provision from this bill—an amendment I and others are proud to cosponsor. We know this fight is not over.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator BALDWIN for her leadership on this issue, for helping us to focus on this threat to the rights of Americans that is being propounded in this Defense bill. I want to thank Senator MERKLEY.

I want to thank everyone who is joining with Senator BALDWIN in this fight because today we are considering the National Defense Authorization Act, and embedded within its language would be a ban on TRICARE coverage of gender-affirming care for children of servicemembers in our country. If passed into law, it would be the first anti-LGBTQ law passed by Congress in decades. Since the 1990s, there has been no anti-LGBTQ law which has passed. If passed into law, it would force thousands of members of the military to decide between service to their country and guaranteeing their child can get the healthcare they need.

This language was the product of a nationwide campaign against trans rights—a campaign that has facilitated the harassment of teachers, bomb threats to children's hospitals, and attacks on transgender people. This is the same campaign that drives legislators from State capitals to Capitol Hill to insist on dictating Americans' healthcare decisions.

We have seen this playbook before. For decades, Republicans attacked the right to abortion. They slowly chipped away, State by State, law by law, and today there is no constitutional right to abortion. Now they have turned their attention to servicemembers' families.

We must fight off efforts by politicians to force themselves into exam rooms. They think they know better than trained healthcare providers and patients. They do not. The only expertise they are exhibiting is an expertise in the oppression, suppression, and repression of healthcare freedom. And their attacks will not stop there.

Freedom isn't lost all at once; it happens 1 inch at a time. As the Senate author of the Transgender Bill of Rights, this is an inch that I insist that we cannot give.

At its best, this institution has affirmed the rights of every American. On this floor, we have expanded access to healthcare, guaranteed Americans' civil rights, and protected same-sex marriage. Today, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to fight discriminatory attacks on servicemembers, their families, and their healthcare providers.

We must strike this language. If we do not, we must vote no on the entire bill.

To every trans American, every servicemember, and their families, friends, and communities: I will not turn my back on you. I am with you. Together, we will keep fighting.

So, again, I thank Senator BALDWIN for her leadership on this issue.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues—Senator KIM, Senator HIRONO, and Senator MARKEY—for participating in this debate today and for standing firm.

As I said earlier, historically, the NDAA has embodied the idea that there is more that brings us together than separates us, that our servicemembers and national defense are not to be politicized, and that we put our country over party when the chips are on the table.

Unfortunately this year, that was ignored, all to gut the rights of our servicemembers to get the healthcare that they need for their children.

With that, I encourage a ''no'' vote on the NDAA.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2082

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it seems hard to imagine that it was 23 years ago when 3,000 Americans were killed in a terrorist attack in New York City and here in Washington, DC, at the Pentagon.

The families who lost loved ones that day have been seeking access to justice, just like any other victim could and should be able to here in the United States.

To that end, we introduced the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA, which was a monumental step to allowing those families who lost loved ones to achieve long-overdue closure in a court of law.

It did not put our thumb on the scale, it didn't say they were entitled to anything; it just said they were entitled to present their arguments and the facts to a court of law just like any other American citizen should be able to do so here in our country.

These terrorist attacks on 9/11 were a tragedy for our entire Nation; but for some, that day was a personal tragedy as well. Men and women who lost loved ones during the terrorist attacks deserve to have their day in court. Thanks to JASTA, as it is called, the Justice against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, that is now possible.

This legislation, the Ensuring Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act, provides important updates and technical edits to the original bill.

To show you the sort of bipartisan support that this carve-out in foreign sovereign immunity law received, it passed 97 to 1 back when it originally passed, and it passed over a Presidential veto by President Obama. The bill before us today does not expand JASTA's original scope as intended by Congress, but it does correct certain judicial misinterpretations that fly in the face of the clear text and the history of this legislation.

When President Obama vetoed JASTA, leading to the only veto override during his Presidency, he listed a parade of harmful potential foreign policy outcomes to justify his refusal to stand up for American victims of terrorism.

None—none—of these predicted negative outcomes have come to pass, and JASTA has been the law of the land for nearly a decade. These technical corrections will not change that fact. It will ensure that the families of the victims of these tragic attacks on 9/11 receive the justice they deserve, and I hope it will advance out of the Senate today.

To that end, I would ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 2082 and, notwithstanding rule XXII, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Reserving the right to object. I would first like to begin by joining my colleague from Texas in mourning the loss of the nearly 3,000 innocent Americans who died in the September 11 attack. We must never—and we will never—forget them.

I also want to extend my prayers to families who lost loved ones that day and who bear the weight of their loss in their hearts every single day.

However, I must object to this bill today because it hasn't yet received the careful consideration and deliberation that the subject warrants. First, contrary to some suggestions, the bill would enact more than mere technical corrections to earlier legislation. Rather, the bill's provisions would significantly change how a highly technical area of U.S. law is interpreted.

But the Judiciary Committee hasn't held a hearing or a vote on this bill, not the fault of the Senator from Texas to be sure, but a fact, nonetheless. I also question whether the Foreign Relations Committee should evaluate the bill as well, given its consequences for our foreign policy.

Second—and speaking of foreign policy—the bill could have far-reaching and consequential implications for our policy in the Middle East. Thanks to Israel's artful diplomacy and incredible military, Iran's so-called ''axis of resistance'' lies in rubble in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria, with Iran itself, therefore, exposed on its flanks for the first time in a generation.

I would suggest at this highly promising, yet highly sensitive moment that all our efforts should be focused on uniting our friends and our allies in the region to put an end, once and for all, to the threat of a nuclear-armed, terrorist-sponsoring Iran.

Finally, this bill could have the unintended but unwelcome result of further delaying resolution and recovery for the 9/11 litigants' cases. The courts will likely need to reopen and relitigate past decisions based on the changed law, while a disproportionate amount of any future recovery could go primarily to insurance companies and lawyers instead of the families of the victims—if any recovery comes at all.

For these reasons, I must object today while suggesting that the new Congress revisit the matter with the hearings, regular order, and full consideration that the subject deserves.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NEBRASKA COMMUNITY LEADER JOHN EDMUND GOTTSCHALK

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 928, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 928) honoring the life of Nebraska community leader John Edmund Gottschalk.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. RICKETTS. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 928) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a great Nebraskan and a great American, John Edmund Gottschalk. John Gottschalk was born in Omaha in 1943 and grew up in a small town in Nebraska called Rushville. He was a Boy Scout, and he went on to attend the University of Nebraska, majoring in political science and journalism.

His father started the Sheridan County Star, and John worked there as well, really getting his break into journalism, the newspaper business. In 1972, John bought the Sidney Telegraph in Sidney, NE, and became mayor of the town of Sidney. In 1975, he joined the Omaha World-Herald as an assistant to the president. He eventually worked his way up to become the publisher and CEO in 1998, and he remained that until 2009. Actually, 1989. I got those numbers flipped around. In 1989, he became CEO and publisher.

John and his wife Carmen were extraordinary people.

John led the Omaha World-Herald into the digital age and also spearheaded a number of the efforts to increase the technology and its spread throughout the State of Nebraska, different communities. He made the Omaha World-Herald a standard for how newspapers should be run.

He himself was known for his integrity and his courage. He was never shy about being direct with a budding politician to let that politician know when he believed that politician might have erred. He was one of those people that cared about the community. As I mentioned, he was a Boy Scout. He served

as chairman of our local Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts but also became national president of Boy Scouts of America. He served as chairman of the Board of Governors of the USO, cared about our veterans and wanted to make sure we were serving them, cared about our military people. He also cared about the arts and was chairman of Omaha Performing Arts.

He and his wife Carmen cared about people. Together, they fostered more than 100 infants awaiting adoption.

John was an outdoorsman and a conservationist. He really was one of those people we would describe as a renaissance man—running a fantastic business, giving back to the community. He was the kind of American that built this country.

John passed away last month, leaving a legacy that is having a lasting imprint on our community of Omaha, the State of Nebraska, and indeed our entire country.

I greatly admire John Gottschalk for the kind of man he was, the example he set for the rest of us. He will be greatly missed, and I will miss him greatly.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. HICKENLOOPER).

The majority whip.

H.R. 5009

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a minute to note the fiscal year 2025 NDAA conference agreement the Senate is voting on this week.

Congress has passed a bipartisan Defense authorization bill every year without fail since 1961, a remarkable feat. And in an increasingly partisan Senate, it is even more remarkable.

Every year, when the final text comes, there are inevitably Members on both sides of the aisle who like some provisions and dislike others. That is what compromise is all about.

This year's text is no different. It includes a historic pay raise for junior enlisted troops. It provides continued support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and Baltic security cooperation.

This bill authorizes important military construction projects. It reauthorizes my READ Act to continue quality basic education programs for vulnerable children around the world.

At the same time, it also continues troubling restrictions that make it unnecessarily difficult to finally close the detention center at Guantanamo Bay. And it fails to include important provisions I sponsored that would have accelerated PFAS remediation and enabled the skilled DACA holders to enlist in the military to address our recruitment challenges.

But there is one provision in this conference agreement that troubles me, a provision that would ban certain medical treatments for transgender children of servicemembers. It eliminates the ability of military families to work with medical professionals and make their own decisions about the healthcare needs of their own children.

That is why I am a cosponsor of Senator TAMMY BALDWIN's amendment to remove this language from the bill.

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST STEP ACT

Mr. President, I would like now to highlight an important milestone. This coming Saturday, December 21, will mark the sixth anniversary of the First Step Act becoming law. That moment resulted from overwhelming bipartisan majorities in the House and Senate coming together to pass landmark criminal justice reform.

I was honored to be the lead Democrat sponsor of this legislation, along with the lead Republican sponsor, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY. Senators CORY BOOKER and MIKE LEE joined us.

The First Step Act acknowledges the obvious: The vast majority of people who are incarcerated will someday be released. So we must prepare them to successfully return to their communities.

In the last 6 years, this law has safely and effectively reduced populations in overcrowded Federal prisons, reuniting families and revitalizing communities.

The First Step Act looked toward the future by providing opportunities for the incarcerated people to reenter society successfully. It helped to reform harsh drug sentencing laws of the past and remedy their effects.

I authored bipartisan legislation, the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, that reduced the unjust 100-to-1 sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine offenses.

Under the First Step Act, the Fair Sentencing Act's reforms were made retroactive, allowing those who still serve sentences imposed before the change in law to be resentenced. I am thankful for the tireless efforts of many dedicated advocates and families who never gave up hope that this bill would become the law.

Since the passage of the First Step Act, 6 years ago, I have met with many Americans who successfully returned home because of this historic legislation.

The First Step Act has been a tremendous success. Of more than 40,000 people released under this law through January of this year, only 9.7 percent have been rearrested or returned to custody. Compare that to the Bureau of Prisons' overall recidivism rate of 45 percent—5 times that number. Unfortunately, some elected officials are calling now for a return to the punitive policies of the past, despite the success of the First Step Act.

Here is the reality: We all deserve to live free from crime, but the War on Drugs, with its inflexible mandatory minimums, did not make communities safer. Instead, the so-called War on Drugs filled the prisons with young, mostly African-American men, and, at the same time, the price of illegal drugs went down, and the use of illegal drugs went up. The strategy didn't work.

The First Step Act shows that we can do more than be just tough on crime. We can be, once and for all, smart on crime and achieve accountability without excessive punishment and incarceration.

It is our job in Congress to thoughtfully respond to the enduring crisis of substance abuse in America. We should provide more opportunities for those who are incarcerated to reenter society successfully, reunite with their families, and contribute to their communities.

And, we need to build on the bipartisan success of the First Step Act and work together to craft new policies to reduce crime in America.

Six years ago, the First Step Act was signed into law by President Donald Trump, during his first term in office, while my lead Republican sponsor, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, was chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. With Donald Trump returning to the White House and Senator GRASSLEY returning as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, we have the opportunity to build on the success of the First Step Act.

Six years ago, we wrote the blueprint for reimagining rehabilitation and protecting public safety. We know that it works.

We must remember that passing this law was just the first step in a long journey toward rethinking rehab and reversing failed reaches. Today, as I reflect on what we achieved by correcting our past wrongs and investing in the power of second chances, I also recognize that more must be done to make our justice system fair and to keep America safe.

We should learn from the experiences of individuals who have been incarcerated under misguided policies and are now seeking to reform the criminal justice system for the future.

As we celebrate this anniversary, I will continue to work with my colleagues to reform outdated sentencing laws and improve conditions of confinement and rehabilitation within our Federal system.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

WILDLIFE INNOVATION AND LONGEVITY DRIVER REAUTHORIZATION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 399

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senator KAINE's request for unanimous consent for the Senate to pass the Saving the Civil Service Act. It is a critical bill that I hope all my colleagues would agree needs to be enshrined into law.

One of the great strengths of our democracy is that we have an independent, merit-based civil service. Back in the 19th century, we saw what happens when you had a Federal workforce that was made up of a system of spoils and political patronage. So the Congress, back in 1883, said: We ought to put in place an independent civil service.

That has been the law of the land for the last 150 years. Virtually every other industrial nation in the world has modeled their independent workforce after the American model.

We have 2 million Federal employees across the country. Virginia has 147,000. There are close to that many in Maryland and in the District, but they are all over. Senator HIRONO mentioned earlier Hawaii has some of the highest concentration.

Senator KAINE's bill, which we are all proud to be cosponsoring, would simply say: Let's not break that system.

The idea—and the incoming President has said he wants this—to make and get rid of a merit-based civil service is, in my mind, beyond comprehension. Do you really want that nurse at the VA hospital, that the first criteria we are looking for is who did she vote for as opposed to whether she knows nursing; or that air traffic controller that says: Well, I may have been politically active for an unpopular candidate, so I am going to get fired? Or, more likely, one of the things that we have seen that has been a strength of our system: The independent economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Presidents of each party get mad when their numbers come out each month because those numbers are independently verified. Do you want to fire all those folks and put in political loyalists?

The rest of the world would run from that, and it would, frankly, undermine the reserved nature of the U.S. dollar as the currency of the backbone of the world, if we are cooking the books on our economic numbers.

There are a host of other examples that we could go almost category by category. I can tell you, the vast majority of Federal workers whom I interact with, most of them could actually have done better in the private sector. They do this work because of that sense of public service.

And if you get rid of a merit-based system and do it all for political patronage, who is going to actually join that kind of government on a going-forward basis?

This would undermine our economy, undermine our security, and obviously undermine the ability of the American people to get a fair administration of government services.

With that, I am going to yield to my good friend, the Senator from Maryland Senator VAN HOLLEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Virginia Senator WARNER, who just addressed this very important issue, and my friend and colleague, the other Virginia Senator, Senator KAINE, who is making the motion today that we pass his Saving the Civil Service Act.

This is a critical piece of legislation to protect one of America's best innovations, which is the idea of a nonpartisan, merit-based Federal workforce—one that serves all Americans, regardless of political affiliation; one where you don't take a political test to decide whether you have the credentials for the job; you take a skills-based, knowledge-based test to decide if you are best for the job.

Our Federal workers are the air traffic controllers who ensure safe passage when Americans fly; they are the inspectors who protect our food supply; they are the folks who determine whether or not medicines put on the market are going to be both safe and do what they say they are going to do; they are the folks at the Social Security Administration in Baltimore City who make sure that people get their Social Security checks on time; they are the nurses and doctors at veterans hospitals who help our veterans; and many, many other essential functions.

Today, the only criteria for their employment is performance. It is what they know, not who they know. They are qualified to serve based on those credentials, and they do a good job protecting the American public. And they serve in those jobs regardless of what President is in the White House and what party that President may belong to. Their duty is to serve the American people.

So why are we here on the floor? Because the incoming administration has threatened to change the longtime practice of making sure we have a merit-based civil service.

At the very end of the last Trump administration, they proposed something called schedule F, which would allow them to convert merit-based positions into politically based positions—in other words, substituting political cronies for qualified merit-based Federal employees. That is a recipe for corruption.

Our predecessors, a long time ago, recognized that. That is why, back in 1883, the Congress passed the Pendleton Act to create the merit-based civil service. Prior to that, we had a spoils system, where people who worked on campaigns thought that they could get any job they wanted, regardless of their qualifications, because of their political party label.

In fact, the reason we ended up getting the Pendleton Act—one of them—was that, in 1881, one of those people, who had worked on a political campaign and thought they should have gotten a job and didn't, assassinated President Garfield. So at that time, the country was shaken, and they said: We have to get rid of the spoils system and replace it with a merit-based system.

I want to just make two other points because the incoming administration, as I said, tried this schedule F idea at the end of the last administration. This time, they are talking about doing it near the beginning of this incoming administration, which is why we are here on the floor today trying to take this action to prevent that from happening.

I want to point out that Presidents have about 4,000 political positions to fill. We are talking about the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State. Presidents have the discretion already—the power today—to nominate people for those 4,000 positions. So we are not talking about taking that away. We are saying: You can't convert thousands of other positions that today are based on merit into those political type of jobs.

Finally, we have heard a lot about the need for more government efficiency, and count me in. Count all of our colleagues from Virginia and Maryland and I think probably both sides of the aisle in on the idea of trying to make sure that we achieve greater efficiencies in government. But I will not support and we will not support something that, under the cover of the claim of government efficiency, is simply a Trojan horse to undo our merit-based system and turn it into one based on political cronyism because that leads to corruption, which will erode the public's confidence and erode the quality of service that our Federal civil servants provide.

So I want to again thank my colleague from Virginia Senator KAINE for all he has done. I want to thank my colleague from Maryland Senator CARDIN, who has also been a great partner in this.

I yield to the Senator from Virginia Senator KAINE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleagues Senator WARNER and Senator VAN HOLLEN. We just had a press conference where Senator CARDIN and Senator HIRONO also came to speak about the importance of this issue.

As everybody knows—you learned this in civics in grade school—officials in the United States swear loyalty not to the President but to the Constitution of the United States. Under the Constitution, Congress passes laws, and the President enforces them.

But from the beginning days of our country, the President can't do all the

enforcement and implementation on his or her own; it is too big a job for an individual. In a big and complex country, you need people whose whole job might be enforcing a particular law—say inspecting a meat-processing plant. You need people to make sure planes don't crash into each other at airports, people to prosecute anybody running a scam to cheat the elderly out of their life savings, people to bust tax cheats or catch somebody dumping toxic chemicals into a stream, in violation of the Clean Water Act.

Federal employees do all these things. They work to ensure that critical resources and services are provided in countless communities across America. They work to keep Social Security up and running, manage veterans' benefits, research medical diseases, and develop cures and vaccines.

Enforcing the law and running government requires people who are dutybound to enforce the laws enacted by Congress and to obey the lawful orders of the President, all subject to the overriding duty to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. But we swear fealty to that Constitution, not to a person.

Early in the Republic, as my colleague indicated—Senator VAN HOLLEN—the executive branch operated under what is known as the spoil system, as in the expression ''to the victor go the spoils.'' But there quickly arose an obvious problem: If the people who enforce American laws answer only to the President, then if you are on the President's team, they go easy on you, and if you are against the President, they bring Federal law down on you like a hammer. That is not the rule of law.

It took a century, from the founding of America until enactment of the Pendleton Act—and Senator VAN HOLLEN talked about a tragedy that occurred at the foot of Capitol Hill, which was once a train station where President Garfield was assassinated in 1881. It took that tragedy to basically galvanize this growing awareness that our Federal employees should be hired based on merit, not political loyalty.

Since then—nearly 150 years—our Nation has recognized the value of a nonpartisan and merit-based system to carry out Federal Government functions. Having a dedicated civil service based on merit rather than political loyalties is in the best interest of everyone. It not only promotes professionalism and reduces cronyism, it also promotes stability.

We saw in the last Trump administration the track record of the political appointees. There was a revolving door in many of these positions. How many Secretaries of State? How many Secretaries of Defense? How many Secretaries of the Navy? When you are switching positions out, you get worse and worse quality of service. The professional civil service is not just about merit, it is also about stability.

Our civil service is tasked with protecting so many important values: national security, economic productivity, guiding public health, and so much more. There have been attempts in recent years to erode the independence of the Federal civil service, and that is why I am here on the floor, where I will in a minute request Senate passage of the Saving the Civil Service Act.

The bill upholds the merit system principles to ensure that the Federal Government is equipped with the most qualified and experienced individuals. Specifically, the Saving the Civil Service Act will prohibit the reclassification of Federal employees to schedules outside of the competitive civil service without congressional consent. If Congress agrees to this, that is one thing, but to do the reclassification over the objection of or without even consulting with Congress would be barred by this bill.

Over 2 million Federal employees work in all 50 States and U.S. territories.

There are 147,000 in Virginia.

In New Mexico, there are more than 22,000 Federal employees who work in critical areas such as nuclear research. Some of the most important research that has been done in the history of the United States was done in New Mexico by highly trained scientists, and that continues today.

In Missouri, which my colleague Senator SCHMITT represents, Federal employment is more than 37,000, and many work for the VA, for the Treasury, for the Army, for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and for the Department of Homeland Security.

This shouldn't be a partisan bill. We don't have any need and never have had a need for Democratic meat inspectors or Republican air traffic controllers, Democratic VA nurses and Republican cancer researchers; we just want people who have expertise. These experts may have their personal political opinions, but as long as they are doing their jobs, they deserve protection from political retaliation.

To be clear, the President can govern as he or she sees fit within the bounds of statute. Many Federal laws have ambiguity. If there is too much ambiguity, we in Congress need to fix it. The President is empowered to use flexibility within the law as he sees fit, and career Federal employees have to follow those directives and implement the President's interpretation of the law falling within legal bounds. The President, additionally, has the ability to appoint 4,000 political appointees, some of whom must be confirmed by the Senate but many of whom don't even require Senate confirmation.

If a President tries to go outside the law, someone should be able to stand up and say, ''Mr. President, that is illegal, and you can't do it. Telling your boss ''That is illegal, and you can't do it'' is not disloyalty. That is patriotism. That is loyalty to the Constitution and to the law. Again, we all take the same oath. The oath is to the document, not the President.

Third and finally, my bill does not mean that we don't expect accountability from Federal workers. In any large organization, government agency, or large company, there is a potential for unnecessary bureaucracy to develop. In a large pool of people, there may be some bad apples not doing their job. Nothing in this bill protects Federal employees from accountability for their performance.

In fact, the National Federation for Federal Employees has testified before Congress on more than one occasion about the circumstances in which Federal employees have been terminated for cause. That demonstrates that while they exist to defend the rights of their members, they are not going to apologize for or shirk responsibility for bad behavior of employees whose performance merits termination.

I am all for solutions that increase accountability and efficiency. I am on the Foreign Relations Committee, and I followed with great interest the efforts of President Trump's first Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, and his team in 2017 in that space.

The rights of civil servants and the goals of an efficient, responsive Federal Government shouldn't be in competition, and I refuse to dismiss as naive the idea that Federal workers can have a range of personal political views but still serve faithfully and carry out the law and the faithful orders of the Commander in Chief.

I know this is possible because it is exactly what we ask of the American military—my oldest son is a marine—and the military delivers that in a significant way. Every servicemember is allowed to vote, but whoever is duly elected—that is whose lawful orders they follow.

The bill is about basic fairness. The American people should have high expectations of Federal workers and should know that the people enforcing American laws aren't going easy on someone just because they happen to be a friend of the President, Democratic or Republican.

Some will argue that this is necessary because the Federal Government is too big and inefficient. In fact, the Federal Government is smaller today than it was during its peak in the post-World War II years, with more than 3 million Federal employees at that time.

So I am looking forward to working on this and making sure that we uphold this value that has stood the test of time since 1883—a professional civil service, not one placed on political loyalty or cronyism.

With that, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 399 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am heartened to hear the historical references from my friend from Virginia and my friend from Maryland, but if we go back just a little bit further, to our Nation's founding, the Founders were very concerned about concentrations of power. That is why we have our system of federalism, three branches of government, separation of powers. All was meant to disperse government so that no one branch, no one person ever got too powerful.

But the underlying belief that would save this system of self-government was that people would be accountable to the people, that if you sent somebody up here and you agreed with them, you would send them back or you would send them home.

What we have seen, particularly in the last hundred years, is the growth of an administrative state that isn't accountable to anybody. That is the truth.

I was in Northwest Missouri a couple of years ago, and a farmer told me: Eric, I just don't ever remember voting for the Deputy Under Secretary of the EPA.

He had a point. A guidance letter—not even a rule and certainly not even a law—can destroy a farmer's livelihood in a farm they have had for generations. Or take for example the abuses we saw during COVID. The Supreme Court—I know something about this. I was the AG that brought the case. The vaccine mandate. They didn't have any authority to force a medical procedure on 100 million people, but they wanted to do it anyway. Student loan debt forgiveness. There was no authority to wipe away half a trillion dollars' worth of student loan debt with the stroke of a pen, but they did it anyway.

These are big, broad discussions. The Supreme Court has weighed in. The major questions doctrine. They have been reining in the abuses of government now in unelected bureaucrats over the last decade.

Of course, with the overturning of the Chevron decision, the ball is now in our court to sort of reassert the article I branch's role that we are the ones—if you want to ban gas stoves, we should have to vote on it.

So this bill, what it does—it blatantly infringes upon executive prerogative to shape the executive workforce. So the courts have weighed in, and dare I say the American people weighed in just about a month ago. There is no secret that President Trump ran on greater government efficiency and reducing the size of government.

This is another effort to Trump-proof before January 20. We are seeing a wholesale auction of the border wall for less than 1 percent of its value. It is happening right now to thwart what is coming. These sort of efforts that are happening behind the scenes and now here on the Senate floor are intended to do one thing, which is to prevent President Trump from executing on what he campaigned on, which is government efficiency.

About 16 percent of the Federal workforce right now is in any one of those buildings on Pennsylvania Avenue. I think that over the coming months, with the DOGE committee and some of those efforts—and I hope we can work in a bipartisan way. I agree, this shouldn't be a partisan issue. Saving money should not be a partisan issue. And there are some people that probably need to go. There are great Federal workers in our Federal workforce, but we are wasting a lot of money, and people aren't even willing to show up to work right now.

So having flexibility to deliver on the message that people saw cross their television screens and in rallies all across this country over the last 2 years during the Presidential campaign—that is what this is about. This bill would thwart those efforts, and that is why I am objecting.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, just a brief response.

My colleague from Missouri mentioned the fact that recent decisions of the Supreme Court have put more burden on the shoulders of Congress not to abdicate decision-making responsibility but to own it, and that is precisely what my bill would do. It would not block a President from trying to make reforms to the Federal civil service; it would just require that the President do so in consultation with the article I branch.

That article I branch, come January 3, is going to be two Republican Houses. I can't imagine why a Trump Presidency would be afraid of two Republican Houses. If any proposal with respect to the Federal civil service has merit, it would seem that the President should have some sense of confidence that he can convince the next Congress of the United States to go along with it. But if, in fact, he is worried about his ability to convince two Republican Houses to go along with plans with respect to the Federal Civil Service, I think that should tell us something.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, the past 4 years have been historic for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs by almost any measure. We secured the largest investment in Native communities in American history, totaling more than $45 billion. We had the committee's most productive 4-year period ever, passing more than a dozen bills into law. And, just this month, we passed another 10 bills in the Senate that are waiting for action in the House.

Taken together, these record investments and laws cover a wide range of priorities for native people—securing ancestral lands and waters, building safer communities for children and elders, and turning a new page on the boarding school era by promoting native languages, education, and healing.

But the numbers alone don't tell the story because behind each of these statutes and investments are real, tangible benefits for Native communities everywhere—from the homes they live in to the roads they get around on to the water they drink every day—and I am proud that we have been able to deliver such important investments in Indian Country, on Hawaiian homelands, and in Alaska Native villages, whose needs have been so often overlooked or even sometimes harmed by the Federal Government.

This progress means more people will have homes with working electricity and clean, piped water. Advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service, for the first time ever, means people don't have to worry about whether or not they can get to a doctor or not if the government shuts down. Significant investments in Tribal transportation and infrastructure means that communities are one step closer to making dirt roads and broadband deserts a thing of the past. And thanks to the provisions in the Violence Against Women Act reauthorization, Tribes can be in charge of their own safety again with the ability to keep their children and their neighbors safe.

The committee has also enacted three water rights settlements into law and secured $2.5 billion to pay for these and the more than 30 other already enacted settlements. There is more work to do to get other settlements over the line, and we are going to continue to work with our House colleagues to get it done.

Rebuilding Tribal homelands, expanding broadband, building out transportation projects were key priorities for our committee on a bipartisan basis. We were also focused on helping Native communities unlock clean energy and adapt to a changing climate. Elsewhere, we put real resources into the Federal Government's efforts to revitalize Native languages and work to bring healing around the Federal Indian boarding school era.

From day one, our work was guided by the voices of Native leaders and community members—''nothing about me without me'' as the saying goes—and we couldn't have done this without the incredible leadership of Native people across our great country, telling us

what matters and holding us accountable.

The progress, though long overdue, is still in progress. The bills we passed and the investments we have made will materially benefit people's lives—for American Indians, for Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives. Now, that doesn't mean we get to call it a day, because to say that this is the most productive period for Native people as it relates to congressional action in American history is to say two things: It is to say we did a lot. It is certainly to say we did a lot. We did it on a bipartisan basis. We did it with extraordinary staff from my Indian Affairs Committee staffers to LISA MURKOWSKI's staffers, to all of the Members and advocacy organizations. We did a lot. It is also to acknowledge that it was a damned low bar. Most Congresses not only didn't help Native communities much but actively harmed Native communities a lot.

The official position of the United States Federal Government was the extermination of Tribal governments. The official position with the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. military, the Department of the Interior, and other Federal Agencies and their representatives was to essentially dismantle Native cultures—language, access to water, access to land. They cut the children's hair. They punished them physically if they spoke their Native language. They removed these children from their parents and incarcerated them in something that they called boarding schools, but let's be clear. It wasn't a boarding school in the sense of ''my kid is 16. We have some extra money. Maybe they are going to go to a good school on the east coast somewhere.'' They were incarcerated.

So it is true that we have done a lot. It is also true that we have done a lot—that we have harmed Native communities for centuries, and this 4-year period marks a change in the relationship between the U.S. Federal Government and Native communities from Hawaii to Alaska and all across the continent.

And so I am extraordinarily proud of the accomplishments of this committee, but I don't want anyone to mistake this for a victory lap. We have so much more to do to undo, literally, generations of injustice. No amount of work we are going to do in a year or even 4 years is going to suddenly and totally reverse generations of neglect and harm by the Federal Government. Yet this is a moment to recognize the great work we have done. It is broadband; it is water; it is economic opportunity; it is Native culture; it is Native language; it is Native music. It is people being in control of their own intellectual property, in control of their own destinies.

That is what this is about. This is about the right of people—the first peoples of the United States—to self-determination. I am proud to be a small part of that legacy.

I yield the floor.

(Mr. BROWN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The senior Senator from the great State of Ohio.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I am here at desk 88, honored to address my family and friends and Ohioans of the Nation.

I remember well my first speech 18 years ago. Illinois Senator Barack Obama was presiding over the Senate. Following parliamentary norms—and perhaps a bit presciently—I addressed him as ''Mr. President.''

A few desks away sat the senior Senator from Massachusetts, whose brother's desk I have now occupied for my entire three terms. Senator Kennedy, the chair of the Labor Committee, spoke after my remarks about his commitment and my commitment to workers. My speech, no surprise to anyone, was about workers and their dignity, raising the minimum wage, creating more opportunity for people who build this country with their brains and with their hands.

By some measure, my life began less than 3 miles from here. My dad, a family doctor from Mansfield, OH, and my mother a teacher from Mansfield, GA, met at a soldiers' dance in 1945 at the Mayflower Hotel. My father had returned from serving in the Army in the Middle East; my mother had moved to Washington to assist in the war effort to work at OSS. Their first date a few days later was at the Willard Hotel.

When they married the next year, my father moved to Mansfield, OH, then a prosperous industrial city where Ohioans made steel and manufactured cars and tires and appliances for young families returning from World War II.

When I was in high school, my mother, troubled by racism she saw in smalltown Georgia as a kid and in Ohio when she moved there, helped found the Ohio council of YWCAs. The 165-year mission of the Young Women's Christian Association is to eliminate racism and to empower women.

My dad was a family doctor with a working-class practice. He always took care of people, regardless of their ability to pay.

From them came my values and my desire to serve. From my parents—he a conservative, she a liberal; he a Republican, she a Democrat; he a northerner, she a southerner—taught me by their action and their admonition that the role of government was to help the little guy; the big guy could take care of himself.

I went to Johnny Appleseed Junior High—that was really its name—and walked the halls with the sons and daughters of autoworkers at GM, electrical workers of Westinghouse, steelworkers of Empire-Detroit, machinists at Tappan Stove, and the daughters and sons of the thousands of millwrights and electricians and laborers and pipefitters who kept those plants running. These workers, especially those lucky enough to carry union cards, could buy a home, take a vacation, and join a growing middle class.

But by the time I graduated from Mansfield Senior High School, these plants were starting to shut down. Corporations searched the globe for cheap labor. First, they moved south to anti-union States; then they lobbied for tax breaks and bad trade deals to move jobs overseas. Always—always in search, Mr. President—of lower wages.

Compliant politicians were all too happy to oblige. They called it the North American Free Trade Agreement; they called it Most Favored Nation status with China—honest to God, that was its original name; they called it the Central American Free Trade Agreement; they called it the Trans-Pacific Partnership—until we put a stop to it.

And Wall Street rewarded those countries and those politicians over and over and over again. I saw what corporate greed and, frankly, Presidents of both parties did to my hometown and towns like it all over this country.

Through all my years in Congress, I have tried to be the voice in the megaphone for those workers and for those communities.

I think back to 2003. Every night, at the other end of this building—every night—I stood in the well of the House of Representatives reading letters from Ohioans opposing Bush's war in Iraq—from Cleveland to Cincinnati, from Dayton to Columbus, from Toledo to Athens. The White House, on flimsy evidence but with an itch to go to war, was sending working-class kids from Ohio to fight and, too often, to die in Iraq, a war that history tells us was a colossal mistake.

I drew inspiration from President John Quincy Adams who had returned to the House in his attack on slavery. To evade House rules that prohibited—believe it or not—that prohibited debating slavery, rules forced on the people's House by enslavers, by southern enslavers, he read letter after letter from his constituents about the evils of slavery and advocating for its abolition.

Then as now, our duty is to amplify the voices of the people whom we serve. To be that strong and effective megaphone, you start by listening.

I remember when I helped lead the opposition in my first year in the House to NAFTA. Bill Richardson, a pro-NAFTA Democrat from New Mexico, lamented the fact that Members would go home during congressional recess. He said, ''You know, every time Members of Congress go home, my side loses votes.''

Well, there is a reason for that. We are supposed to listen to our constituents. So almost every week, every Friday, Saturday, Sunday, I am in Ohio. I have crisscrossed this State, from Ashtabula to Athens, from Gallipolis to Zanesville to Portsmouth to Springfield to Van Wert to Toledo to Shelby—

all over this State holding roundtables, walking picket lines, touring plants, talking to workers in break rooms and on worksites and behind checkout counters.

On Monday afternoons, I return to Washington carrying a satchel of good ideas drawn from Ohioans. My job in both the House and Senate has been to represent those workers, to listen to them, to speak out for them, to fight for them; not to listen to Wall Street, not the drug companies, not the big railroads, but to fight for the people who make this country work.

Over the last few weeks, people have come up to me, since the election, at the grocery store, after church, at the airport, in the halls of the Senate asking how I am doing. There are two reasons I answer, ''I am doing well.'' First is this team, the team around me. I have never been prouder of the public servants who work in this office, how they immediately went to work to help and support each other. All of them, all of them have dedicated themselves to making sure their colleagues land well and to making sure casework for Ohioans is handed off to other Members of Congress.

Over the last few weeks, I have been meeting with every single staff member—70 in all—to discuss their careers and their futures.

The second reason is that for me, this job has never really been about the title of being a U.S. Senator. Much of the important work we have done has been driven not by a bunch of Washington insiders but by ordinary Ohioans. I think about the fight to save workers' pensions. When Wall Street gambled away workers' retirement savings, we fought back.

Washington ignored Ohio workers, didn't take them seriously. Most people in Washington don't really even understand what collective bargaining is, that workers give up raises at the bargaining table for pensions and paid into them over a lifetime, all for the promise of a secure retirement for their family.

Ohioans put this on the agenda. They kept it there. They—we—never gave up, and together we passed the Butch Lewis Act, named for an Ohioan, saving the pensions of 100,000 Ohio workers and a million workers serving this country.

Or think how we expanded healthcare for veterans exposed to those football field-sized burn pits. Ohio veterans and their families came to us. They put it on the agenda. They forced—forced—Washington to listen. Veterans traveled to Washington. Many of them camped outside this door not far from here to make this happen. Because of them, the Heath Robinson PACT Act—again named for an Ohioan—is now law.

Those fights aren't quick, particularly when they require taking on powerful corporate interests.

Back when I was in the House more than two decades ago, we organized bus trips for Ohio seniors to Canada to save money on prescription drugs. Three-hour bus ride from Lorain to Toledo to Detroit, across the river to Windsor, Ontario, so they could save money on prescription drugs.

Throughout my entire time in the Senate and before, we fought big Pharma and their lobbyists trying to lower the cost of prescription drugs. Two years ago, finally we won. This never happens fast. We capped the price of insulin at $35 a month for Medicare beneficiaries. For the first time, Medicare was negotiating drug prices for seniors.

These victories, as I say, they don't come easy. Of course they don't, but they matter to millions of families. When we stand up to corporate special interest, when we guarantee workers a seat at the table, when we see decisions here through the eyes of workers, we all do our jobs a little bit differently and better.

We included a project labor agreement for 8,000 workers at a single construction site, ensuring a path to middle class for those families.

We expanded the childcare tax credit, giving more than 90 percent of American families a tax cut to keep up with the cost of living—2 million children in Ohio, 60 million around the country benefited, if only for a year.

We are on the verge of restoring the full Social Security benefits that police officers and teachers and firefighters and busdrivers and school cafeteria workers have earned.

With Finance Chair RON WYDEN, we created an industrial policy to build more manufacturing in our country. And we have fundamentally—fundamentally—changed the debate on trade in this country. Of course, this town is still full of people who think that way, whose arrogance won't allow their world view to be changed by all the evidence that corporate trade deals have failed our workers, failed our communities, and, frankly, poisoned our politics.

They no longer go unchallenged and unquestioned. They used to ridicule you if you spoke up for workers, if you dared to suggest that no amount of compensating the losers, no amount of compensation can replace the dignity of a good-paying, rewarding job—no longer.

I have always looked at things a little differently, perhaps, than some. To me, politics is not really left or right or liberal or conservative. It is really about whose side you are on and whom you are willing to fight for, whom you are willing to stand up to. That is what true populism is all about. True populism lifts all people. True populism doesn't tear others down. True populism doesn't play to race and division. True populism is essentially about the dignity of work, putting workers at the center of all we should be doing.

When I talk about workers, I mean all workers—whether you swipe a badge or punch a clock, whether you work for tips or whether you work on salary, whether you are going to school or raising kids or caring for an aging parent. No matter who you are, no matter where you live, no matter what kind of work you do, your work has dignity. It ought to pay off for you and your family. We have that in common. With all the differences we have as a country, we have work in common. Work is really what binds us.

For too many people in Ohio and around the country, hard work hasn't paid off. Today, far too many workers don't see a path to the middle class, no matter how hard they work.

For almost a half a century—we know this, we know this—we should be challenging this. For half a century, the stock market soared; executive compensation has exploded; corporate profits have risen dramatically; worker productivity has increased, but workers' wages have been comparatively flat, and costs keep going up.

Until we solve the fundamental problem in this country, until hard work is valued, until everyone has a path to the middle class and the stability and security of a good-paying job, our work in this body, my work as a private citizen, come January, that work is unfinished.

If you want to know why so many workers think the system is rigged against them, just look at what happened 3 weeks ago in East Texas. It is a little fanfare. A single judge, appointed by President Trump, at the behest of the Texas Chamber of Commerce, struck down a Labor Department rule which guaranteed overtime for workers making $35,000 or $40,000 a year.

That ought to be a fundamental principle. If you put in extra hours, you ought to earn extra pay. You did the work; you earned it. One judge, one decision, four million workers lost their overtime. One judge, one decision, four million workers lost their overtime. That is why we make this fight.

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII wrote what is recognized as the first time an international figure acknowledged the rights of workers and the duty of employers to respect workers' inherent dignity. In Rerum Novarum, he wrote that ''to respect in every man his dignity,'' required respecting workers' rights to fair compensation and safe humane working conditions.

Think about this. Seven decades later, in a segregated Tennessee, in a segregated city of Memphis, in a segregated neighborhood, amidst a torrential downpour, four sanitation workers climbed into—yes—a segregated garbage truck to shield themselves from the rain. Two White workers settled into the warmth and the safety of the cab. Two Black workers crawled in the back, amidst the garbage, where the compactor malfunctioned, and two young Black workers were crushed to death.

Dr. King went to Memphis twice that year. He went after that happened. The

second time, we know he was murdered. Both times, he was fighting for the dignity of work. He wove together better than anybody I know of in history—wove together civil rights, voting rights, and worker rights better than anybody ever has.

In a speech to ACME Sanitation workers, a month after the workers were crushed to death, he spoke at ACME on March 18 in Memphis:

So often we overlook the work and the significance of those who are not in professional jobs, of those who are not in the so-called big jobs. But let me say to you tonight—

Dr. King went on—

that whenever you are engaged in work that serves humanity . . . it has dignity and it has worth.

All labor has dignity. While the shape of our fight for the dignity of work may change, it will, of course, continue. And I count on my colleagues to do that.

I will close the same way I have closed so many speeches across Ohio because the values I fight for have not changed and will never change come January. On my lapel, I wear this pin. Some of you have one on today. Thank you. Many of you do.

I wear this pin—I know you don't wear it every day, but thank you for wearing it—depicting a canary in a birdcage. It was given to me at a workers' Memorial Day rally 25 years ago in Lorain, OH.

You know the story. At the turn of the last century, coal miners took the canary down into the mines with them to warn them of poisonous gases. They didn't have a union strong enough to protect them. They didn't have a government that cared enough to protect them. He was on his own.

But over the last century and a half, think about what we as a nation have done. Think of what we have done to change that. All those fights required going up against powerful special interests. I think about the lesson that any union organizer knows. They don't just give you fair wages and better benefits and retirement. They don't give it to you. You have to go out and take it. That is how progress works.

Wall Street didn't just wake up one day and say: You know, older people ought to have a pension. We ought to give them—no, we demanded Social Security, we fought for it, and we got it.

Companies 100 years ago didn't just all of a sudden think: You know, work is too hard; we ought to have an 8-hour workday. We ought to ban child labor. No. We fought for it. We demanded it. We got it.

Big insurance companies didn't just all of a sudden think: You know, there are a lot of seniors that just can't afford their healthcare. No. We fought for it; we demanded it; and we got Medicare.

In the 1960s, a bunch of Southern segregationists didn't say: You know, everybody ought to have the right to vote. No. We fought for it. We demanded it. We got voting rights in this country.

And then, just 2 years ago, the drug companies didn't all of a sudden say: Insulin costs too damn much. We have got to do something. Drugs are too expensive. No. We took them on. We fought for it. We got a $35 insulin cap.

Those fights—progress didn't just happen on their own course.

So when I first came to the Senate, like all new Senators, they gave me a really cool, pretty expensive-looking piece of jewelry to say: I am a big shot. I am a Senator, and walk around. Well, I wore that for a couple days, and then I thought, you know, it didn't feel right. So I took it off. I put my canary pin back on. I have worn it every day since.

So when I walk off the Senate floor at the end of this year, nothing changes. I am not taking off this pin. I am not giving up my fight for workers. If you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work every day.

In January, I return to Ohio, close to the seven grandchildren who are sitting in the Gallery today. My wife Connie surprised me last night with their showing up at a dinner with their parents in tow. My grandchildren are in the Gallery—some sitting there patiently, some perhaps not so patiently. Leo and Jackie and Milo and Carolyn and Russell and Ela and Maribell sitting with Emily and Matt. Sitting with Elizabeth and Patrick and Caitlin and Alejandro. And Clayton, our oldest, is taking finals today, but their dad Andy is here. My journey has been a family affair.

With my brothers Bob and Charlie, for literally 50 years with the sacrifices that family members inevitably make to ambition, to service—yes, sometimes to ego—for a career of serving the public.

To my beloved Connie, how selfless she has been as I pursued this dream. Her exceptional talent is exceeded only by her kindness in spirit, as a wife and mother and grandmother extraordinaire. There is no one like her. How lucky I have been the last 22 years.

So to my colleagues, this is my last speech on the Senate floor. But it is not, I promise you, the last time you will hear from me.

Thank you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

TRIBUTE TO SHERROD BROWN

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I know we have a number of colleagues who want to speak. I will be very brief.

I just want to start by saying how grateful we are for the service of SHERROD BROWN in the U.S. Senate and the great work that he has done. He reminded us to make sure that we wore the canary pin. And for me, it has a special significance, even though I haven't been wearing it all these years, but I wanted to wear it today. But it is especially significant because I have ancestors who worked, of course, in the anthracite coal mines. But I think, in so many ways, it is emblematic of his service, that he never forgot where he came from, never forgot who sent him here, and you heard that throughout his remarks today about the work he has done on behalf of American working men and women and their families.

When the history of the labor movement of the United States—if it were ever written, of course, it wouldn't be one book. It would be a multivolume work by some scholar, maybe sometime in the future. But whenever that complete and comprehensive history is written, there will be a significant portion of that history written about the work of Senator SHERROD BROWN of Ohio because no one that I am aware of that has served in this body has done more for workers in the time he has been in the Senate.

The last thing I want to say is what he did—and there are too many to mention here today—but I want to thank him for what he did leading the effort, which culminated in 2021, March of 2021, at 5:34 a.m. in the morning, when the first vote was taken on the American Rescue Plan. Among many things that bill did was allowed us to take the child tax credit—an existing tax credit—and turbocharge it for America's children. As he said, 60 million American children—2 million in Ohio, a little more than 2 million in my home State of Pennsylvania. It would not have happened without his leadership.

So with that, I will yield the floor and thank Senator BROWN again for his service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, as another occupant of the back row, I just want to add my incredible thanks for not just his family but for SHERROD and what he stood for in this place. We are going to forever miss him.

We are going to miss—right, Senator CASEY—CHUCK looking back at this row and glaring at us because SHERROD was talking. ''It is not us. It is not us.''

(Laughter.)

I will forever cherish the note in my desk to BOB that says: Get him to be quiet now. They are going to throw us out.

Sherrod, you have made trouble, but it is a whole lot of good trouble on behalf of the people of this country.

I look up there at Connie, and I will forever love that story that I will not do justice to, but it is the story of when Connie was in an audience and SHERROD was speaking. And a guy she doesn't know turns to her and says: God, I hate that guy's voice.

And she says: Yeah?

And he says: Yeah. You know, it is a bit like fingernails on a blackboard.

And Connie says: Really, you don't like that guy's voice?

He says: Yeah.

And she says: I like his voice.

And he says: You like his voice?

And she says: Yeah. You know when I really like it?

She leans into the guy, the guy leans in, and Connie goes: I really like it when he wakes me up in the middle of the night and says in that gravelly voice: ''I love you, baby.''

(Laughter.)

Your love of Connie and the two of you together is something that is such a model for all of us here. Her success, your success is part of this U.S. Senate story.

And that pin you wear—that canary in the coal mine—this is not the last time we are all going to wear it. For me, it was not just about workers, which is about its glory, but it is also about what we have to confront in this place—the toxicity of this place sometimes—and that you, SHERROD—for us, you were that canary in the coal mine. You are the one reminding us why we are really here when, some days, you just can't believe that people are doing certain things or stopping certain good pieces of legislation for the people of this country.

You are that person for us who stood up not just when the cameras were on but behind closed doors. You reminded us and reminded your staff to carry on, and they are going to take that torch with them and those pins with them every single place they go. So thank you for giving us that inspiration, SHERROD. Thank you for your work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. First of all, I am going to come out to the aisle because this is ''doing the SHERROD,'' when you get far away from your desk. I literally think, if the leash were long enough, he would have opened the door and taken a couple steps out and come running in and down the aisle.

(Laughter.)

I stand today with a similar start because there was this moment in the cloakroom when I was a new guy in the Senate, and I talked about TESTER saying to me very loudly in the cloakroom: I didn't think I was going to like you when I first got here.

Then SHERROD chimed in right away—and you will remember this, SHERROD—and said: I didn't think I would like you either.

Now, I didn't care about JON TESTER because I don't like JON TESTER.

(Laughter.)

But I really cared that SHERROD BROWN would say that, at one point, he didn't like me. But I knew he liked me when he said it, because when I came to the Senate, he surprised me. He did something I never expected. I had great experiences when I first came here—friendships, colleagues stepping up—I see my chairman here—putting me under their arm, but SHERROD did it in a way that really surprised me.

He said: Hey, CORY. I want to work with you on something really important.

And I thought of all of these big issues in the Senate. Is it Social Security? Is it lowering prescription drug prices? I thought: What are we going to do for America?

SHERROD BROWN blew me away.

He said: I want to fight for fair wages for the cafeteria workers who work in the basement of the buildings we work in.

Immediately, it floored me.

I started working in this place in 2013—and I will never forget—it was the least diverse place I had ever worked. I came here, and on one of the first nights I worked past 10 p.m., I left out of the employees' entrance. I saw the line of employees walking in, and they were mostly Black and Brown people. When I went to the basement to get something to eat in the cafeteria, the cafeteria workers were mostly Black and Brown folks. They didn't have a Senator living in Washington, DC, but SHERROD was someone who stood up for their dignity.

SHERROD, I have been struggling all week because I feel emotional, like losing you. I had this poem that kept coming up over and over again—it is really short, and I know you know it—but I did not understand why this was the poem, and I want to try to explain it to you. It is a poem by Langston Hughes. It is entitled ''I, too, sing America.''

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

[Because] tomorrow,

I'll be at the table
When company comes.

[And] nobody'll dare
Say to me,

''Eat in the kitchen,''

Then.
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, [sing] America.

SHERROD, I have served with you for 11 years, and the thing I love the most about you is you see people. You see the folks who others walk past and don't even affirm their humanity. And you just don't see people; what you have shown me time and time again from my first week as a U.S. Senator is that you see the folks who are the most important to the very idea of America—the idea that people have sweat for and cried for and bled for. To me, that is the definition of what it means to represent people, all the people.

So I end with this, and it is a moment from American history because I know you are such a nerd.

(Laughter.)

You, frankly, just never fit my image of what I thought a Senator would look like. You are frumpy, and you are disheveled—and the only person who has messier hair than you is Bernie, for crying out loud.

(Laughter.)

But there are five words I think I want to say to you in my final farewell to you in an official capacity, standing in the aisle that you so defined. And it is a simple story from history after Lincoln gave his second inaugural address: Malice towards none and charity towards all—the ideal that you live that there is no us and them. It is just us.

Lincoln retired to a reception afterward, and it was crowded. And people were pulling at him and trying to get his attention, and he was pushing through the crowds, looking for one person who almost didn't get into the reception. This guy had to be recognized by someone because he was Black and was pulled in to be allowed to be at this incredible reception. The President pushes by him. The historians say it was the Governor of Rhode Island who was trying to talk to him, but he kept pushing towards this man.

And he said to this man: My friend, what did you think of my speech?

This man, regal in stature, humble in spirit, looked at him and said: Mr. President, you should attend to your guests.

And President Lincoln is said to have waved him off and said: No. I want to know what you thought of my speech. I need to know, my friend, what you thought of my speech.

This would be the last time in American history that these two men would ever speak because Lincoln would soon be assassinated. These were the last words that they exchanged. And if you allow me these five words, I just want to say to you, in my last farewell to you after your farewell speech, as Frederick Douglass looked at Abraham Lincoln and simply said:

It was a sacred effort. It was a sacred effort.

Your 18-year career here was a sacred effort to see everyone in our great country as an American, to affirm their humanity, to affirm their dignity, and to elevate our highest virtues.

Thank you, my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am saddened by the comment from SHERROD that this is his farewell speech.

As I said to several of my colleagues, we lose so many good ones here, and after we have lost them to retirement and to election results, the Senate really is an empty place, and it will be in that corner. For as long as I have been honored to serve here, that place has been occupied by SHERROD.

What makes such a difference in this man? Why is he viewed so differently? Why have so many showed up to hear his farewell speech? Well, what I am about to say you can say about him and about Connie, his wife.

There was a man named Jack Valenti, who used to be an adviser to the Presidents, and he gave President Lyndon Johnson a piece of advice. He said: Every good speech should include six words. Let me tell you a story.

Time and again, SHERROD BROWN told us a story. It was a story from a picket

line. It was a story from a clothes factory. It was a story that you picked from your home State of Ohio and as you traveled around this country. And those stories, much like the stories that Connie has told over and over again in her celebrated writing, really illustrate the values of this country. You can give a sterile speech about political science all you wish, but if you tell a story that touches the heart of the listener, it can make a difference in them as it has made in you. Time and again, SHERROD has told those stories. That canary in a cage is a classic example. It tells you that he not only saw injustice but he spoke out against it, and he has dedicated his life to stopping it. And that inspires all of us—to listen to these stories and to realize they are the true story of America.

Now, this troubadour—this speaker, this man who has inspired us so often—is stepping into a different place in life.

All I can ask is one favor: Tell stories. You have so many that you have lived and so many things that need to be shared. I know that you, like your wife, are a writer—you wrote a great book about the desk at which you are sitting—and I know that you know what history means. But there is another job for you. I am not sure what it is, but I hope it will tap into your talent and your values.

I remember that day. You said it many times. It was the greatest day in your service in the Senate. It involved the child tax credit, as BOB CASEY has talked to us about, and it also, I am sure, involved the idea of finally giving these retirees a fighting chance and a wage with which to sustain their families. Your fingerprints were all over that, SHERROD. It is the kind of issue that you run for office for and fight for—and make a difference in the history of this country.

So remember those words as you go forward. Your stories have inspired us. Keep telling those stories.

And, Connie, I know you will. I will look for your byline.

I wish you the best.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, when I was wrestling, along with Mary, my wife, about whether to run for the Senate, I had the chance to meet the Senator from Ohio and his wife at a gathering in Massachusetts, and I came away believing that service here could matter.

When I learned of your background and your fight, SHERROD, I thought that is my fight, too. I want to be here and join you in this effort.

You know, with my dad a mechanic and my mother a secretary, I don't know how the hell I ended up here on the floor of the Senate, but it is because of believing in the vision of America that you referred to at the close of your speech. While I can't quote it exactly, it was along the lines of: If you love America, you fight for America's worker—or: You fight for the workers who make America function.

We are in a system now that is so rigged with liars and lobbyists and dark money, but the antidote is individuals like yourself who say: Public service matters. I am not here to help the rich become richer or the corporations become stronger. I am here to fight for the foundation for every family to thrive—on healthcare, on housing, on education, and on a good-paying job, with an honest day's pay for a fair day's work.

I then saw you in action on the Banking Committee. Now, ELIZABETH WARREN had this idea for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, but she wasn't here in the Senate yet. But on that committee, in working on Dodd-Frank, we collectively delivered that and so much more through that process, including taking on the false mortgages—the predatory mortgages—that were turning the dream of homeownership into a nightmare. There is probably a dozen powerful factors in there for America's workers. We made a difference in those years—you made a difference—and I was so happy to see you lead the Banking Committee.

I can't tell you what a loss it is to this Chamber and what a loss it is to the workers of America that I will no longer see you in that chair, but I know I will see you somewhere down the trail, fighting the good fight.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I have a little bit of a beef here with Senator BROWN because right before he spoke, I admonished him to try not to choke up during his speech, and, of course, this was a fool's errand. It was like asking the Sun not to shine; and, of course, it was highly predictable that what would cause that gravelly voice of his to get even more of a catch in it was when he was talking about his family and also about his staff—his work family.

The very first time I met SHERROD, I could see that this was a man with a huge heart and tons of energy.

I recognized in you, SHERROD, the Midwest populism that I come from, from the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party.

I sit in the seat that was once held by Paul Wellstone, as you know, who famously said, ''When we all do better, we all do better.'' I know that has been the guiding light of your service.

There are plenty of people here in Washington watching out for the rich people, the powerful people, and the big corporations, but you have always been our guide in watching out for everybody else, the people who actually make this country work.

I saw this firsthand when you and I worked together on one piece of legislation—the Butch Lewis Act—to basically say that hard-working folks who earned their pensions, who lost their pensions through no fault of their own, deserve to be able to retire with dignity. This is, of course, one of the most important promises of organized labor—a fair wage, safe working conditions, and to be able to retire with dignity. Because of your work, I had a chance to see what that really meant for people.

I will never forget one of the first meetings I did when I first was a U.S. Senator. I went up to Duluth, MN, an old industrial community on the shores of Lake Superior. It is a beautiful community—probably not unlike Mansfield—that in some ways had seen better days, as the shipping out of jobs happened and affected them. I talked to some of those hard-working teamsters, retired teamsters, about the importance of their pension and what we were doing, what I was doing with SHERROD BROWN to help to protect their pensions.

I will never forget this one woman. She described to me what it meant that she had paid in, she had done everything right, and now she was running the risk of losing that. She said to me: Tina, that is my plan A, B, and C. I don't have another plan. My other plan is to live under a bridge.

That work, just that one piece of work that you did, that you led us on to make sure those pensions were there for folks, is a legacy that all of us can aspire to.

Throughout your career, you always made sure that, while so many others were watching out for the folks who already had it pretty good, the people who make this country work had a voice.

I, too, am wearing my canary pin today, and I think that your legacy in this body will be all of us who don't forget your work but continue it.

You know, the hope that we can do better, that there is more work ahead of us, and that we have the energy for fight—I mean, hope is an act of will; it is not an article of faith. It takes the will of all of us. I know that you have inspired in all of us in this Chamber—at least many of us—the will to continue to fight with hope and optimism that we will make this country live up to its full promise.

I can't wait to see what you do next. As you have famously said—and I will leave out some of the adjectives—you are not dying here, you are just going on to the next thing. I know those of us who have heard this story are grateful that on the floor of the Senate, I am only giving an abbreviated version.

I know I am one of many who love you very much and can't wait to see what you do next.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I say to Senator BROWN: I have my pin. I am taking your desk. I am going to get your office. And I wouldn't mind having your hair and your eloquence.

(Laughter.)

For me, SHERROD BROWN—and for many of our colleagues—has always

been a role model, a friend, a voice for people who are often unseen, and also a real example of integrity. When you talk to SHERROD BROWN, you may not agree with him, but you know what he says is what he believes.

You know, we live in a day where politicians are often distrusted and demeaned, maybe as never before, but what you have done for me and for my family is to give politics a good name, to make sure that people understand that the word ''politician'' is not a four-letter word; it is something I am proud to say—I am a politician because I try to be like SHERROD BROWN.

You know, that kind of politician doesn't always win. It is just a fact of life that people often take stands; they espouse causes; they champion people or issues that may not be popular at that moment. But they are vindicated by history.

I have been proud to stand with you, SHERROD, for some of those causes, and I know they will be vindicated by history.

As I told your staff—some of them—in that office, the SHERROD BROWN office, we are going to have a conference room named after you. It is a trivial thing to do, but it will remind us that we will be asking ourselves at moments, tough moments, moments of crisis: What would SHERROD do? What would he think? What would he say?

I will continue to value you as a friend and as a role model. Thank you, SHERROD, for all you have done for all of us. Godspeed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I want to be brief, but I would like to briefly say something that might be an odd thing for the Senator from Colorado to say, which is how grateful I am to the people of Ohio for sending SHERROD BROWN to the U.S. Senate for all of these years and how much I wish that you had sent him back one more time.

I say that in part because I once lived in Ohio and was a young person there, learning something about politics in the late eighties and early nineties. SHERROD BROWN was my secretary of state. He was the same person then that he is today in all the important ways and a progressive voice for the people of Ohio.

It was an amazing thing for me to come to this place and meet SHERROD as a fellow Senator and to sit in that chair and preside, while SHERROD stood—I don't remember when that was, when it would have been; Barack Obama probably was in the early days of his Presidency—and listen to the names of cities and towns all across Ohio ricochet around the marble Chamber that we are in with such joy because I had been to those places myself.

I can remember hearing him fight against the characterization by outsiders of the place he lived and the place he grew up as the Rust Bowl of the United States instead of the industrial heartland of the United States, for him to remind people in this Chamber of the important—as he was describing today—the critical contribution that working people make to this Nation every day, all day, over many years, whether they are living in the industrial heartland or anywhere else in America, because for SHERROD, workers in every State in this country count and matter.

But I want to just say thank you on behalf of the children that I used to work for in the Denver public schools. I was the superintendent when my friend CORY BOOKER was the mayor of Newark. We worked together in those days, and we have had the chance to work together here.

There are many times that I have been on this floor, Senator BROWN, when I worried about whether the children I used to work for in Denver, who are mostly kids of color, mostly kids living in poverty, whether anybody here had their interests at heart or whether anybody here could even see them or whether we had actually become really comfortable in the sense that we were treating our kids like they were someone else's kids, not even the country's kids. More than anybody else in this place, you have lifted their voices. You have seen the kids that I represented or worked for in the Denver public schools.

The chance for you and Bob and Cory and I to work together on the child tax credit, which went to 90 percent of America's kids and cut child poverty in half, is a symbol to all of us, I think, of what is possible if we dedicate ourselves to the idea that this country has to live up to its aspirations. That is something you never have let us forget. I know you have talked about it over and over again, how one of the happiest days of your time in the Senate was the day we passed that bill. Bob mentioned that.

I will say for a lot of us who are here today, this is one of the saddest days in the Senate because the contribution that you have made here is one that is so unique and so singular, and it is entirely unfinished.

I don't feel sorry for you, but I feel sorry for the rest of us. I know we are counting on you—counting on you—to make sure that you continue to fight the fight you have been fighting from the day you arrived here, the days you were secretary of state all those years ago in Ohio, for the rest of your life.

Thanks, SHERROD, for your leadership and your friendship and for everything you have done for the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1607 and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills en bloc: Calendar No. 278, S. 1277; Calendar No. 333, H.R. 1727; Calendar No. 602, S. 3543; H.R. 6826, which was received from the House and is at the desk; H.R. 6843, which was received from the House and is at the desk; and H.R. 1607.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged of the relevant bill, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bills, en bloc.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment, where applicable, be agreed to; that the bills, as amended, if amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bills passed, en bloc, as follows:

MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2023

The bill (S. 1277) to modify the boundary of the Mammoth Cave National Park in the State of Kentucky, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 1277

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

Section 11 of the Act of June 5, 1942 (56 Stat. 319, chapter 341; 16 U.S.C. 404c–11), is amended—

(1) in the second paragraph, by striking ''the sum of not to exceed'' in the first sentence and all that follows through the period at the end of the paragraph and inserting ''such sums as are necessary.''; and

(2) by inserting after the second paragraph the following:

''The Secretary of the Interior may acquire approximately 980 acres of the land and any interests in the land generally depicted on the map entitled 'Mammoth Cave National Park Proposed Southern Boundary Expansion Edmonson and Barren Counties, Kentucky', numbered 135/177, 967, and dated April 28, 2022, for inclusion in the Mammoth Cave National Park.''.

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COMMISSION EXTENSION ACT

The bill (H.R. 1727) to amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

HISTORIC GREENWOOD DISTRICT-BLACK WALL STREET NATIONAL MONUMENT ESTABLISHMENT ACT

The bill (S. 3543) to establish the Historic Greenwood District-Black Wall Street National Monument in the State of Oklahoma, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument Establishment Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument Advisory Commission established by section 5(a).

(2) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the map entitled ''Greenwood Historic District—Black Wall Street National Monument, Proposed Boundary'', numbered 196/188,275, and dated August 2024.

(3) NATIONAL MONUMENT.—The term ''National Monument'' means the Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument established by section 3(a).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC GREENWOOD DISTRICT—BLACK WALL STREET NATIONAL MONUMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), there is established the Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument in the State of Oklahoma as a unit of the National Park System to preserve, protect, and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations resources associated with the Historic Greenwood District, Black Wall Street, and the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921 and the role of each in the history of the State of Oklahoma and the United States.

(2) CONDITIONS OF ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) DETERMINATION BY THE SECRETARY.—The National Monument shall be established on the date the Secretary determines that a sufficient quantity of land or interests in land has been acquired to constitute a manageable park unit.

(B) NOTICE.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary makes a determination under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register notice of the establishment of the National Monument.

(b) BOUNDARY.—The boundary of the National Monument shall be as generally depicted on the Map.

(c) MAP.—The Map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(d) ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may acquire any land or interest in land located within the boundary of the National Monument by—

(1) donation;

(2) purchase from a willing seller with donated or appropriated funds; or

(3) exchange.

(e) AGREEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements, as appropriate, with public or private entities to provide and facilitate, within or outside the boundary of the National Monument, interpretive and educational services, administrative support, and technical assistance relating to the National Monument.

(2) MARKING AND INTERPRETATION OF SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC OR CULTURAL RESOURCES.—The Secretary may enter into agreements to mark or interpret significant historic or cultural resources or locations on land within the boundary of the National Monument.

(f) PRIVATE PROPERTY.—Nothing in this Act affects the rights of an owner of private property within or adjacent to the National Monument.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall administer the National Monument in accordance with—

(1) this Act; and

(2) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System.

(b) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall prepare a management plan for the National Monument in accordance with section 100502 of title 54, United States Code.

(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with the Commission on the preparation of the management plan under paragraph (1).

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC GREENWOOD DISTRICT—BLACK WALL STREET NATIONAL MONUMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an advisory commission, to be known as the ''Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument Advisory Commission''.

(b) DUTY.—The Commission shall advise the Secretary on matters relating to the development and management of the National Monument, including the construction of visitor service facilities and infrastructure.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be composed of 11 members, to be appointed by the Secretary, of whom—

(A) 7 members shall be descendants of individuals who lived or worked in the Greenwood District of Tulsa in 1921, to be appointed after consideration of recommendations from interested organizations or individuals;

(B) 3 members shall have experience in the field of historic preservation or the purposes for which the National Monument was established; and

(C) 1 member shall be appointed after consideration of recommendations submitted by the Mayor of Tulsa.

(2) TERMS.—A member of the Commission shall be appointed for a term of 5 years.

(3) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

(4) SUCCESSORS.—Notwithstanding the expiration of a 5-year term of a member of the Commission, a member of the Commission may continue to serve on the Commission until the date on which—

(A) the member is reappointed by the Secretary; or

(B) a successor is appointed by the Secretary.

(d) CHAIR; BYLAWS.—The Commission shall—

(1) have a Chair, who shall be elected by the members of the Commission; and

(2) adopt such bylaws as the Commission considers necessary to carry out the functions of the Commission under this Act.

(e) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of—

(1) the Chair; or

(2) a majority of the members of the Commission.

(f) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

(g) COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the Commission.

(h) FACA NONAPPLICABILITY.—Section 1013(b) of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply to the Commission.

(i) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate 10 years after the date on which the National Monument is established.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 3543), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

DESIGNATING THE VISITOR AND EDUCATION CENTER AT FORT McHENRY NATIONAL MONUMENT AND HISTORIC SHRINE AS THE PAUL S. SARBANES VISITOR AND EDUCATION CENTER

The bill (H.R. 6826) to designate the visitor and education center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine as the Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE ATCHAFALAYA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA TO INCLUDE LAFOURCHE PARISH, LOUISIANA

The bill (H.R. 6843) to expand the boundaries of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area to include Lafourche Parish, Louisiana was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CLARIFYING JURISDICTION WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN BUREAU OF RECLAMATION PUMPED STORAGE DEVELOPMENT

The bill (H.R. 1607) to clarify jurisdiction with respect to certain Bureau of Reclamation pumped storage development, and for other purposes, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, I want to thank Senator CASSIDY for his cooperation in putting together this package. It is a package of bills that were favorably considered by the committee. They are noncontroversial. I want to thank also Senator KELLY for his help in putting together this package.

Let me just, if I might, talk about two of the issues we just passed: First, H.R. 6826, to designate the visitor and education center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine as the Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center.

I want to first acknowledge Congressman SARBANES, who is on the floor, who has represented me so well in the House of Representatives. He has also decided not to run for reelection and served for 18 years in the House of Representatives.

Mr. President, I hold the Sarbanes seat in the U.S. Senate. Paul Sarbanes was a dear friend. He was a Senator's Senator. He was deeply respected by all Members of this body. I think it is particularly appropriate that he is honored with the naming of the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine visitor center and education center.

The late Paul Sarbanes was a tireless advocate to preserve Fort McHenry in Baltimore, MD. Senator Sarbanes worked to honor the site and elevate the history of the War of 1812 in the national consciousness throughout his career.

I got to know Senator Sarbanes when we were both elected at the same time to the Maryland House of Delegates many years ago. He would go on to serve in the House of Representatives on the Judiciary Committee, which was given the responsibility of the first Article of Impeachment against President Nixon during the Watergate scandal.

Later, while serving in the Senate in the aftermath of the 2002 Enron scandal, Sarbanes worked in a bipartisan manner to pass the Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. Then-President George W. Bush called the Sarbanes-Oxley bill ''the most far-reaching reforms of American business practices since the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.''

He had a long and distinguished career of public service to the Nation, and, throughout, he never forgot his Baltimore roots. He saw Fort McHenry as a national treasure in the city and a site worth celebrating. This legislation acknowledges his long-term advocacy for the preservation of the site and the improvement of the visitor experience by designating the visitor and education center the Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center. It is a fitting tribute to name the visitor center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine after a true American hero: Paul S. Sarbanes.

Mr. President, I also would like to call my colleagues' attention to H.R. 1727, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission Extension Act, which we just approved.

I am proud to have worked together with Representative TRONE and Senators CAPITO, VAN HOLLEN, MANCHIN, WARNER, and KAINE on this legislation. The C&O Canal National Historic Park is 184.5 miles long and covers 20,000 acres, winding north and west along the Potomac River, from the heart of Washington, DC, to Cumberland, MD. The park includes a canal and contiguous towpath that provides runners, cyclists, and backpackers access to hundreds of historic structures that tell a story of this critical economic artery.

The Advisory Commission was established in 1971, and it has been reauthorized at nominal cost by Congress every 10 years for the past three decades with overwhelming bipartisan support. There is no better wealth of knowledge of the unique issues the C&O Canal and its resources face than the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Advisory Commission. Government works better when policymakers listen to the people who know them best, and this commission ensures that all surrounding communities have a voice in shaping their future.

I am proud to work together with my neighboring delegations to keep this commission running strong.

So, Mr. President, once again, I want to thank my colleagues for their cooperation in getting this done, and I particularly want to acknowledge, as earlier, Representative JOHN SARBANES. He has worked his entire career on good governance, and there is no stronger need in our society than an advocate for good governance in our community. He has done a great job in the House of Representatives.

He is also known for his work on the Chesapeake Bay, as the leader of No Child Left Inside, getting young people to understand the importance of Chesapeake Bay so we have advocates for the future. I congratulate JOHN SARBANES for his incredible record in the House of Representatives and wish him the best.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the courtesies that were just extended.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to support H.R. 6843, which is part of this package, the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Boundary Remodification Act.

I want to take just a moment to talk about the Atchafalaya. Le Grand Derangement—my French is off, but stay with me.

When the British kicked the Acadians out of Canada and they migrated down to Louisiana and along the gulf coast, the Atchafalaya basin was where many of them settled, and their culture spread out from there. And if you think of our culture with the etouffee, the jambalaya, the crawfish, it all began in the Atchafalaya basin and built out from there.

And if you look at a map, where the Mississippi comes down, draining most of the continental United States, and then the Red River comes down, which drains Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas—they meet, and the Atchafalaya is born.

Prehistorically, the Atchafalaya River was an outlet for the Mississippi River. And if it were not for human engineering, it would once again be the outlet for the Mississippi. It is 1.4 million acres of swamps and wetlands and rivers—the largest wetlands in the United States.

And I say this because this culture, this Acadian culture—one of the most unique, if not the most unique, in our country—began here. In our boundary modification, we extend the footprint of this, acknowledging that the Cajuns that came from Canada, finding refuge in the United States, putting a unique imprint—a unique imprint on our country.

And I hesitate because I'm thinking. For example, Breaux Bridge, LA, has the crawfish capital of the world. Now, we are the only State, I am sure, that has the crawfish capital of the world.

But to show where that goes, yesterday, I am at a truck stop in Arkansas, and I stop and they are selling crispy, crunchy chicken. And with the crispy, crunchy chicken, I can get a side. It is jambalaya, it is red beans and rice, and it is something else. I said: This is Louisiana day. The guy laughed. He goes: It sure is. So the food that began when those Acadians settled there has spread out.

What this does is it expands that footprint. It allows more of a celebration of that culture, a preservation of the sportsmen's paradise. And along the way, it created a lot of jobs. It has support across Louisiana, including from the original 14 parishes within the national heritage area.

So I thank my colleagues for getting this across the line. I am very pleased about it, and I look forward to the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area educating even more Americans as to the wonders of my State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, this bipartisan bill, H.R. 1607, the pumped hydro storage bill, is about delivering affordable and reliable energy to our growing State by expanding hydropower storage.

The way it does that is pretty simple. It clarifies the Bureau of Reclamation's jurisdiction with respect to the future development of pumped storage along the Salt River in Arizona, and it expands an existing withdrawal south of the river from 1 to 2 miles, allowing the Salt River Project to explore developing sites identified in a 2014 Bureau of Reclamation study. This could ultimately bring upwards of 2,000 megawatts of energy storage capacity to the State of Arizona, providing clean energy and improving grid reliability as the demand for energy grows in the coming years.

Representatives SCHWEIKERT and STANTON introduced this bill in the House, and it passed the Chamber last year by a vote of 384 to 1. I appreciate the work of my colleagues on the Energy and National Resources Committee to ensure that our bill received a hearing and a markup.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

REFORMING EMERGENCY POWERS TO UPHOLD THE BALANCES AND LIMITATIONS INHERENT IN THE CONSTITUTION ACT

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, we are currently considering the Defense authorization bill. We have considered this most years annually for many decades. Typically, though, we will have a robust debate, we will have amendments offered, and we will try to have participation by Senators from all over the

United States geographically represented in the debate.

That won't happen this year. There will be no debate. It will be very controlled and circumscribed, and there won't be amendments. This is disappointing to me because I think there are some very important issues that need to be brought up, and one of those is emergency powers.

Our Founding Fathers understood that it was very important to divide these powers between the executive branch, the legislative branch, or the judiciary. Over the past hundred years though, we have had a gradual evolution of these powers toward the executive branch. And we now have a very, very strong executive branch that, in many ways, is able to control the narrative and ultimately to control the country.

In the 1970s, Frank Church wrote these words, which I think represent a problem that existed then and even more so now. He wrote:

> Hundreds of statutes clothe the President with virtually unchecked powers with which he can affect the lives of American citizens in a host of all-encompassing ways. This vast range of powers, taken together, confers enough authority on the President to rule the country without reference to normal constitutional processes.
>
> Under the authority delegated by these statutes, the President may: seize property; organize and control the means of production; seize commodities; institute martial law; seize and control all transportation and communication; regulate the operation of private enterprises; restrict travel; and, in a plethora of particular ways, control the lives of all American citizens.

These words were written by Senator Frank Church in a 1977 law review article, but they are still true to this day and even more worrisome.

The Church Committee's investigatory work famously convinced many in Congress that the time had come to reassert congressional checks and balances on the Executive that had become all too powerful.

It is ironic that the powers-that-be still conspire to this day to hide the work of the Church Committee. I have been trying for over a year to read the classified version of the Church Committee. All right. This is not some sort of new document; this is a document from 1976. But the powers-that-be have prevented me for over a year from reading the classified report. You got to wonder—does that mean they have something to hide or does that mean they love power so much that they don't want to share it?

The National Emergencies Act of 1976 was supposed to be a reform of Presidential emergencies. It was supposed to limit the power of Presidents. In that act, they actually gave a legislative veto. If an emergency were invoked by a President and the majority of Congress voted it, they would be legislatively able to reject that emergency.

The Court ultimately ruled, though, that that would have to be signed by the President, effectively meaning that if a President declares an emergency, a majority of us say ''We don't think that should be declared,'' and he vetoes it, it now takes two-thirds of us to overcome a Presidential emergency. This is a very high bar and makes it nearly impossible to stop a Presidential emergency.

Essentially, the National Emergency's Act enforcement mechanism became toothless when the Court got rid of the legislative veto. Subsequently, Congress must muster this veto-proof or two-thirds vote. To thwart a rogue President, it currently takes a two-thirds majority vote in both Houses to overturn a veto. This is a very high bar. Consequently, we live in a country Frank Church would barely recognize.

In some ways, the United States of America is a monarchy in disguise. The United States maintains the veneer of a constitutional republic but often operates as an elected monarchy in which the President exercises awesome and unchecked power by decree and in perpetuity.

If you look at the emergencies on the books, some of them have been on the books for 50 years. If you look at the potential emergencies that could be declared, you would be shocked.

This dangerous imbalance of the constitutional separation of powers is not simply aggrandizement by the executive branch; it is something that Congress has actually been complicit with. Congress has essentially made itself a feckless branch of the Federal Government by granting the President so many emergency powers and refusing to regularly vote on the termination of national emergencies, as required by current law. The emergencies go on and on.

Our concern should not merely be to restore Congress to its proper role in our Madisonian system of government; rather, our true focus should be to restore the Founders' vision of a government of limited and diffuse powers that is devoted to securing our inalienable rights. A government that disperses power among separate, distinct, and competing branches is a government that is less likely to violate our liberties.

We owe the people nothing less than the restoration of the constitutional principles of separation of powers and of checks and balances among the branches of the Federal Government.

I have offered a significant step towards revivifying the Founders' vision. I have introduced a bill called the REPUBLIC Act, which is an amendment to this bill but likely will not be considered because the powers-that-be don't want debate or amendments. But this amendment, were it considered, would restore Congress's role in governance by requiring that declarations of national emergency expire after 30 days. The President would still have the power to declare an emergency, but it would expire after 30 days unless approved affirmatively by Congress. What this does is essentially switches the role we currently have. Currently, it takes two-thirds of Congress to stop an emergency; now it would take 50 percent of Congress to affirm an emergency.

We did this in my State for our Governor. It is a good reform and goes a long way towards restoring the faith that people have in the separation of powers and the limitation of powers.

This simple reform allows the President to respond to genuine crises but ensures that the Executive cannot rule by unchecked perpetual emergency.

My bill includes other reforms that are designed to safeguard the country from emergency rule. My bill would repeal the provisions of the Communications Act of 1934—also known as the internet kill switch—that allow the President, if he declares an emergency, to take over all communications.

Now, this emergency fortunately has never been declared, but simply having this on the book for so long is a threat that someday a President might occur who says: I am going to take over all communications, and I will shut them down. That is a power so ominous, no President of either party should ever have that power, and this bill would remove that power.

Today, though, with the power still in place, with the stroke of a pen, the President could use this power to monitor emails, restrict access to the internet, control computer systems, television, radio broadcast, and cellphones. Longstanding use of this power would effectively eviscerate the First Amendment.

If the REPUBLIC Act, my amendment today, were accepted, the President would no longer be able to utilize this power—at least would have limited power during a limited time, and a majority of Congress would have to affirm the continued use of this emergency.

Emergency powers were not the type of rule our Founders anticipated for our country. The other name for emergency rule is ''martial law.'' It is something all of us should object to and say that this should only happen in an exceptional case, be very limited, and have the ability of Congress to overturn.

If anyone doubts that emergency powers can be abused, just look to Canada. Gene Healy of the Cato Institute wrote:

> America's neighbor to the north offers a cautionary tale about the risks that broad emergency powers could be turned inward against political dissent. In early 2022, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau faced a mass protest against COVID–19 restrictions, in which Canadian truckers obstructed key border crossings and effectively shut down the capital city with their rigs. Instead of simply clearing out the protesters and punishing them via conventional legal means, Trudeau invoked emergency powers broad enough to permit the financial ''unpersoning'' of anyone participating in the protests.

He went to their bank accounts and took their money. When people raised

money voluntarily through crowd financing to help these truckers, he stole that money as well through martial rule. Without any rule of law, he took the money. No transaction with the protesters; he took their money. People were locked up under martial law.

Canada's 1988 Emergencies Act gave the Trudeau government staggering powers to subject individual protesters to ''de-banking'' without due process.

This is the danger of Presidential power—of excessive Presidential power. It isn't about any individual President; it is about all Presidents of either party because men and women will succumb to the desire for power. It is inherent in all. That is why we must have checks and balances.

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland put it this way in describing Trudeau's martial law in a February 2022 warning to the truckers:

As of today, a bank or other financial service provider will be able to immediately freeze or suspend an account without a court order.

The Government of Canada—essentially Trudeau—could freeze a bank account without a court order, without due process of law.

We are today serving notice: If your truck is being used in these protests, your corporate accounts will be frozen. The insurance on your vehicle will be suspended. Send your . . . trailers home.

While native-born Americans may think that emergency powers are to be used to target others, I would venture to guess that the Canadian truckers protesting COVID-era mandates didn't expect that their government would treat them as foreign adversaries and freeze their accounts.

If it can happen in Canada, it can happen in the United States.

Expansive emergency powers do not end there. Today in the United States—a country that owes its very existence to tax revolt—the President can unilaterally impose and raise taxes on foreign imports. Now, some of that power, unfortunately, Congress gave to the President, but it was a mistake, and we should take the power back.

The rallying cry of our American Revolution—''no taxation without representation''—was not just a protest of the past, it is a core principle of American governance. Yet Congress, in its feckless desire to abscond on all responsibilities, said to the President: You can have it; we don't want it. You can raise taxes anytime you want without a vote of Congress.

Terrible idea. Our Constitution was designed to prevent any branch from overstepping its bounds.

Unchecked Executive actions—enacting tariffs on our citizens without a vote of Congress threatens our economy, raises prices on everyday goods, and erodes the system of checks and balances that our Founders so carefully crafted.

The REPUBLIC Act, the reform of emergency powers, the limitation of emergency powers, would correct this. We end up saying to the President: You can't declare an emergency to raise a tax.

Our Founding Fathers were very specific. Not only did taxes have to originate in Congress, they had to originate in the House before coming to the Senate because the House was seen as being closer to the people. Yet here we are talking about vast taxes being levied by one person through emergency powers. We should not let this stand.

Finally, the REPUBLIC Act, my reform, requires the President to disclose Presidential emergency action documents to the Congress. What are these? These are Executive orders that are prepared in anticipation of a wide range of emergency scenarios. These documents are kept secret, and Congress has historically had little oversight or insight into how many exist, what they say, and what are the powers that the President anticipates taking in an emergency.

Although the documents have never been made public, there have reportedly been emergency orders designed to unilaterally suspend habeas corpus, impose censorship, and seize property without warrants. We don't know for certain because they will not reveal these Executive orders, but we do know that they exist. Congress desperately needs to see these documents to conduct oversight of these secret plans that can threaten basic constitutional rights.

We do not have to accept as inevitable or as an inevitability the degeneration of a republic into rule by an all-powerful Executive. We do not have to live in a monarchy disguised as a republic.

We would do well to remember Montesquieu, who wrote that ''when the executive and legislative powers are combined into one branch, no liberty will remain.''

It is time to reclaim the authority of Congress and protect the liberties of people by paring back the vast emergency powers delegated to the President.

I hope the powers-that-be will change their mind and see fit to allow a vote on this amendment. There is significant bipartisan support. We passed it out of committee I believe 13 to 1. The Democrat chairman is a cosponsor of this bill. I think this is a bill that really should bring both sides together.

There used to be pride in our country, pride in the legislative branch to hold firm against usurpation of power by the other branches. This was a pride that went beyond party label and brought legislators together. In recent years, it has been disappointing.

Some people are for reform of Presidential emergencies when their party is not in power, and some people are for it until they are against it when their guy or their woman is in power.

I can tell you this: I have been for this emergency reform under the previous President. I am for this emergency reform under the next President because this is about power. It is about the dispersion of power. It is about decentralizing power. It is about the constitutional separation of powers. It is about checks and balances.

It is important enough that it should be considered. I think it would pass were it considered. But the American people need to know that important debates like this will only occur if the powers-that-be allow the vote to occur. So I would beseech the powers-to-be to allow a vote on this amendment and for my colleagues to vote yes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from North Dakota.

H.R. 5009

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about the National Defense Authorization Act. The act that is called the NDAA covers a wide range of topics, but, overall, it helps us chart a course to defend our country during these very dangerous times.

Russia, China, and Iran are working together to undermine U.S. interests across the globe. A world led by those nations is, in fact, a very dangerous world. And it is a world where the economic well-being of ordinary Americans suffer.

I have visited key U.S. allies and partners in recent years, and I am convinced that when we are strong—when the United States is strong—as a nation, we attract like-minded partners who will work with us to push back on our adversaries and defend freedom, not only here for our country but across the globe. And the NDAA is about bolstering our defenses and strengthening those very partnerships.

This bill, for example, establishes a Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative. Now, that is modeled after the Indo-Pacific and Ukraine's security assistance initiatives, and it is designed to enable Taiwan to maintain sufficient self-defense capabilities, vitally important in the Pacific and vitally important that we not work just with Taiwan but with all our allies in the Pacific: Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and others.

And also, this pact requires the Department of Defense to provide Israel with intelligence and advice in support of their war effort in the Middle East against Hamas and other terrorist organizations, including the largest sponsor of state terrorism in the world, Iran.

In addition, the NDAA supports a handful of missions that are both critical to our security around the globe and of particular interest to my State.

First, for example, UAS and counter-UAS. It is a huge issue right now, not only in terms of the battlefield, what we are seeing in Ukraine, in the Middle East, and other places, but even here in our own country, civilian uses of drones and counter-drones is certainly very much at the forefront of the

public's attention. And we have real problems with UAS threats across all of the areas that we operate, here at home and overseas.

Now, we still have a patchwork approach that has grown out of an ad hoc response to specific threats to domestic military installations. The Department of Defense very much needs a coherent strategy and clear guidance when it comes to drones and countering drones.

This bill takes a number of important steps toward addressing the issue, including: directing the Secretary of Defense to develop a strategy for countering unmanned aerial systems and the threats they pose to Department of Defense facilities, personnel, and assets. And that means not only here at home but across the globe where we have personnel and where we have military installations.

So having that strategy for drones and counter-drones is very, very important right now. And it is very complex, as we are seeing.

This legislation also requires standing up a counter-UAS—unmanned aerial system—drone task force to review and update all of DOD guidances to provide clarity and expedited decision-making processes and information processes so that the public knows what we are doing and has confidence in what we are doing.

In North Dakota, we have a UAS ecosystem that is ready to support this initiative, both in the military aspects and in the civilian aspects. And we have had that focus on UAS technology going back all the way to 2005.

And again, I think we are one of the only air bases in the country, at the Grand Forks Air Force Base, where we operate military and civilian, manned and unmanned aircraft, all at the same base, as well as our connection to the lower orbit satellites through the Space Defense Agency.

So we have established what we call their Project ULTRA. Project ULTRA is specifically designed to move unmanned aerial systems and to counter unmanned aerial systems from the drawing board to the warfighter. As I say, we have been at that for almost 20 years.

As DOD contemplates this counter-UAS strategy, we are ready to bring industry partners, and I mean some of the leading industry partners like Northrup Grumman, like General Atomics, like Raytheon, and many others as well. They are already operating. They are in the Grand Sky Technology Park on the Grand Forks Air Force Base. And we are ready to bring those partnerships—those companies that have developed these technologies—together with the Department of Defense under the directive in this legislation to defend, like I say, not only our military installations but to do more in the civilian airspace so that the public can have confidence that when they see a drone flying in our national airspace, that it has been accounted for and properly dealt with.

Second, the second huge issue in the NDAA is nuclear modernization. Our nuclear deterrent is the foundation of global stability and is prerequisite for the success of our conventional forces.

If we have a nuclear deterrent that no adversary ever questions, then they will never go beyond conventional forces. We have the finest military in the world. Our conventional forces are more than a match for anyone in the world. And so that could create the temptation for somebody to actually use nuclear forces. But if they know our deterrent is so strong, then they will never actually challenge us. So it is the bedrock or the foundation on which our conventional forces reside. We are facing an increasingly dangerous nuclear world where we must deter multiple nuclear powers at the same time.

Now, several years ago, I led efforts to ensure that the Department of Defense kept our inventory of silos for our intercontinental ballistic missiles and preserve a full deployment of these missiles to support deterrence.

Today, we need those missiles to support deterrence against China, which is building up its forces incredibly, as well as Russia and North Korea.

This NDAA continues to carry language preserving the number of ICBMs that we deploy. It also creates a new Assistant Secretary of Defense to oversee nuclear deterrence policies and programs across the Department of Defense.

And most importantly—most importantly—it authorizes the next steps in modernizing not only the ICBM force but all three legs of the nuclear triad—bombers, the missiles, and submarines. It provides more than $5.6 billion in authorizations for modernizing these programs; for example, Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota, which is the only dual nuclear base that we have, both the bombers and the missiles. But it also updates the aircraft, the Sentinel, which is the new missile program, the LRSO, long-range stand-off, which is the new air-launched cruise missile, which is part of the bomber fleet; the B–52s, the new B–2 bombers, as well as our other long-range stand-off missile programs.

All of those things, as well as our submarines, form the nuclear deterrent that is the bedrock of our military forces. With the evolution of technology, the environment, and our own ambitions—the military environment I am talking about—and the near-peer challenges that we face with Russia and particularly with China, we have no choice but to make sure that we are updating and modernizing our nuclear forces so that no one ever challenges the United States or our ability to defend ourselves and our allies.

Space Development Agency—I mentioned that just a minute ago—another area of emphasis that is very important in this legislation. We know that space is an increasingly important part of defending our Nation and our interests around the globe. When we look at Russia, when we look at China and what they are doing in space, we must not only keep up, we must continue to exceed what they are doing. It is vitally important to making sure that our nuclear forces have the best technology and a technological advantage in warfare over our adversaries.

This legislation authorizes more than $4 billion for the Space Development Agency, including how the Low Earth Orbit Satellite Program is operated. This program is significant and will fundamentally change—the low Earth orbit satellites, which we are putting out in space now, and we will have many of them, I mean, hundreds of them. This program is significant and will fundamentally change the way our forces operate around the globe.

Every soldier, every weapon system, and every mission will benefit from getting information from these low Earth orbit satellites. And we are taking steps in this bill and in the appropriations processes to do just that.

And so when you look at SpaceX, sending those rockets in space, many of those have low Earth orbit satellites that we are already putting out in space.

Those low Earth orbit satellites will be controlled from one Army base and from one Air Force base. The Army base is the Redstone Army base in Alabama. And the Air Force base is the Grand Forks Air Force Base in my State.

Some other provisions that I want to mention are noteworthy as well. First, greenhouse gas emissions. This NDAA extends a prohibition that we passed last year on any rules that would force contractors to report on greenhouse gas emissions.

I fought hard against these types of regulations, which would add unnecessary redtape and delays, drive up costs, and provide no benefit to the warfighter.

The purpose of our weapons systems must be to make sure that our forces have a superior advantage to any other forces in the world in lethality. And that is exactly how they need to be designed. And that is what this provision is designed to ensure.

Support for our servicemembers, this bill includes a number of provisions that I have heard about in regard to strongly supporting our servicemembers and their families; for example, pay increases. It authorizes a 14.5-percent pay increase for junior enlisted servicemembers, E–4 and below, and a 4.5-percent basic pay increase for all other servicemembers.

Second, access to mental health. The bill improves access to services for mental health, making it easier for telehealth providers to offer services and expand accreditation opportunities for behavioral health providers, which is a big need.

Specialty care travel allowances. The bill includes a provision I supported to require the Secretary to reassess the

travel and transportation allowances provided to servicemembers and dependents seeking specialty care—healthcare, within a hundred miles of their duty station.

Military spouse professional licensing permanently grants authority to the Department of Defense to make transferring professional licenses between States easier for military spouses.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion: It is important that our military members can put mission first, and this bill eliminates authorizations for a range of disruptive DEI programs while establishing a 1-year freeze on hiring for DEI work at the Department of Defense.

Like I said at the beginning of my remarks, the NDAA helps us chart a course to defend our country during these dangerous times. With the passage of the NDAA, we will have the authorization for these important programs, and as a member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, we are ready—I and others are ready—to get to work to fund these important programs for our Nation's defense. We have the finest military in the world, and we must do all that we can to support our men and women in uniform.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, may we have order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I am laughing because it was Senator HOEVEN over there probably talking about you and me, Mr. President, and I just couldn't let that go unchallenged.

TRIBUTE TO PALOMA CHACON

Mr. President, with me today is one of my able colleagues from my Senate office, Ms. Paloma Chacon. Behind my back, some of my staffers call Paloma ''Kennedy's brain.'' They think I don't know that they are saying that, but it is probably true, and I want to thank her for her good judgment, counsel, and advice.

NEW ORLEANS MASS SHOOTING

Mr. President, what I want to talk about briefly tonight breaks my heart, but it also makes me mad. But it does break my heart.

On Thursday, November 21, we had another mass shooting in New Orleans—this time in the French Quarter. It happened at the corner of Iberville and Royal Streets, across from Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse. Three masked men pulled up in a car and started firing. Bystanders testified they fired about 40 rounds. One person was killed. Three others were injured.

Some people, particularly back home, are probably thinking: OK. What else is new? Another mass shooting in Louisiana and in New Orleans. But this one was preventable.

One of the shooters, who was arrested—his name is Nicholas Miorana. Mr. Miorana is 28 years old. He has spent most of his adult life in prison. He is, based on his record, a career criminal. He served 7 years in prison for armed robbery. He got out. Shortly thereafter, in 2023, Miorana was arrested for a bunch of things: domestic battery, child endangerment, a series of gun charges, including being a felon with a firearm.

What happened next is disgusting.

In January of 2024, our district attorney offered Mr. Miorana a really sweet deal. Forget about the child endangerment. Forget about the domestic battery. Forget about all the gun charges.

The DA said: You can plead guilty.

He said this to Mr. Miorana: You can plead guilty to attempted possession of a firearm by a felon—attempted possession of a firearm by a felon.

What? Attempted possession?

I don't mean to be metaphysical here or teleological, but you either possess a firearm or you don't. I don't understand the ''attempted'' possession of a firearm. Maybe it was because, had Mr. Miorana been offered a deal—take it or leave it—for possession of a firearm as opposed to attempted possession of a firearm, which I didn't even know exists, it would have carried a 5-year sentence. Obviously, Mr. Miorana took the deal, and he appeared before Judge Leon Roche in our criminal court in New Orleans. Mr. Roche gave him probation.

Eight months later, while he was on probation, Mr. Miorana violated his probation, and his probation officer sought to revoke his probation. Then, 1 month later—nobody did anything about revoking his probation. So, 1 month later, Miorana was arrested for domestic abuse battery. He went back before Judge Roche. Judge Roche didn't revoke his probation. He just gave him house arrest and told him he had to wear an ankle monitor. That was in September of 2024. Then, a little bit later, Judge Roche decided to lighten even those conditions. He allowed Mr. Miorana to be free every day from 9 to 6—every day from 9 to 6—supposedly, to go to work.

Beginning on October 8, Mr. Miorana violated the judge's orders every single day—every single day for 45 days. How do we know this? He had on an ankle monitor, and the monitor company reported to the district attorney and to Judge Roche that Mr. Miorana was violating the terms of his house arrest and ankle monitoring—45 days.

Do you know what the district attorney did? Do you know what Judge Roche did? Nothing. Zero. Zilch. Nada. I have already told you how this story ends. Allegedly—I have to say ''allegedly''—he has been arrested for it anyway. Mr. Miorana and three of his buddies put on a mask, got in a Honda, killed somebody in the French Quarter, and shot three others. Mr. Miorana was caught. Do you know how he was caught? He had on an ankle monitor. He was caught within hours. This was a system failure.

I love New Orleans. I used to live in New Orleans. I earned a living in New Orleans. I met my wife in New Orleans. My son lived the first couple of years of his life in New Orleans. I love New Orleans.

What did Tennessee Williams say? ''America has only three cities: New York, San Francisco, and New Orleans. Everything else,'' Tennessee Williams said, ''is Cleveland.''

Now, before my friends in Cleveland get mad at me, I didn't say it; Tennessee Williams said it. But I think what Mr. Williams was trying to convey is what an extraordinary, unique, city New Orleans is. Every other State in America would kill to have a New Orleans. Twenty million people from all over the world come to visit the city in America which is perhaps the most European city and the most diverse city in our country. And I love New Orleans. But New Orleans deserves better.

I wish this hadn't happened. I wish there weren't more people in this world like Mr. Miorana. But there are some people in this world who just habitually, consistently hurt other people, and they take other people's stuff. I wish they wouldn't, but they do. I don't know why they do. If I make it to Heaven, I am going to ask. But they do, and they have got to be separated from society. And our judges and our district attorneys are not doing anybody—anybody—in New Orleans a favor by not putting those folks into jail. It breaks my heart. It also makes me mad.

TÜRKIYE

Mr. President, the second thing I want to just mention briefly, and I say this gently—respectfully, but gently—to President Erdogan, the distinguished President of Türkiye: Leave the Kurds alone. Leave the Kurds alone.

The Kurds, as you know, are wonderful people. There are probably 30 to 40 million Kurds throughout the world. Some we are blessed to have here in the United States. They live mostly in Türkiye, Iran, northern Iraq, and Syria. The Kurds are a distinct ethnic group. They are sort of a stateless country because they are spread all over the world.

The Kurds are America's friends. It hadn't been that many years ago since ISIS was rising high. ISIS had established a caliphate in the Middle East. That is a fancy word for a country. They established their own country in the Middle East, and America and other countries beat them back. We destroyed ISIS. They are still there, but we destroyed their caliphate.

The people most responsible for helping us, most responsible for destroying ISIS, were the Kurds. We lost less than 20 American lives in destroying ISIS in the Middle East. Our friends the Kurds lost over 10,000—10,000—fighting alongside of us. Over 30,000 Kurds were wounded. Without the Kurds, ISIS would still be there.

Now, Mr. Erdogan, the President of Türkiye, does not like the Kurds. I am not going to go into why. He is entitled to his opinion. But, right now, Mr. Erdogan has troops and tanks and weapons marshaled on the border between Türkiye and Syria.

As we know, the people in Syria finally had enough, and they overthrew Mr. Assad, their President. Predictably, Assad, who we think stole billions of dollars from the good people of Syria, is now, predictably, living in Russia. We are going to try to find his money.

Mr. Assad, like his father, is a butcher. He killed tens and tens of thousands of Syrians, and many of them he hurt the entire time they were dying.

To keep power and his money—a lot of which he made by dealing drugs—he used chemical weapons against his own people. And now the people in Syria are free of him.

Everybody else, stay out of Syria. President Trump has already talked about it. It doesn't mean we can't offer our advice, but we all need to stay out of Syria.

The defeat of Mr. Assad in Syria would not have happened but for Israel. We know that. You don't have to be a graduate of Cal Tech to know that. Israel destroyed Hezbollah, which was working with Iran, which was working with Russia to keep Assad in power.

Russia and Iran and Hezbollah were on the side of the butcher. But Russia is tied up in Ukraine. Hezbollah was holding down the fort while Russia was tied up in Ukraine. And Israel ignored the advice of many and just went out and destroyed Hezbollah.

Thank you, Israel.

But that is why the people of Syria today are free, and they are entitled to self-determination.

Mr. Erdogan in Türkiye, I worry, is going to invade Syria. I am not accusing him of anything, but I worry that he is because we have intelligence that he has many soldiers and many tanks and much equipment and many weapons right now stationed on the border between Türkiye and Syria. And our Kurd friends are afraid that Mr. Erdogan, because of his hatred for the Kurds, is going to attack now. The Kurds live very peacefully in northeast Syria.

My message today is: President Erdogan, I don't want to mess in the affairs of your country, but don't do it. Leave the Kurds alone. Leave the people of Syria alone.

Türkiye has problems now. Türkiye is supposed to be our friend. Türkiye is a member of NATO. Lately, they haven't been acting like our friend. Türkiye has its own problems. If we think interest rates are high in America, they are close to 50 percent in Türkiye. Some people think they are in a recession. Their inflation is between 40 and 50 percent.

If you invade Syria and touch a hair on the head of the Kurds, I am going to ask this U.S. Congress to do something, and our sanctions are not going to help the economy of Türkiye. I don't want to do that. Leave the Kurds alone.

My work here is done. I will show myself to the door, and I will suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3324 and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the following bills, en bloc: Calendar No. 277, S. 1097; Calendar No. 528, H.R. 2468; Calendar No. 530, H.R. 4094; Calendar No. 640, S. 5005; Calendar No. 660, H.R. 7332; and H.R. 3324.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged of the relevant bill, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bills, en bloc.

Mr. LEE. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment, where applicable, be agreed to; that the bills, as amended, if amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bills passed, en bloc, as follows:

CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ AND THE FARMWORKER MOVEMENT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ACT

The bill (S. 1097), to establish the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park in the States of California and Arizona, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is in boldfaced brackets and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is in italic.)

S. 1097

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park Act''.

[SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

[(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

[(1) on October 8, 2012, the César E. Chávez National Monument was established by Presidential Proclamation 8884 (54 U.S.C. 320301 note) for the purposes of protecting and interpreting the nationally significant resources associated with the property in Keene, California, known as ''Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz'';

[(2) Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz—

[(A) served as the national headquarters of the United Farm Workers; and

[(B) was the home and workplace of César E. Chávez, the family of César E. Chávez, union members, and supporters of César E. Chávez;

[(3) while the César E. Chávez National Monument marks the extraordinary achievements and contributions to the history of the United States by César Chávez and the farmworker movement, there are other significant sites in the States of California and Arizona that are important to the story of the farmworker movement; and

[(4) in the study conducted by the National Park Service entitled ''César Chávez Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment'' and submitted to Congress on October 24, 2013, the National Park Service—

[(A)(i) found that several sites associated with César E. Chávez and the farmworker movement—

[(I) are suitable for inclusion in the National Park System; and

[(II) depict a distinct and important aspect of the history of the United States not otherwise adequately represented at existing units of the National Park System; and

[(ii) recommended that Congress establish a national historical park to honor the role that César E. Chávez played in lifting up the lives of farmworkers; and

[(B)(i) found that the route of the 1966 march from Delano to Sacramento, California, meets National Historic Landmark criteria;

[(ii) recommended that the potential for designation of the route as a national historic trail be further explored; and

[(iii) indicated that the National Park Service could work with partner organizations and agencies to provide for interpretation programs along the route of the 1966 march from Delano to Sacramento, California.

[(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to establish the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park—

[(1) to help preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant resources associated with César Chávez and the farmworker movement;

[(2) to interpret and provide for a broader understanding of the extraordinary achievements and contributions to the history of the United States made by César Chávez and the farmworker movement; and

[(3) to support and enhance the network of sites and resources associated with César Chávez and the farmworker movement.]

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(3) to support and enhance the network of sites and resources associated with César Chávez and the farmworker movement.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) HISTORICAL PARK.—The term ''historical park'' means the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park established by section 4.

(2) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Cesar E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park Proposed Boundary'', numbered 502/179857B, and dated September 2022.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) STATES.—The term ''States'' means—

(A) the State of California; and

(B) the State of Arizona.

(5) STUDY.—The term ''Study'' means the study conducted by the National Park Service entitled ''César Chávez Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment'' and submitted to Congress on October 24, 2013.

SEC. 4. CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ AND THE FARMWORKER MOVEMENT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) REDESIGNATION OF CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ NATIONAL MONUMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The César E. Chávez National Monument established on October 8, 2012, by Presidential Proclamation 8884 (54 U.S.C. 320301 note) is redesignated as the ''César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park''.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any funds available for the purposes of the monument referred to in paragraph (1) shall be available for the purposes of the historical park.

(3) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, regulation, document, record, map, or other paper of the United States to the monument referred to in paragraph (1) shall be considered to be a reference to the ''César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park''.

(b) BOUNDARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of the historical park shall include the area identified as ''César E. Chávez National Monument'' in Keene, California, as generally depicted on the map.

(2) INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SITES.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may include within the boundary of the historical park the following sites, as generally depicted on the map:

(A) The Forty Acres in Delano, California.

(B) Santa Rita Center in Phoenix, Arizona.

(C) McDonnell Hall in San Jose, California.

(3) CONDITIONS FOR INCLUSION.—A site described in paragraph (2) shall not be included in the boundary of the historical park until—

(A) the date on which the Secretary acquires the land or an interest in the land at the site; or

(B) the date on which the Secretary enters into a written agreement with the owner of the site providing that the site shall be managed in accordance with this Act.

(4) NOTICE.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary includes a site described in paragraph (2) in the historical park, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register notice of the addition to the historical park.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map shall be available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(d) LAND ACQUISITION.—The Secretary may acquire land and interests in land within the area generally depicted on the map as ''Proposed NPS Boundary'' by donation, purchase from a willing seller with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange.

(e) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer the historical park in accordance with—

(A) this section; and

(B) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—

(i) section 100101(a), chapter 1003, and sections 100751(a), 100752, 100753, and 102101 of title 54, United States Code; and

(ii) chapter 3201 of title 54, United States Code.

(2) INTERPRETATION.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance and public interpretation of historic sites, museums, and resources on land not administered by the Secretary relating to the life of César E. Chávez and the history of the farmworker movement.

(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with the States, local governments, public and private organizations, and individuals to provide for the preservation, development, interpretation, and use of the historical park.

(f) GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this subsection, the Secretary shall prepare a general management plan for the historical park in accordance with section 100502 of title 54, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL SITES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The general management plan prepared under paragraph (1) shall include a determination of whether there are—

(i) sites located in the Coachella Valley in the State of California that were reviewed in the Study that should be added to the historical park;

(ii) additional representative sites in the States that were reviewed in the Study that should be added to the historical park; or

(iii) sites outside of the States in the United States that relate to the farmworker movement that should be linked to, and interpreted at, the historical park.

(B) RECOMMENDATION.—On completion of the preparation of the general management plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives any recommendations for additional sites to be included in the historical park.

(3) CONSULTATION.—The general management plan under paragraph (1) shall be prepared in consultation with—

(A) any owner of land that is included within the boundaries of the historical park; and

(B) appropriate Federal, State, and Tribal agencies, public and private organizations, and individuals, including—

(i) the National Chávez Center; and

(ii) the César Chávez Foundation.

SEC. 5. FARMWORKER PEREGRINACIÓN NATIONAL HISTORICAL TRAIL STUDY.

Section 5(c) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(50) FARMWORKER PEREGRINACIÓN NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.—The Farmworker Peregrinación National Historic Trail, a route of approximately 300 miles taken by farmworkers between Delano and Sacramento, California, in 1966, as generally depicted as 'Alternative C' in the study conducted by the National Park Service entitled 'César Chávez Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment' and submitted to Congress on October 24, 2013.''.

The committee reported amendment was agreed to.

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 1097

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to establish the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park—

(1) to help preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant resources associated with César Chávez and the farmworker movement;

(2) to interpret and provide for a broader understanding of the extraordinary achievements and contributions to the history of the United States made by César Chávez and the farmworker movement; and

(3) to support and enhance the network of sites and resources associated with César Chávez and the farmworker movement.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) HISTORICAL PARK.—The term ''historical park'' means the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park established by section 4.

(2) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Cesar E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park Proposed Boundary'', numbered 502/179857B, and dated September 2022.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) STATES.—The term ''States'' means—

(A) the State of California; and

(B) the State of Arizona.

(5) STUDY.—The term ''Study'' means the study conducted by the National Park Service entitled ''César Chávez Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment'' and submitted to Congress on October 24, 2013.

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(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any funds available for the purposes of the monument referred to in paragraph (1) shall be available for the purposes of the historical park.

(3) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, regulation, document, record, map, or other paper of the United States to the monument referred to in paragraph (1) shall be considered to be a reference to the ''César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park''.

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(B) RECOMMENDATION.—On completion of the preparation of the general management plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives any recommendations for additional sites to be included in the historical park.

(3) CONSULTATION.—The general management plan under paragraph (1) shall be prepared in consultation with—

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MOUNTAIN VIEW CORRIDOR COMPLETION ACT

The bill (H.R. 2468) to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Utah certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management within the boundaries of Camp Williams, Utah, and for other purposes, was ordered to a third reading, as read the third time, and passed.

GREAT SALT LAKE STEWARDSHIP ACT

The bill (H.R. 4094) to amend the Central Utah Project Completion Act to authorize expenditures for the conduct of certain water conservation measures in the Great Salt Lake basin, and for other purposes, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION SETTLEMENT ACT

The bill (S. 5005) to authorize additional funding for the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 5005

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION SETTLEMENT ACT.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO IMPLEMENT SETTLEMENT.—Section 10009 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11; 123 Stat. 1355) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''$250,000,000'' and inserting ''$750,000,000''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''$250,000,000'' and inserting ''$750,000,000''.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR FRIANT DIVISION IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 10203(c) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–11; 123 Stat. 1367) is amended by striking ''$50,000,000'' and inserting ''$75,000,000''.

UTAH STATE PARKS ADJUSTMENT ACT

The bill (H.R. 7332) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain Federal land to the State of Utah for inclusion in certain State parks, and for other purposes, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXTENDING THE AUTHORITY TO COLLECT SHASTA-TRINITY MARINA FEES THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029

The bills (H.R. 3324) to extend the authority to collect Shasta-Trinity Marina fees through fiscal year 2029, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

H.R. 5009

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we are on the floor here in the U.S. Senate debating and discussing the National Defense Authorization Act—the NDAA, as we call it—one of the most important bills of the year because it sets our defense policy, defense spending numbers; it lays out the things that Congress wants to do, hopefully, to focus on modality for our troops; and it is about taking care of our military men and women and their families. So it is a very important bill.

We are here at the end of the year, unfortunately, and I am going to complain a little bit. We got this bill done in June in the Senate and never brought it to the Senate floor. I am just going to be a little blunt. It is the majority leader. Senator SCHUMER doesn't prioritize national defense. He doesn't. Every year, the NDAA, under his leadership, has come to the floor at the very end of the year—no chance to amend it; no Senate floor vote. It is wrong that we don't prioritize it. He doesn't prioritize national defense.

We are looking at one of the most dangerous periods that we have seen since World War II. Dictators are on the march around the world—Russia, China, Iran, North Korea. They are all working together. And look at what we are doing with regard to defense spending. We are hitting, with President Biden—look at that—3 percent of GDP. We have been at 3 percent of GDP or lower only three or four times since the end of World War II. That is not a number you should aspire to if you want a strong American defense, especially during a dangerous time, but we are going down—3 percent. The Biden budget would bring us to below 3 percent next year.

Again, this is being jammed through at the end of the year. We never debated it on the Senate floor.

We did a lot of good work in the U.S. Senate. I want to particularly do a shout-out to Senator WICKER, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. He will be the chairman of the Armed Services Committee starting in January. That will be really great for our military, for our country.

In our bill, we got an additional $25 billion added to the Biden budget to make our military stronger. One of the disappointments of the NDAA that we are debating now—that was a bipartisan addition to the budget. Remember, it is a Democratic-controlled Senate, a Democratic-controlled Armed Services Committee.

I do want to do a shout-out to Senator JACK REED, the chairman, as well.

Senator WICKER's leadership got us an additional $25 billion, which we need—our military needs, our troops need, their families need—and this final bill just leaves that on the cutting room floor. Hey, it is one of the reasons I was thinking about voting against the bill, but there are a lot of good things in the bill.

So we don't want to be at this level, but we all have to come together here, Democrats and Republicans, recognizing the dangerous world in which we are now living.

Now to some of the good things in the NDAA. I do want to do a shout-out to the work that was done, particularly as it relates to pay raises for our most junior enlisted servicemembers. These are the pay grades E–1 to E–4. They are going to get a 14.5-percent pay increase. That is very significant. As a matter of fact, I have been doing this for almost 10 years now. That is the biggest pay raise I have seen ever. And they needed it. Our troops need that money. Their families need that money. Inflation has been really, really undermining their ability to live on bases in Alaska or Georgia or other places.

There has been a recruiting crisis in our military. I think it has a lot to do with the leadership of the Biden administration. In 2024, Army, Air Force, and Navy all once again failed to meet the recruiting goals.

So this pay raise is needed. This pay raise will help. So that is a big positive about this bill.

Some other things.

It improves the support for Israel and its capabilities against Iran during this very existential-threat time Israel is facing.

We are starting finally in this bill to reverse the shrinking U.S. Air Force, and we are starting to finally attack the issue of Navy shipbuilding. We are in the worst crisis in almost 50 years in terms of building ships for our country. That is a bipartisan assessment by the Congressional Research Service saying that manning, maintaining, and building ships hasn't been this bad in almost half a century. We have to get on this.

The Chinese are building ships at a rapid rate, and we can't build anything. So we are starting to turn that around. This bill should start turning that around. President Trump and his team, I am really hopeful, are going to turn that around. I have talked to President Trump about this very topic, our very weak industrial base, and how we are getting outbuilt by the Chinese. We need to turn that around.

Of course, Mr. President, I was honored to work hard on some really important things for the great State of Alaska. The father of the Air Force, Billy Mitchell, Gen. Billy Mitchell, called Alaska the most strategic place in the world. It is. Our enemies know that, and Americans should know that. So we are building up our military in Alaska.

I consider Alaska contributing—our great State contributes many things to our Nation's defense. I like to say there are three pillars of the strength of Alaska for America.

We are the cornerstone of missile defense. All the missiles that would intercept anything shot at New York or Miami or Chicago, they are all based in Alaska, with the exception of four at Vandenberg Space Force Base.

All the radar systems that track these missiles, again, are all based in Alaska.

We are the hub of air combat power for the Arctic and Asia-Pacific. We have over 100 fifth-generation fighters—F–22s, F–35s—in Alaska. No other place on the planet Earth has that kind of fifth-gen combat capability.

We are the place where expeditionary forces—now the 11th Airborne Division for the U.S. Army—can deploy in a moment's notice anywhere in the world because we are so strategic.

Those are the three pillars. We are going to build on those pillars in this bill.

I was able to get close to $750 million in military construction for the great State of Alaska. That is good for Alaska, it is good for our economy, and it is good for our workers. But most importantly, when we are talking about national defense and the NDAA, it is really good for the national security of America.

Mr. President, overall, I am going to be supporting this bill. It is important. It should have gotten here way earlier. We should have been able to have amendments for it. Again, I don't know why Senator SCHUMER, whenever he was in leadership, always brought this at the end of the year. He never prioritized the NDAA—never.

But I will say, I am disappointed about a couple of things in this bill. This is just an area where the Congress of the United States has to start getting a lot more serious.

I have this chart here. It says ''Xi's Appeasers in Congress.'' That is tough language. That is Xi Jinping, the dictator of China.

I and others had some provisions. I am going to mention three of mine that were focused on going after the Chinese Communist Party—very bipartisan provisions in the NDAA. Yet somebody, in the middle of the night—I don't know who; an appeaser for Xi—strips these measures out of the bill, and the final bill doesn't have them. The final bill doesn't have them. These are the most bipartisan things. Yet we have Members of Congress that don't realize this guy is a dictator that we need to be ready to defeat. When we have anti-China stuff—anti-Chinese Communist Party stuff, Members of Congress, somewhere, somehow, stripped this. Who the heck is appeasing Xi?

Let me just give you a couple of examples. It is a mystery, and it is frustrating. Come on—what are we doing?

No. 1. See down here? This is the New York Times from last week: ''China Bans Rare Mineral Exports to the U.S.'' Well, we knew that was coming. China dominates critical minerals, rare earth elements. So we are very vulnerable to the Chinese.

(Mr. KELLY assumed the Chair.)

Here is the good news: We have critical minerals in America. We have great critical minerals in Alaska. We have them in Arizona. I see Captain Kelly on the floor. We have minerals that can make our country less dependent on China when they blackmail us like this.

So I had a provision, Mr. President. We have a road in Alaska to go to what is called the Ambler Mining District. It has critical minerals. It is one of the biggest sources of critical minerals in America. We have a road. The previous administrations—starting with President Obama, President Trump—certified this road, right-of-way. Of course, President Biden, who will listen to the radical environmental groups no matter what—even when it makes us weaker to China—he killed the road.

In the markup of the Senate NDAA bill, I said to my colleagues: Colleagues, we need this road because it is going to make us less dependent on China.

Guess what. That provision in the Senate NDAA passed 20 to 5. I believe the Presiding Officer voted for it. Bipartisan. Everybody agreed.

We need to do more to have our own critical minerals so we are not dependent on China. That was good. It was good for our country, good for our military, good for Alaska. Yet somebody stripped it out. I heard it was HAKEEM JEFFRIES, the minority leader. I don't know. Maybe he is pro-Xi Jinping. But he stripped out the provision that was going to make us stronger in terms of critical minerals, the week that the Chinese said they were going they ban exports of critical minerals to America.

Good job over there, Minority Leader JEFFRIES. Way to go. I am sure Xi Jinping was applauding your actions.

Second, Mr. President—now, this one might seem a little bit small-ball, but it was important to me, and I think it was important to America. Somehow, someway, the Chinese have dominated global fishing. OK. They are the largest seafood producer and consumer and exporter of fish, rising to almost $93 billion in 2023.

But here is the deal: They use ghost fleets. They have a horrible environmental record. They use slave labor on their ships. They are about as bad as it gets in global fishing.

Well, a constituent of mine back home said: Hey, Senator, why are we selling Chinese communist fish to our military members, to our commissaries, to our chow halls? Soldiers, sailors, marines eating this fish. It is horrible fish, by the way.

Why are we selling this to them? Why is our military buying communist fish from the Chinese when they can buy great Alaskan seafood, freedom fish? Why?

I don't know. It is a great question.

So I had a provision saying: Hey, you think the Chinese are letting their military eat great Alaskan freedom fish? Do you think the Chinese buy Alaskan fish? They don't. So why the heck are we buying Chinese fish?

So I had a provision in the NDAA in the Senate that says our military, our commissaries, our chow halls, our soldiers, our sailors—we are not going to buy Chinese communist fish. Why should we help those guys? They don't buy our fish. Let's eat American fish, Alaskan fish, Mississippi fish, Maine lobsters.

That vote in the Armed Services Committee, on which the Presiding Officer sits with me, passed unanimously—unanimously. Everybody agreed. Heck, why are we buying Chinese communist fish? Let's buy Alaskan fish for our troops.

Guess what? Somebody—I think it was HAKEEM JEFFRIES again, in the middle of the night, said: Nope, we are going to strip that out. We are going to strip that out. Let's undermine Alaska and American fishermen, and let's promote Chinese slave labor, fishermen, and continue to export and have our military members eat that fish.

What a dumb idea. Who is doing this? Who is the Xi Jinping appeaser in the Congress? I don't know. HAKEEM JEFFRIES, I heard it was you. Maybe you want to come and talk to us. But why would you get rid of that provision? It helps Alaskans. It helps fishermen. It helps American fishermen. It helps our troops. It helps the military.

Nope, we are going to rip that out, and we are going to make sure Chinese fish exports, which use slave labor, can still go onto our military bases.

I can't believe it, but that is what happened.

Then, finally, this outbound investment provision. We have been working on this issue. Senator CORNYN, in particular, has done a great job—and so has Senator CASEY—on this. This is an amendment of ours that we got in the NDAA. All it says is—unfortunately, we have some finance firms in America—I have sat down with a couple of these guys. I still can't believe it. I am like: Hey, where is your patriotism? We have American hedge funds, private equity groups, and even some investment banks, who invest big-time in Chinese military capabilities—in quantum computing, AI, advanced chip manufacturing—in China.

And all this provision says is: Hey, we want to know who is doing that. We want to know who is doing that.

That passed in the U.S. Senate with over 90 Senate votes—over 90 Senate votes. We finally got it in the NDAA, and it got stripped out. That got stripped out. Again, I think it was Minority Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES did that one that time, too.

So, again, these are all things—every one of these—Ambler Access for critical minerals in Alaska to compete against China, banning Chinese communist fish on U.S. bases for our military and commissaries so we get fish from Alaskans and other great American fishermen, outbound investment. Hey, who is investing in quantum computing? We want to know. We want to know. American investors using, you know, Iowa teacher pension funds to help the Chinese get stronger? Are you kidding me?

All these were in the Senate bill, and all these got stripped out by the House. Come on, guys. Whose side are you on? Really?

So here is what I want to say. I want to end with this: We all know it is a dangerous world, and this is what we have to get back to: Peace through strength. Peace through strength.

You can do that in many ways—getting stronger from a military perspective, stronger from a natural resources perspective, stronger from an energy perspective. This is what President Trump ran on. This is what Republican Senators ran on. This is what Republican House Members ran on. This is what was in our platform in Milwaukee, the Republican Party platform—very similar to the Reagan 1984 platform. It is what the American people want.

So, Mr. President, I am going to vote yes for the NDAA tomorrow when we vote on it. I want to commend Senator REED and Senator WICKER for their hard work on this bill. It should have been brought up way earlier—way earlier. But we need to do better. We need to do better. And I sure hope, when we work on this bill again next year, that whoever is doing the appeasing in China is no longer going to do that—no longer going to do that.

We need to return to peace through strength. It is a dangerous world.

I yield the floor.

BIENNIAL REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the record the biennial report from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

U.S. CONGRESS, OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS,
Washington, DC, December 17, 2024.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Re Biennial Report from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights

DEAR MADAM PRESIDENT: Section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA) requires the Board of Directors of the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) to biennially submit a report containing recommendations regarding the applicability of Federal workplace rights, safety and health, and public access laws and regulations to the legislative branch. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the rights afforded by the CAA to legislative branch employees and visitors to Capitol Hill and district and state offices remain equivalent to those in the private sector and the executive branch of the Federal Government. As such, these recommendations support the intent of Congress to keep pace with advances in workplace rights and public access laws.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the Board's Section 102(b) report for the 119th Congress. The Board welcomes discussion on these issues and urges that Congress act on these important recommendations. As required by the CAA, we request that this publication be printed in the Congressional Record and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration as the committee of the U.S. Senate with jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

MARTIN J. CRANE,
Executive Director,
Office of Congressional Workplace Rights.

Attachment.

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Required by Section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act

Issued at the Conclusion of the 118th Congress for Consideration by the 119th Congress

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) Board of Directors submits this report to Congress pursuant to section 102(b) of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA). In accordance with the CAA, the Board is to provide each Congress with recommendations regarding the applicability to the legislative branch of federal workplace rights, safety and health, and public access laws and regulations. The Board's fulfillment of this requirement provides Congress with information and recommendations necessary to ensure parity between the rights and protections applied to the legislative branch and those applied to the executive branch and the private sector.

Currently executive branch and private employees have protections and rights that legislative branch employees do not have. In this report, the Board addresses and recommends changes to the CAA's substantive protections and obligations and to the necessary implementing procedures and regulations. Adoption of these recommendations would ensure that Congress meets the goal that it set for itself: to apply to the legislative branch those workplace rights and obligations that it has applied to the executive branch and the private sector. The following is a summary of the Board's recommendations:

Create Parity with the Executive Branch and the Private Sector

Require legislative branch offices to maintain records of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Provide comparable parental bereavement leave for legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable nursing protections for legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable religious compensatory time for all legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable whistleblower protections to legislative branch employees.

Provide comparable protections from retaliation for non-employees under the CAA's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) public access provisions.

Provide comparable protections for legislative branch employees who serve on jury duty, declare bankruptcy, or have their wages garnished.

Require legislative branch offices to maintain records required under other federal workplace rights laws.

Improve Implementation of Existing Rights to Ensure Parity

Empower the OCWR General Counsel to seek a court order to temporarily enjoin unfair labor practices.

Allow disclosure of proceedings involving disability-related public access and labor-management issues.

Approve pending OCWR regulations in the legislative branch, including:

Fair Labor Standards Act regulations related to overtime pay.

Family and Medical Leave Act regulations related to paid parental leave and leave benefits for servicemembers and their families.

Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute regulations related to collective bargaining in the legislative branch.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act regulations related to workplace protections for servicemembers.

Americans with Disabilities Act regulations related to public access to facilities.

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act regulations related to protections for job applicants in the legislative branch.

More information about the Board's recommendations can be found on OCWR's website at www.ocwr.gov.

STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 2025, the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) celebrates the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA), which was enacted by Congress in 1995 with nearly unanimous approval. This milestone anniversary marks the establishment of OCWR and reflects the steadfast commitment of Congress to the American public that it will apply to itself labor, employment, accessibility, and health and safety laws on par with those that apply to the executive branch and the private sector.

This commitment is an ongoing one. To ensure that it continues to be fulfilled, section 102 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1302, requires the Board of Directors of OCWR to issue a report to each Congress that describes: (1) to what degree such provisions of federal law are applicable or inapplicable to the legislative branch; and (2) whether any inapplicable provisions should be made applicable.

The Board believes that now is the time to celebrate the many accomplishments that Congress has made in the area of workplace rights and to acknowledge the many recommendations in previous Section 102(b) Reports that Congress has adopted. However, much work remains. We highlight in this Section 102(b) Report additional recommendations for amendments to the CAA to apply to the congressional workplace employee protections applicable to the executive branch or the private sector, as well as key recommendations that the Board has made in past Section 102(b) Reports that have not yet been implemented.

On the eve of this historic milestone, we are pleased to submit to Congress these 2024 biennial recommendations for amendments to the CAA. We welcome the opportunity to further discuss these recommendations and ask for careful consideration of them by the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,

BARBARA CHILDS WALLACE,
Chair, Board of Directors.
BARBARA L. CAMENS,
ALAN V. FRIEDMAN,
ROBERTA L. HOLZWARTH,
SUSAN S. ROBFOGEL,
Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 119th CONGRESS

I. Create Parity with the Executive Branch and the Private Sector

A. Require Legislative Branch Offices to Maintain Records of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses to Ensure Workplace Safety

The Board has long recommended amending the CAA to apply the critical recordkeeping requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) to the congressional workplace. Under the CAA, Congress and its instrumentalities are exempt from critical OSH Act requirements that apply to the private sector, including section 8(c) of the OSH Act which requires employers to make, keep and preserve, and provide, upon request, records necessary and appropriate for the enforcement of the OSH Act (29 U.S.C. §657(c)).

In enacting the OSH Act, Congress recognized that ''[f]ull and accurate information is a fundamental precondition for meaningful administration of an occupational safety and health program.''[1] Congress observed that a recordkeeping requirement should be included in that legislation because ''the Federal government and most of the states have inadequate information on the incidence, nature, or causes of occupational injuries, illnesses, and deaths.''[2]

Without access to such information, OCWR is unable to effectively enforce several critical safety and health standards within the legislative branch. For example, substantive occupational safety and health standards concerning asbestos in the workplace, providing employees with safety information regarding hazardous chemicals in their workspaces, and emergency response procedures in the event of the release of hazardous chemicals all rely on accurate recordkeeping to ensure that employees are not exposed to hazardous materials or conditions. But because the CAA does not contain section 8(c)'s recordkeeping requirements, employing offices may contend that they are not required to maintain or submit such records to OCWR for review.

Moreover, without the benefit of section 8(c) authority, OCWR is also hampered in its ability to access records needed to develop information regarding the causes and prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses. As the Department of Labor recognized, ''Analysis of the data is a widely recognized method for discovering workplace safety and health problems and tracking progress in solving these problems.''[3]

Recordkeeping improves safety. When conducting inspections of employers in the private sector, inspectors routinely request to view records of workplace injuries and illnesses at the outset of the inspection. This helps inspectors improve the focus of their inspection. For instance, if the records contain multiple instances of a particular type of injury, this may indicate to the inspector to investigate specific equipment and work processes that may have given rise to those injuries. Relatedly, if the records show that multiple employees have experienced similar work-related illnesses, this may indicate to the inspector a possible exposure to a hazardous substance in the workplace. In short, these records help inspectors determine which hazards may exist in the workplace and whether different controls or personal protective equipment (PPE) might reduce injuries and illnesses.

Because Congress is exempt from these recordkeeping requirements, OCWR occupational safety and health (OSH) inspectors—who are statutorily charged with annually inspecting the congressional campus to ensure workplace safety—are dependent on voluntary reporting by employees and employing offices to determine the types of injuries or illnesses that congressional workplaces are experiencing. From OCWR's experience, voluntary reporting is often insufficient to produce a comprehensive record of incidents.

The consequences of a lack of recordkeeping requirements were demonstrated during OCWR's investigation of occupational safety and health concerns arising out of the events of January 6, 2021. As an essential part of OCWR's OSH investigation of the events that day, the OCWR Office of the General Counsel requested that the USCP identify the types and causes of injuries sustained by United States Capitol Police (USCP) officers. However, because the USCP was not required to maintain a list of employees injured under the provisions of the OSH Act, as applied by the CAA, the information provided by the USCP was so lacking in detail, particularly as to the specific causes of the described injuries, that it was impossible for the General Counsel to determine precisely how each of these employees were injured.[4] As a result, OCWR's ability to prescribe appropriate remedies to keep the congressional workplace safe was severely hampered.

Accordingly, the Board again strongly recommends—as it has for years—that legislative branch employing offices be required to maintain records of workplace injuries and illnesses under OSH Act section 8(c). As demonstrated from experience, workplace injury and illness recordkeeping is essential to ensuring safety and health in the congressional workplace.

B. Provide Comparable Parental Bereavement Leave for Legislative Branch Employees

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 amended the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to establish a new paid leave category for most federal civilian employees, which was codified in title 5 FMLA (5 U.S.C. §6329d). Under section 6329d, executive branch employees are entitled to 2 workweeks of paid parental bereavement leave in connection with the death of an employee's child.

However, because legislative branch employees are not governed by the provisions of title 5 FMLA, but are instead covered by title 29 FMLA, as applied by the CAA, they are not covered by this important workplace benefit.

The Board recommends that the CAA be amended to provide paid parental bereavement leave for legislative branch employees. Such an amendment would help balance work and family responsibilities by allowing employees to take reasonable paid leave in the catastrophic circumstance of the death of a child and would ensure parity between the legislative and executive branches.

C. Provide Comparable Nursing Protections for Legislative Branch Employees

In December 2022, Congress passed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (H.R. 2617), which included the language of the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (or ''PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act''). The PUMP Act amended the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to expand protections for nursing employees. These employees are now entitled to reasonable break time and a private space to pump at work for up to 1 year after their child's birth.

Under the CAA, only certain sections of the FLSA apply to the legislative branch—specifically, sections 206, 207, and 212. Prior to the adoption of the PUMP Act, protections for nursing employees were included in section 207(r) of the FLSA. The PUMP Act struck section 207(r) and created a new section—section 218d—to contain the expanded protections. In striking section 207(r) from the FLSA and failing to amend the CAA to apply section 218d to the legislative branch, Congress removed the existing protections for legislative branch employees and failed to provide them the new protections.

Since 2022, Congress has introduced several technical amendment bills to apply the PUMP Act protections to the legislative branch.[5] The Board believes that the protections of the PUMP Act should apply to legislative branch employees and urges Congress to amend the CAA so that section 218d of the FLSA applies to the legislative branch. Such an amendment would ensure that the rights and protections of nursing employees in the legislative branch are equivalent to those of nursing employees in the executive branch and the private sector.

D. Provide Comparable Religious Compensatory Time for all Legislative Branch Employees

In 1978, to further the free exercise of religious beliefs by federal employees, Congress amended title 5 of the U.S. Code to establish a system of religious compensatory time off (5 U.S.C. §5550a). Section 5550a requires executive agencies, military departments, judicial branch agencies, the Library of Congress, the Botanic Garden, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, and the government of the District of Columbia to allow employees whose personal religious beliefs require them to abstain from work at certain times of the workday or workweek to work alternate work hours so that the employees can meet their religious obligations.

Although some legislative branch employees are covered by section 5550a, a substantial number—including those who work in offices in the House and Senate, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Government Publishing Office (GPO), and OCWR—are not. As a result, a substantial number of legislative branch employees are not currently entitled to section 5550a's benefits and protections, despite the intent of Congress that section 5550a benefit all federal employees.[6]

The Board recommends that Congress amend the CAA to include section 5550a, thereby providing parity to all legislative branch employees regarding their ability to work alternate work hours so that they can meet their religious obligations. Such an amendment would enable legislative branch employees, especially those of minority faiths, to exercise their religious beliefs without being forced to lose a portion of their pay or use annual or other leave. And it would help ensure that all legislative branch employees ''are treated equally, regardless of their religion, and to make sure that no [legislative branch] employee is discriminatorily or unnecessarily penalized because of their devotion to their faith.''[7]

E. Provide Comparable Whistleblower Protections to Legislative Branch Employees

Federal law provides broad employment protections to executive branch employees who disclose information that the whistleblower reasonably believes evidences (1) a violation of any law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement; (3) gross waste of funds; (4) abuse of authority; or (5) a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.[8] However, there are no analogous protections for legislative branch employees, even for those who would raise an issue with a committee of jurisdiction or other appropriate legislative branch official. This lack of statutory protection leaves legislative branch employees, who would otherwise provide critical information, at risk for retaliation. The absence of whistleblower protections also risks depriving Congress of information it needs to oversee the entirety of the legislative branch in the public interest.

Statutory protections for legislative branch employees who disclose evidence of wrongdoing must be carefully drafted in light of the special constitutional role of Congress as the nation's forum for robust policy debate. To be effective, such protections must respect important legislative branch prerogatives, accommodate the need for confidentiality during congressional deliberations, and, more generally, protect the necessary confidentiality of sensitive information handled in many contexts across the legislative branch. Effective whistleblower protections must account for the wide range of workplace environments and job functions, from librarians to landscapers to law enforcement officers to committee staff, and accommodate the concerns unique to each position.

To achieve these important ends, the Board recommends that Congress amend the CAA to protect and provide parity to legislative branch employees who make whistleblower disclosures to officials or entities specifically designated to receive such disclosures, such as an instrumentality's Inspector General or an appropriate committee of jurisdiction. This approach would parallel laws in the executive branch designed to protect whistleblowers who work in special environments, who must also follow specific procedures to make protected disclosures to designated individuals or entities through designated channels.[9]

To facilitate compliance with the recommended whistleblower protections, the Board further recommends that OCWR be granted investigatory and prosecutorial authority over whistleblower reprisal complaints, by incorporating into the CAA authority analogous to that granted to the Office of Special Counsel for executive branch claims.

F. Provide Comparable Protections from Retaliation for Non-Employees under the CAA's ADA Public Access Provisions

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is unique among the laws applied by the CAA as it affords protections to members of the public as well as to employees. The rights and protections for the public are found in section 210 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1331), which incorporates titles II and III of the ADA. Section 210 requires that legislative branch employing offices make their public services, programs, and activities—as well as the facilities where these services, programs, and activities are provided—accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Section 208 of the CAA, 2 U.S.C. §1317, prohibits employing offices from intimidating, retaliating against, or discriminating against employees who exercise their rights under the CAA. However, section 208 does not authorize ADA retaliation claims by members of the public who are not covered employees.

Section 503 of the ADA (42 U.S.C. §12203) prohibits retaliation, interference, coercion, or intimidation against ''any individual'' relating to exercising their rights under the ADA's public access provisions. Although section 503 covers both the public and private sectors, that section is not incorporated by the CAA, and thus does not apply to the legislative branch. Therefore, non-employee members of the public are unable to bring ADA retaliation claims under the CAA.

This parity gap is contrary to the purpose of the CAA and deters members of the public with disabilities from asserting their rights under the ADA in the legislative branch. Accordingly, the Board recommends that the CAA be amended to incorporate the ADA's section 503 anti-retaliation provisions.

G. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees Who Serve on Jury Duty

Jury duty is a fundamental civic responsibility. Section 1875 of title 28 of the U.S. Code provides that no employer shall discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any permanent employee by reason of such employee's jury service, or the attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with such service, in any court of the United States. This section currently does not cover legislative branch employees. For the reasons set forth in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

H. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees and Applicants who are or have been in Bankruptcy

Section 525(a) of title 11 of the U.S. Code provides that ''a governmental unit'' may not deny employment to, terminate the employment of, or discriminate with respect to employment against, a person because that person is or has been a debtor under the bankruptcy statutes. This provision currently does not apply to the legislative branch. Reiterating the recommendations made in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

I. Provide Comparable Protections for Legislative Branch Employees who are or have been Subject to Garnishment

Section 1674(a) of title 15 of the U.S. Code prohibits terminating an employee because their wages have been garnished. This section is currently limited to private employers. For the reasons set forth in several previous Section 102(b) Reports, the Board continues to recommend that the rights and protections against discrimination on this basis should be applied to covered employees and employing offices within the legislative branch.

J. Require Legislative Branch Offices to Maintain Records Required under other Federal Workplace Rights Laws

The Board has also recommended in previous Section 102(b) Reports, and continues to recommend, that Congress adopt all recordkeeping requirements under federal workplace rights laws, including title VII. Although some employing offices in the legislative branch keep personnel records, there are no legal requirements under the CAA to do so. Records can greatly assist in the speedy resolution of claims. Moreover, both employers and employees benefit from the retention of documented personnel actions. Employers can use records as critical evidence to demonstrate that no violation has occurred, while employees can use records as critical evidence to assert their rights.

II. Improve Implementation of Existing Rights to Ensure Parity

A. Empower the OCWR General Counsel to Seek a Court Order to Temporarily Enjoin Unfair Labor Practices

Section 220 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1351) applies certain provisions of the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (FSLMRS) to the legislative branch. In general, the OCWR General Counsel exercises

the same authority delegated to the General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), under 5 U.S.C. §§7104 and 7118, in the executive branch, including the authority to investigate allegations of workplace unfair labor practices (ULPs) and to file and prosecute complaints regarding ULPs.

The CAA, however, does not incorporate the provisions of 5 U.S.C. §7123(d), which allows parties to ULP proceedings in the executive branch to request the FLRA General Counsel to seek appropriate temporary relief, including the issuance of a temporary restraining order. This important statutory provision in the FSLMRS allows the FLRA General Counsel to seek, in appropriate cases when a ULP complaint is issued, temporary relief in any United States District Court when it would be just and proper to do so and the record establishes probable cause that a ULP is being committed.

Granting the OCWR General Counsel the authority to seek appropriate temporary injunctive relief would protect parties from irreparable harm during ULP litigation.[10]

B. Allow Disclosure of Proceedings Involving Disability-Related Public Access and Labor-Management Issues

The CAA generally requires confidentiality in proceedings before OCWR to protect the privacy of individuals. However, Congress excluded proceedings under the OSH Act from these confidentiality provisions because it determined that the public interest in transparency concerning safety and health on Capitol Hill outweighed any value in keeping them confidential.

As with OSH Act proceedings, proceedings involving ADA public access and labor-management issues primarily involve public and institutional concerns, as well as concerns on the part of key stakeholders to labor-management relationships, with maintaining facilities, policies, and programs that are safe, healthful, accessible, and free from ULPs. The current lack of transparency in these matters is unnecessary to protect individual privacy and undermines the confidence of the public and of central stakeholders that those statutory mandates are being fully enforced.

Accordingly, section 416 of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1416) should be amended to eliminate these unnecessary confidentiality restrictions and provide transparency to the public and to key stakeholders.

C. Approve Pending OCWR Regulations

Congress has not approved several substantive OCWR Board regulations necessary to fully implement workplace protections made applicable to legislative branch employees by the CAA.

As discussed below, the regulations that have been approved for the House but are awaiting congressional approval for the Senate and other employing offices in the legislative branch are the Board's (1) updated regulations concerning overtime pay; (2) updated regulations concerning paid parental leave and leave benefits for servicemembers and their families; and (3) regulations concerning collective bargaining.

The regulations awaiting congressional approval for all employing offices in the legislative branch are the Board's (1) regulations concerning employment and reemployment protections for servicemembers and their families; (2) amended regulations concerning the access rights of members of the public with disabilities; and (3) proposed regulations concerning protections for job applicants in the legislative branch.

The Board urges Congress to approve these regulations.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Regulations

The CAA's FLSA provisions provide for minimum wage and overtime compensation for certain legislative branch employees.[11] If nonexempt, these employees are entitled to overtime compensation when working over 40 hours in a workweek.

The FLSA's overtime exemptions are not defined in the FLSA itself but by regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor.[12] Through the CAA, Congress requires that OCWR's FLSA regulations substantially mirror regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor. Congress last approved OCWR regulations implementing the FLSA in 1996. Since that time, as the Secretary of Labor has updated its overtime regulations, OCWR has updated its regulations to reflect the Secretary's changes. The last such update was in September 2022, when OCWR revised its FLSA regulations to reflect the Secretary's substantial increase in the minimum salary test used to determine who may be exempt from overtime protections.[13]

In December 2022, the House of Representatives, by resolution, approved the Board's amended FLSA regulations, thereby applying them to House employees and offices.[14] The Senate must take similar action to apply those regulations to Senate offices and employees. Full approval by both houses is necessary to make these regulations applicable to legislative branch employees of instrumentalities, including the Library of Congress (LOC) and the USCP.

Until the 2022 OCWR regulations are fully approved by Congress, many covered employees in the legislative branch may be denied the overtime pay to which they would be entitled for comparable work performed in the executive branch or private sector. Approval of the regulations will ensure that Congress and the legislative branch at large are able to attract and retain a talented, motivated, and high-performing workforce.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Regulations

The CAA's FMLA provisions provide rights and protections for legislative branch employees needing leave for specified family and medical reasons.[15] In December 2021, the Board adopted FMLA regulations to implement recent amendments to the FMLA and transmitted the regulations to Congress.[16] These OCWR FMLA regulations would implement FMLA amendments that (1) provide up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave for the birth, adoption, or placement in foster care of a child[17] and (2) enhance leave benefits for servicemembers and their families. These regulations would further revise the definition of ''spouse'' to include same-sex spouses to remain consistent with Supreme Court precedent and the Department of Labor's definition in its February 25, 2015 Final Rule.[18]

In December 2022, the House of Representatives, by resolution, approved the Board's amended FMLA regulations, thereby applying them to House employees and offices.[19] As with the Board's modified FLSA regulations, the Senate must take similar action in order to apply the modified FMLA regulations to Senate offices and employees. Full approval by both houses is needed to make these regulations applicable to legislative branch employees of instrumentalities.

Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (FSLMRS) Regulations

Through the CAA, Congress made applicable to the legislative branch specific sections of the FSLMRS, which governs unionization and collective bargaining in the executive branch. In 1996, the Board adopted final regulations implementing those sections of the FSLMRS in the legislative branch. That same year, Congress approved these regulations for certain employees and employing offices covered by the CAA, such as the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) and the USCP.

However, at that time, Congress did not approve complementary regulations adopted by the OCWR Board necessary to implement those sections of the FSLMRS for most offices listed in section 220(e)(2) of the CAA (2 U.S.C. §1351), i.e., most offices within the House of Representatives or the Senate, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and OCWR.

In May 2022, the House of Representatives approved the complementary regulations through a resolution, thereby extending the labor-management rights and obligations of the FSLMRS to House employees and offices.[20] Full approval by both houses would apply the regulations to employees and offices in both the House and Senate and to the additional legislative branch offices listed in section 220(e)(2), and ensure that the protections afforded by the FSLMRS apply to the entire legislative branch, similar to how they apply in the executive branch. Accordingly, the Board urges Congress to adopt resolutions approving these regulations.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) Regulations

The CAA's USERRA provisions protect servicemembers and veterans from discrimination on the basis of their service and allow them to regain their civilian jobs upon return from service. The Board's USERRA regulations, first transmitted to Congress over 15 years ago, have not yet been approved. In April 2023, the Board made minor amendments to its USERRA regulations and transmitted the amended regulations to Congress for approval.

Congressional approval of the USERRA regulations would signal a continued commitment to the welfare of servicemembers in the legislative branch—where they remain a significantly underrepresented percentage of the workforce—by granting them the same workplace protections and entitlements as servicemembers in the executive branch and the private sector.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Public Access Regulations

The CAA's ADA public access provisions protect the right of members of the public with disabilities, including constituents and employees, to accessible facilities, programs, services, activities, and accommodations in the legislative branch. In March 2023, the Board made additional modifications to the pending ADA regulations that it adopted in 2016 and transmitted the amended regulations to Congress for approval. In accordance with the CAA, the 2023 amended ADA regulations incorporate by reference the most recent comparable regulations issued by the Department of Justice and the Department of Transportation. If approved by Congress, these regulations would provide much-needed guidance both to those charged with the legal duty to provide accessible services and accommodations, as well as to the members of the public who have the right to such accessibility.

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act (FCA) Regulations

The CAA's FCA provisions protect job applicants in the legislative branch by prohibiting employing offices from inquiring into an applicant's criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer of employment. The FCA, as applied by the CAA, provides that employees who inquire into an applicant's criminal history record information in a manner that violates the FCA may

be subject to discipline including suspensions from employment and fines.

In June 2024, the Board issued a notice of proposed rulemaking for its regulations implementing the FCA in the legislative branch. In early December 2024, the Board submitted final regulations to Congress for approval. If approved, these regulations would provide necessary protections for job applicants in the legislative branch alleging a violation of the FCA.

ENDNOTES

1. Senate Report No. 91–1282 (October 6, 1970) respecting the recordkeeping and records provisions of now Section 8(c) of the OSH Act.

2. Id. See also Report No. 91–1291 of the House Committee on Education and Labor, 91st Congress, 2d Session, p.30, to accompany H.R. 16785 (OSH Act) (''Adequate information is the precondition for responsible administration of practically all sections of this bill.'').

3. See ''Detailed Frequently Asked Questions for OSHA's Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Rule for Federal Agencies,'' https://www.osha.gov/enforcement/fap/recordkeeping-faqs.

4. Office of the General Counsel, Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, Special Report: Occupational Safety and Health Concerns Arising out of the Events of January 6, 2021, https://www.ocwr.gov/publications/reports/other-reports/special-report-occupational-safety-and-health-concerns-arising-out-of-the-events-of-january-6-2021-july-2-2021/ (citing U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Committee on Rules and Administration, Examining the U.S. Capitol Attack: A Review of the Security, Planning, and Response Failures on January 6, Staff Report at 1 (June 8, 2021), https://www.rules.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Jan%206%20HSGAC%20Rules%20Report.pdf. According to the General Counsel's Special Report, of the approximately 1,200 officers defending the Capitol on January 6, fewer than 300 were equipped with much in the way of PPE.

5. See PUMP Technical Correction Act, S. 2219, 118th Cong. (2023); PUMP Technical Correction Act, H.R. 3585, 118th Cong. (2023); Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2025, S. 4768, 118th Cong. (2024) (containing the language of the PUMP technical correction acts).

6. See Comptroller General Decision B–193636 (January 9, 1979) (finding although legislative history indicated Congress intended benefit to apply to all federal employees, section 5550a covers only employees of the agencies specified in section 5550a).

7. 124 Cong. Rec. 15435 (1978).

8. See, e.g., the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, 5 U.S.C. §2302(b)(8), as amended by the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, Pub. L. 112–199.

9. See, e.g., the Intelligence Community Whistleblower Protection Act of 1998, 5 U.S.C. App. §8H, 50 U.S.C. §3033, 50 U.S.C. §3517; and the FBI Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2016, 5 U.S.C. §2303(a).

10. See, e.g., United States Capitol Police v. Office of Compliance, 916 F.3d 1023 (Fed. Cir. 2019) (affirming the Board's determination that the USCP had committed a ULP when it refused to participate in an arbitration concerning an officer's termination, where two Federal Circuit Court of Appeal decisions had already flatly rejected the statutory interpretation arguments made by USCP that termination decisions were not subject to arbitration).

11. See at 2 U.S.C. §1313.

12. See 29 U.S.C. §213; 29 C.F.R. part 541.

13. The 1996 FLSA regulations exempt from overtime any employee whose salary (exclusive of board and lodging) is ''not less than $155 per week'' or ''not less than $250 per week'' if their primary duty involves management of the employing office and includes the customary and regular direction of two or more employees. The 2022 OCWR FLSA regulations pending congressional approval increase the salary test to not less than $684 per week (exclusive of board, lodging, or other facilities). See generally, 168 Cong. Rec. H8203, S5148 (Sep. 28, 2022).

14. See H. Res. 1516 (117th Cong. 2022).

15. See 2 U.S.C. §1312.

16. See 167 Cong. Rec. H7224, S8966 (Dec. 7, 2021).

17. See Federal Employee Paid Leave Act (subtitle A of title LXXVI of division F of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, Public Law 116–92, Dec. 20, 2019).

18. See 162 Cong. Rec. H4128, S4475 (June 22, 2016).

19. See H. Res. 1516 (117th Cong. 2022).

20. See H. Res. 1096 (117th Cong. 2022).

HOMEBUYERS PRIVACY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 3502 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3502) to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Reed-Hagerty substitute amendment be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3339), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Homebuyers Privacy Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF PRESCREENING REPORT REQUESTS.

Section 604(c) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681b(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) TREATMENT OF PRESCREENING REPORT REQUESTS.—

''(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

''(i) CREDIT UNION.—The term 'credit union' means a Federal credit union or a State credit union, as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C 1752).

''(ii) INSURED DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term 'insured depository institution' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813(c)).

''(iii) RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOAN.—The term 'residential mortgage loan' has the meaning given the term in section 1503 of the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5102).

''(iv) SERVICER.—The term 'servicer' has the meaning given the term in section 6(i) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2605(i)).

''(B) LIMITATION.—If a person requests a consumer report from a consumer reporting agency in connection with a credit transaction involving a residential mortgage loan, that agency may not, based in whole or in part on that request, furnish a consumer report to another person under this subsection unless that other person—

''(i) has submitted documentation to that agency certifying that such other person has, pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the authorization of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates; or

''(ii)(I) has originated a current residential mortgage loan of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates;

''(II) is the servicer of a current residential mortgage loan of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates; or

''(III)(aa) is an insured depository institution or credit union; and

''(bb) holds a current account for the consumer to whom the consumer report relates.''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The bill (S. 3502), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

SOURCE CODE HARMONIZATION AND REUSE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 9566, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 9566) to require government-wide source code sharing, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 9566) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION ACCOUNTABILITY (FEMA) WORKFORCE PLANNING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 549, S. 4181.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4181) to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which was reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Emergency Mobilization Accountability (FEMA) Workforce Planning Act''.

SEC. 2. FEMA WORKFORCE PLAN.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Agency.

(2) AGENCY.—The term ''Agency'' means the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(4) SURGE CAPACITY FORCE.—The term ''Surge Capacity Force'' means the Surge Capacity Force described in section 624 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 711).

(b) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every 3 years thereafter, the Administrator shall develop and submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a human capital operating plan to shape and improve the workforce of the Agency.

(c) LEADING PRACTICES.—The Administrator shall develop the plan required under subsection (b) in accordance with best practices outlined by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Comptroller General of the United States, and other sources relevant to the Federal workforce.

(d) CONTENTS.—The plan developed under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) performance measures to monitor and evaluate progress towards the human capital goals of the Agency, including filling staffing gaps, closing skills gaps in mission critical occupations, and implementing workforce training and, if applicable, progress towards meeting those goals since the date of submission of the most recent plan under subsection (b), including—

(A) a process to monitor and evaluate progress toward those goals;

(B) a discussion of why the Agency has or has not met those goals, including a description of specific barriers; and

(C) a discussion of the addition or deletion of any specific performance measures;

(2) details of the types of employees of the Agency, including by hiring authority and cadre;

(3) a comprehensive analysis of the projected costs associated with implementing the plan;

(4) strategies and practices designed to increase cost-efficiency within the workforce operations of the Agency, including reducing overhead costs, improving resource utilization, and avoiding unnecessary expenditures;

(5) a detailed analysis of how the Agency determined the current overall staffing goals of the Agency;

(6) an analysis of the current workforce of the Agency and possible gaps in the current staffing structure of the Agency needed to fulfill the mission of the Agency, including an assessment of—

(A) the critical and emerging skills that will be needed in the workforce of the Agency to support the mission and responsibilities of, and effectively manage, the Agency during the 3-year period following the date of the submission of the plan, including target staffing numbers by cadre, region, and office;

(B) the skills of the workforce of the Agency, including numbers of employees by cadre, region, and office on the date of submission of the plan;

(C) projected trends in the workforce of the Agency based on expected losses due to retirement and other attrition, including any known data for the causes of attrition; and

(D) the staffing levels of each category of employee of the Agency, including shortages in the workforce of the Agency and in the projected workforce of the Agency that should be addressed to ensure that the Agency has continued access to the critical and emerging skills described in subparagraph (A);

(7) a plan of action with specific recommendations for developing and reshaping the workforce of the Agency to address the gaps in critical and emerging skills described in paragraph (6)(A), including—

(A) specific recruitment and retention goals by cadre and mission critical occupations, including the analysis that the Agency uses to produce those numbers;

(B) specific strategies for developing, training, deploying, motivating, and retaining the workforce of the Agency and the ability of the workforce of the Agency to fulfill the mission and responsibilities of the Agency, including the program objectives of the Department and the Agency to be achieved through such strategies;

(C) specific strategies for recruiting and retaining individuals needed to address workforce gaps within specific cadres;

(D) specific strategies for the development, training, and coordinated and rapid deployment of the Surge Capacity Force; and

(E) any necessary legislative proposals to improve recruitment and retention; and

(8) a discussion that—

(A) details the number of employees not employed by the Agency serving in the Surge Capacity Force and the qualifications or credentials and training of such individuals;

(B) includes information on annual data relating to the deployment of the workforce of the Agency following major disasters or emergencies declared by the President under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170, 5191) during the 3-year period preceding the date of the submission of the plan;

(C) details—

(i) average tenure and attrition data, categorized by type of attrition, for—

(I) types of Agency employees by hiring authority; and

(II) specific offices, regions, and cadres of the Agency; and

(ii) any known reasons why some types of Agency employees or specific offices, regions, or cadres of the Agency may have higher levels of attrition and strategies to address those higher levels of attrition;

(D) details—

(i) efforts of the Agency to help prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment; and

(ii) information on reported cases of discrimination and harassment within the Agency and the outcomes of those cases; and

(E) describes, with respect to hiring information of the Agency, the time between the date on which the Agency validates a need to hire a new employee for a position and—

(i) the acceptance of an offer of employment for the position by an applicant; and

(ii) the start date of the employee at the Agency for the position.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the submission of the plan required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) analyzes whether the plan meets the requirements of this Act; and

(2) includes necessary recommendations to ensure subsequent plans meet the requirements of this Act.

(f) NO NEW FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of carrying out this Act.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Peters amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the committee-reported substitute, as amended, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3340) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop strategies for identifying, addressing, preventing, and mitigating discriminatory actions or decisions based on political affiliation)

On page 12, line 15, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''any'' on line 16, and insert the following:

(E) specific strategies for identifying, addressing, preventing, and mitigating discriminatory actions or decisions based on political affiliation; and

(F) any

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 4181), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

S. 4181

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Emergency Mobilization Accountability (FEMA) Workforce Planning Act''.

SEC. 2. FEMA WORKFORCE PLAN.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Agency.

(2) AGENCY.—The term ''Agency'' means the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(3) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(4) SURGE CAPACITY FORCE.—The term ''Surge Capacity Force'' means the Surge Capacity Force described in section 624 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 711).

(b) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every 3 years thereafter, the Administrator shall develop and submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a human capital operating plan to shape and improve the workforce of the Agency.

(c) LEADING PRACTICES.—The Administrator shall develop the plan required under subsection (b) in accordance with best practices outlined by the Director of the Office of

Personnel Management, the Comptroller General of the United States, and other sources relevant to the Federal workforce.

(d) CONTENTS.—The plan developed under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) performance measures to monitor and evaluate progress towards the human capital goals of the Agency, including filling staffing gaps, closing skills gaps in mission critical occupations, and implementing workforce training and, if applicable, progress towards meeting those goals since the date of submission of the most recent plan under subsection (b), including—

(A) a process to monitor and evaluate progress toward those goals;

(B) a discussion of why the Agency has or has not met those goals, including a description of specific barriers; and

(C) a discussion of the addition or deletion of any specific performance measures;

(2) details of the types of employees of the Agency, including by hiring authority and cadre;

(3) a comprehensive analysis of the projected costs associated with implementing the plan;

(4) strategies and practices designed to increase cost-efficiency within the workforce operations of the Agency, including reducing overhead costs, improving resource utilization, and avoiding unnecessary expenditures;

(5) a detailed analysis of how the Agency determined the current overall staffing goals of the Agency;

(6) an analysis of the current workforce of the Agency and possible gaps in the current staffing structure of the Agency needed to fulfill the mission of the Agency, including an assessment of—

(A) the critical and emerging skills that will be needed in the workforce of the Agency to support the mission and responsibilities of, and effectively manage, the Agency during the 3-year period following the date of the submission of the plan, including target staffing numbers by cadre, region, and office;

(B) the skills of the workforce of the Agency, including numbers of employees by cadre, region, and office on the date of submission of the plan;

(C) projected trends in the workforce of the Agency based on expected losses due to retirement and other attrition, including any known data for the causes of attrition; and

(D) the staffing levels of each category of employee of the Agency, including shortages in the workforce of the Agency and in the projected workforce of the Agency that should be addressed to ensure that the Agency has continued access to the critical and emerging skills described in subparagraph (A);

(7) a plan of action with specific recommendations for developing and reshaping the workforce of the Agency to address the gaps in critical and emerging skills described in paragraph (6)(A), including—

(A) specific recruitment and retention goals by cadre and mission critical occupations, including the analysis that the Agency uses to produce those numbers;

(B) specific strategies for developing, training, deploying, motivating, and retaining the workforce of the Agency and the ability of the workforce of the Agency to fulfill the mission and responsibilities of the Agency, including the program objectives of the Department and the Agency to be achieved through such strategies;

(C) specific strategies for recruiting and retaining individuals needed to address workforce gaps within specific cadres;

(D) specific strategies for the development, training, and coordinated and rapid deployment of the Surge Capacity Force;

(E) specific strategies for identifying, addressing, preventing, and mitigating discriminatory actions or decisions based on political affiliation; and

(F) any necessary legislative proposals to improve recruitment and retention; and

(8) a discussion that—

(A) details the number of employees not employed by the Agency serving in the Surge Capacity Force and the qualifications or credentials and training of such individuals;

(B) includes information on annual data relating to the deployment of the workforce of the Agency following major disasters or emergencies declared by the President under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170, 5191) during the 3-year period preceding the date of the submission of the plan;

(C) details—

(i) average tenure and attrition data, categorized by type of attrition, for—

(I) types of Agency employees by hiring authority; and

(II) specific offices, regions, and cadres of the Agency; and

(ii) any known reasons why some types of Agency employees or specific offices, regions, or cadres of the Agency may have higher levels of attrition and strategies to address those higher levels of attrition;

(D) details—

(i) efforts of the Agency to help prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment; and

(ii) information on reported cases of discrimination and harassment within the Agency and the outcomes of those cases; and

(E) describes, with respect to hiring information of the Agency, the time between the date on which the Agency validates a need to hire a new employee for a position and—

(i) the acceptance of an offer of employment for the position by an applicant; and

(ii) the start date of the employee at the Agency for the position.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the submission of the plan required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) analyzes whether the plan meets the requirements of this Act; and

(2) includes necessary recommendations to ensure subsequent plans meet the requirements of this Act.

(f) NO NEW FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of carrying out this Act.

FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE GRANTS FOR TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 550, S. 4654.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4654) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian tribal governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which was reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fire Management Assistance Grants for Tribal Governments Act''.

SEC. 2. INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT ELIGIBILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting '', Indian tribal government,'' before ''or local government'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) through (e) as subsections (c) through (f), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) PROCEDURE FOR REQUEST.—The Governor of a State or the Chief Executive of an Indian tribal government affected by a fire described in subsection (a) may directly submit a request to authorize assistance under this section.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall prohibit an Indian tribal government from receiving assistance under this section pursuant to an authorization made at the request of a State under subsection (b) if assistance is not authorized under this section for the same incident based on a request by the Indian tribal government under subsection (b).''.

(b) REGULATIONS.—

(1) FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE DECLARATION DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''fire management assistance declaration'' means a declaration approved under section 204.21(a) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) UPDATE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall issue regulations updating part 204 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, to carry out the amendments made by subsection (a).

(3) CONTENTS.—In issuing the regulations required under paragraph (2), the President shall—

(A) authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency to directly receive a request for a fire management assistance declaration from an Indian tribal government and directly provide related grants and resources to Indian tribal governments;

(B) clarify that Indian tribal governments for which the President does not grant a request described in subparagraph (A) remain eligible to receive assistance under section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187) through assistance granted under a fire management assistance declaration made at the request of a State;

(C) consider the unique conditions that affect the general welfare of Indian tribal governments; and

(D) enter into government-to-government consultation with Indian tribal governments regarding the regulations.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 4654), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

FAIRNESS FOR SERVICEMEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ACT OF 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 1299 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1299) to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Cornyn substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3341) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. PERIODIC REVIEW OF AUTOMATIC MAXIMUM COVERAGE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE AND VETERANS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage

''(a) IN GENERAL.—On January 1, 2025, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

''(1) complete a review of how the amount specified in section 1967(a)(3)(A)(i) compares to the amount described in subsection (b); and

''(2) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate the results of the review, which may serve as a guide for coverage increases within the existing administrative incremental structure.

''(b) AMOUNT DESCRIBED.—The amount described in this subsection is the amount equal to—

''(1) $500,000; multiplied by

''(2) the average percentage by which the Consumer Price Index changed during the five fiscal years preceding the review under subsection (a).

''(c) CONSUMER PRICE INDEX DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'Consumer Price Index' means the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 19 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1980A the following new item:

''1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage.''.

The bill (S. 1299), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

PATSYE CRITES FOREST

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 5575, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5575) to designate the Patsye Crites forest.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I further ask that the bill be considered read three times and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 5575) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 5575

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF PATSYE CRITES FOREST.

(a) DESIGNATION.—On acquisition by the United States, the approximately 2,693.31 acres of land within the Monongahela National Forest identified on the map prepared by the Forest Service entitled ''Blackwater Canyon'' and dated August 5, 2024, shall be known and designated as the ''Patsye Crites Forest''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the land acquired under subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Patsye Crites Forest''.

OPIOID OVERDOSE DATA COLLECTION ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 5130 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5130) to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 5130) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 5130

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Opioid Overdose Data Collection Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to expand the adoption and implementation of, and provide interoperability of, data collection tools used to track fatal and nonfatal overdoses and opioid overdose reversal medication administration in near real-time through a web-based, mobile-friendly software platform.

SEC. 3. COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 3021 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10701) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (G), by striking ''; and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (H), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(I) an overdose data collection program described in subsection (g)(1).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) OVERDOSE DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An overdose data collection program described in this paragraph is a program under which a State, unit of local government, coalition of law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribe develops and implements a data collection tool, including mobile data mapping applications, with which the State, unit of local government, coalition of law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribe can easily and quickly track the locations of—

''(A) suspected fatal and nonfatal overdoses; and

''(B) the administration of opioid overdose reversal medication by first responders, including law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service technicians.

''(2) ELIGIBILITY OF COALITIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(1), a coalition of law enforcement agencies shall be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a) only for the purpose of implementing an overdose data collection program described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—A coalition of law enforcement agencies seeking a grant under subsection (a) to implement an overdose data collection program described in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be subject to the same requirements and authorizations to which a States, units of local government, and Indian tribes are subject under this section, including the requirement to submit an application under section 3022.

''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—A State, unit of local government, coalition of law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribe implementing an overdose data collection program described in paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) support the development of coordinated public safety, behavioral health, and public health responses to the data collected by the tool described in paragraph (1);

''(B) focus on areas in which fatal and nonfatal overdoses occur and trends of concern;

''(C) provide for interoperability with existing Federal, State, local, and Tribal overdose data collection tools and overdose data collection tools of coalitions of law enforcement agencies; and

''(D) make data collected through the program available to Federal, State, Tribal, and territorial governments and coalitions of law enforcement agencies.

''(4) AUDIT; APPLICATION.—A State, unit of local government, coalition of law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribe seeking to use a grant received under subsection (a) for a program described in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall—

''(A) conduct an audit of available data and resources; and

''(B) in order to avoid duplication, submit the audit conducted under subparagraph (A) as a part of the application for the grant of the State, unit of local government, coalition of law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribe.

''(5) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this subsection, the Attorney General shall consult with the heads of agencies that maintain overdose data collection tools, including the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.''.

INVEST TO PROTECT ACT OF 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 1144 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1144) to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Cortez Masto substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3342) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The bill (S. 1144), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIVE AMERICAN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 663, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 663) to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 663) was passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IHS WORKFORCE PARITY ACT OF 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 553, S. 3022.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3022) to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to allow Indian Health Service scholarship and loan recipients to fulfill service obligations through half-time clinical practice, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''IHS Workforce Parity Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN RECIPIENTS.

(a) INDIAN HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS.—Section 104(b)(3) of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1613a(b)(3)) is amended by striking the paragraph designation and all that follows through the end of subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(3)(A) The active duty service obligation under a written contract with the Secretary under section 338A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l) that an individual has entered into under that section shall, if that individual is a recipient of an Indian Health Scholarship—

''(i) be met by full-time (as defined in section 331(j) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(j))) practice—

''(I) in the Service;

''(II) in a program conducted under a contract entered into under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);

''(III) in a program assisted under title V; or

''(IV) in the private practice of the applicable profession if, as determined by the Secretary, in accordance with guidelines issued by the Secretary, the practice—

''(aa) is situated in a physician or other health professional shortage area; and

''(bb) addresses the health care needs of a substantial number of Indians; or

''(ii) be met by half-time (as defined in section 331(j) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(j))) practice in a program described in any of subclauses (I) through (IV) of clause (i) if the individual agrees, in writing—

''(I) to double the period of obligated service that would otherwise be required if the individual were satisfying the period of obligated service through full-time (as so defined) practice; and

''(II) that if the individual fails to begin or complete the period of obligated service described in subclause (I), the procedures described in section 108(l)(2) for determining damages for breach of contract will be used after converting that period of obligated service or service performed into its full-time equivalent.''.

(b) INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.—Section 108 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1616a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)(1)(B), by striking clause (iii) and inserting the following:

''(iii) to serve for a period of time (referred to in this section as the 'period of obligated service') equal to—

''(I) 2 years, or a longer period of time as the individual may agree to serve, in the full-time (as defined in section 331(j) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(j))) clinical practice of the profession of the individual in an Indian health program to which the individual may be assigned by the Secretary;

''(II) 4 years, or a longer period of time as the individual may agree to serve, in the half-time (as defined in that section) clinical practice of the profession of the individual in an Indian health program to which the individual may be assigned by the Secretary, subject to the condition that if the individual has agreed to serve for a period longer than 2 years of full-time (as so defined) service, as described in subclause (I), the half-time (as so defined) service obligation shall be the amount of time required for the individual to complete an equivalent amount of service on a half-time (as so defined) basis; or

''(III) 2 years in the half-time (as so defined) clinical practice of the profession of the individual in an Indian health program to which the individual may be assigned by the Secretary with a loan payment amount equal to 50 percent of the amount that would otherwise be payable for full-time (as so defined) service for that same period of obligated service; and

''(iv) in the case of an individual completing a period of obligated service through half-time (as so defined) clinical practice, that if the individual fails to begin or complete that period of obligated service, the procedures described in subsection (l)(2) for determining damages for breach of contract under this section will be used after converting the period of obligated service or service performed into its full-time (as so defined) equivalent;''; and

(2) in subsection (l)(2), in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (D), by inserting the following before ''Amounts'': ''Periods of obligated service completed in half-time (as defined in section 331(j) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(j))) clinical practice shall be converted to their full-time (as defined in that section) equivalents for purposes of determining damages for breach of contract under this paragraph.''.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 3022), as amended, was passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DETERRING EXTERNAL THREATS AND ENSURING ROBUST RESPONSES TO EGREGIOUS AND NEFARIOUS CRIMINAL ENDEAVORS ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 5398 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5398) to authorize sentencing enhancements for certain criminal offenses directed by or coordinated with foreign governments.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. SCHUMER. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 5398) was passed, as follows:

S. 5398

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Deterring External Threats and Ensuring Robust Responses to Egregious and Nefarious Criminal Endeavors Act'' or the ''DETERRENCE Act''.

SEC. 2. KIDNAPPING.

Section 1201 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i);

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

''(h) SENTENCE ENHANCEMENTS FOR OFFENSES DIRECTED BY OR COORDINATED WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (a) may be increased by up to 10 years if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(2) CONSPIRACY.—The sentence of a person convicted of conspiring to commit a violation of subsection (a) as part of a conspiracy under the elements specified in subsection (c) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(A) 1 or more of the persons involved in such conspiracy were knowingly acting in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government; and

''(B) the person convicted of conspiring to commit a violation of subsection (a) knew that 1 or more of the persons involved in such conspiracy were knowingly acting in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(3) ATTEMPT.—The sentence of a person convicted of an attempt to violate subsection (a) may be increased by up to 5 years if such attempt was knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.''; and

(3) in subsection (i), as so designated, by inserting ''DEFINITION.—'' before ''As used in this section''.

SEC. 3. USE OF INTERSTATE COMMERCE FACILITIES IN THE COMMISSION OF MURDER-FOR-HIRE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1958 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c);

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) SENTENCE ENHANCEMENTS FOR OFFENSES DIRECTED BY OR COORDINATED WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.—The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (a)—

''(1) may be increased by up to 5 years, if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government; and

''(2) may be increased by up to 10 years—

''(A) if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government; and

''(B) personal injury results.''; and

(3) in subsection (c), as so redesignated, by inserting ''DEFINITIONS.—'' before ''As used in this section''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 2332b(g)(2) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 1958(b)(2)'' and inserting ''section 1958''.

(2) Section 1010A(d) of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 960a(d)) is amended by striking ''section 1958(b)(1)'' and inserting ''section 1958''.

SEC. 4. INFLUENCING, IMPEDING, OR RETALIATING AGAINST A FEDERAL OFFICIAL BY THREATENING OR INJURING A FAMILY MEMBER.

Section 115(b) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (a), if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government—

''(A) may be increased by up to 5 years if the offense committed was an assault involving physical contact with the victim of that assault or the intent to commit another felony;

''(B) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(i) the offense committed was an assault resulting in bodily injury (including serious bodily injury (as that term is defined in section 1365 of this title));

''(ii) the offense involved any conduct that, if the conduct occurred in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, would violate section 2241 or 2242 of this title; or

''(iii) a dangerous weapon was used during and in relation to the offense; and

''(C) may be increased by up to 10 years if the offense committed was a murder, attempted murder, or conspiracy to murder.''.

SEC. 5. STALKING.

Section 2261A of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''Whoever—'' and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), whoever—''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) ENHANCED PENALTIES FOR OFFENSES INVOLVING FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.—The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a), if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government—

''(1) may be increased by up to 5 years if—

''(A) serious bodily injury (including permanent disfigurement or life threatening bodily injury) to the victim results;

''(B) the offender uses a dangerous weapon during the offense; or

''(C) the victim of the offense is under the age of 18 years;

''(2) may be increased by up to 10 years if death of the victim results; and

''(3) may be increased by up to 30 months in any other case.''.

SEC. 6. PROTECTION OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 1114 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) SENTENCE ENHANCEMENTS FOR OFFENSES DIRECTED BY OR COORDINATED WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.—The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (a) may be increased by up to 10 years if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.''.

SEC. 7. PRESIDENTIAL AND PRESIDENTIAL STAFF ASSASSINATION, KIDNAPPING, AND ASSAULT.

Section 1751 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f) through (k) as subsections (g) through (i), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f)(1) The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (a), (b), or (c) may be increased by up to 10 years if such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(2) The sentence of a person convicted of conspiring to kill or kidnap any individual designated in subsection (a) as part of a conspiracy under the elements specified in subsection (d) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(A) 1 or more of the persons involved in such conspiracy were knowingly acting in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government; and

''(B) the person convicted of conspiring to kill or kidnap an individual designated in subsection (a) knew that 1 or more of the persons involved in such conspiracy were knowingly acting in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(3) The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (e) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(A) the victim was any person designated in subsection (a)(1); and

''(B) such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(4) The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (e) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(A) the victim was any person designated in subsection (a)(2); and

''(B) such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.

''(5) The sentence of a person convicted of an offense under subsection (e) may be increased by up to 10 years if—

''(A)(i) the offense involved the use of a dangerous weapon; or

''(ii) personal injury resulted; and

''(B) such offense was committed knowingly at the direction of or in coordination with a foreign government or an agent of a foreign government.''.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL MILITARY TOXIC EXPOSURES AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 932, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 932) designating the month of October 2024 as ''National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month''.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 932) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO DIANNE NELLOR

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Dianne Nellor, who is retiring after serving on the Senate Appropriations Committee for nearly 22 years and who has left her fingerprints on so much of the crucial legislation to support our farmers, strengthen our food supply, and keep our families healthy.

Dianne Nellor first joined the Senate Appropriations Committee in 2003 under Chair Stevens, on the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. In 2018, Dianne was named clerk of the subcommittee. She has served as clerk of the subcommittee under Senators MERKLEY, BALDWIN, and HEINRICH—and we all can attest that she has been an invaluable member of the team.

At a time of immense global change and in an era where climate change has put intense focus on issues like food supply chains, crop resilience, keeping small farms afloat, and putting food on the table, the investments we make in our agriculture and in our families have huge implications for our Nation's future. Dianne has worked tirelessly to help the Senate solve problems, address these challenges, and ensure Congress makes critical strategic investments in FDA, our farmers, and our families.

Among her many accomplishments, Dianne helped negotiate 18 annual appropriations bills and 3 full-year continuing resolutions, drafted at least 17 supplemental bills, and has remained a tireless advocate for international food aid and child nutrition programs. The progress we made on these issues is part of an incredible legacy she has written into our Nation's laws through her work. Dianne has also been a mentor to staff and an advocate for many issues that are important to Senators and their communities back home.

We all owe Dianne a debt of gratitude for working through many long nights and completing many hard negotiations in service of our Nation. As chair of the Appropriations Committee, I have leaned on Dianne's wisdom and counsel, and it is clear to all that her expertise, dedication, and ability to work across the aisle to make progress have made our country stronger. She will be deeply missed.

On behalf of all the past committee leadership—and all the Senators and staff—who have worked with Dianne over the years and who know firsthand just how impactful her counsel has been, I would like to thank you, Dianne, for your service. You will be missed, and we wish you all the best for what lies ahead. Thank you.

REMEMBERING JAMES A. McCLURE

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, today I rise with my colleagues Senator MIKE CRAPO, Congressman MIKE SIMPSON, and Congressman RUSS FULCHER to acknowledge former Idaho U.S. Senator James A. McClure who, on December 27, would have celebrated his 100th birthday. Senator McClure was a remarkable man whose dedication to the State of Idaho and the United States left an indelible mark on our Nation's history. We are proud to recognize him not only as a distinguished public servant but also as an esteemed alumnus of the University of Idaho, where his legacy continues to inspire future generations.

Senator McClure's political career was nothing short of exceptional. A proud graduate of the University of Idaho's College of Law, he served as the Payette County prosecuting attorney, an Idaho State Senator, and a three-term Member of Congress before his election to the U.S. Senate, where he served from 1973 to 1991. His committee assignments included the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which he chaired from 1981 to 1987, underscoring his leadership and expertise in Federal land management and American energy production. Among Senator McClure's accomplishments were the creation of the Federal Department of Energy and the Hells Canyon National Recreation area.

Beyond his political achievements, Senator McClure's commitment to public service was evident in his contributions to the University of Idaho. Together with his wife Louise, he was a steadfast supporter of the university, established the James and Louise McClure Endowment for the Sciences and Public Policy, and served on various boards, including the U of I Foundation and the College of Law Advisory Board. The James A. and Louise McClure Center for Public Policy, established in 2007, embodies their passion for evidence-based research and its application in public policy.

The McClure Center's focus on research, civic engagement, science policy, and student programs reflect the values that Senator McClure championed throughout his life. By inspiring students and stakeholders alike, the center continues to uphold the highest standards of excellence and impact, reinforcing the importance of informed public policy in Idaho and beyond.

On this occasion, we are proud to honor Senator McClure's legacy of public service, commitment to education, and support for the State of Idaho, which will resonate for generations to come.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN ROE LEWIS

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Stephen Roe Lewis, Governor of the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona, for being named one of TIME Magazine's 100 most influential climate leaders in 2024.

Governor Lewis is the longest serving Governor of the Gila River Indian Community, presiding over its reservation with a land area of 583.749 square miles and a 2020 census population of over 14,000 Tribal citizens. Spearheading his vision of a ''blue-green economy'' that prioritizes conserving water and producing renewable energy, with the ultimate goal of becoming a net-zero Tribe, Governor Lewis is doing something that has never been achieved before in the Western Hemisphere: turning canals into solar-power systems.

Governor Lewis is a solutions-focused leader, whose tireless work is a testament to the strength of the people of

the Gila River Indian Community. I have had the privilege of working with Governor Lewis for many years—and I am grateful for his strong partnership in delivering results on behalf of the Arizonans we serve.

While writing and negotiating the bipartisan infrastructure law, I worked closely with Governor Lewis to secure never-before-seen water and transportation infrastructure investments in communities across Arizona.

Thanks to Governor Lewis' partnership, I was proud to lead into law the Blackwater Trading Post Land Transfer Act, increasing land rights and economic opportunities for the Gila River Indian Community.

Both Governor Lewis and I understand that Arizona's water future requires working together to meet the drought challenge. As a trusted member of my Water Advisory Council, Governor Lewis is an advocate for the Community's interests and needs and fights for the well-being of our entire State.

Governor Lewis takes innovative approaches to conserve and replace supplies from the Colorado River by working collaboratively with others in Arizona and in the Basin. In 2022, during one of my Water Advisory Council meetings, Governor Lewis announced that the Community would be able to offer 250,000-acre-feet of water a year, totaling 750,000 over 3 years, for conservation and to increase the assured water supplies of Arizona municipalities—a decision that takes real leadership.

Arizona's water crisis requires leaders who are willing and committed to working around the clock to deliver solutions. Time and time again, Governor Lewis has demonstrated a deep commitment to strengthening our water future in the face of historic drought. I am confident that, with leaders like Governor Lewis at the table, we will continue delivering lasting solutions and giving Arizonans peace of mind that our water supply is safe and secure for generations to come.

Governor Lewis is a valuable voice, not just for Tribal sovereignty and his community, but for Arizona and the entire Southwest. He is a cheerful warrior who knows how to get things done—and I am proud to call him my friend.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ROGER S. CHRISTENSEN

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, with my colleagues Senator JIM RISCH and Representative MIKE SIMPSON, we join in honoring Roger Christensen for his decades of service to Idahoans as Bonneville County Commissioner.

Roger Christensen of Idaho Falls has been a steady, experienced hand at the helm of Bonneville County for the past 30 years. He became commissioner in January 1995 and has served faithfully until his upcoming retirement in January 2025, giving him the distinction of being the longest serving Bonneville County commissioner. Roger has led the Bonneville County Board of Commissioners as its chairman for the majority of his time as commissioner. He has dedicated those years meaningfully, as he has been influential in strengthening the fiscal health of the county. This financial discipline has helped the county provide for necessities and plan for the future, setting it on a more secure economic path.

Throughout, he has lent his experience in accounting, business, and as a college professor to advancing local priorities in the county that has grown considerably over his tenure. Some of the many efforts he moved forward and resolved over the years include relocating the Bonneville County Fairgrounds and selecting judges, to name just a couple. When facing considerable challenges, he kept a perceptive focus on completing the task at hand. His work has been marked by principles of transparency, treading lightly, forging partnerships, aiming for a smooth and simple government, and well-reasoned decision-making.

In addition to his service as commissioner, Roger has pursued his passion for community service through many other capacities. He served in leadership roles for the Idaho Association of Counties, including his service as the association's president in 2009. He dedicated 14 years to service on the Catastrophic Health Care Cost, CAT, Program Board; 4 years to the Supreme Court Drug Court Oversight Committee; 2 years to the Board of Directors for the National Association of Counties; 21 years to the Magistrates Commission; and 16 years to the Eastern Idaho Regional Sewer District.

Thank you, Roger, for your unwavering leadership of Bonneville County. You can retire knowing you have made a lasting, positive impact. And you have, undoubtedly, etched a clear example of outstanding governance in the minds and hearts of all those who have been fortunate enough to know you and benefit from your service. We wish you all the best for a retirement filled with more time with your wife, grandchildren, and many other loved ones.●

RECOGNIZING ELLIOTT ART STUDIO

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize Elliott Art Studio of Jefferson, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 2023, Chad and Alyssa Elliott opened Elliott Art Studio in Jefferson. Chad Elliott, a lifelong artist and painter, started creating art as early as 5 years old. His skills and passion for art grew after graduating with a degree in ceramics from Graceland University. While honing his skills, Chad also discovered a new passion for music, teaching himself guitar and integrating this creative outlet into his life as an artist. Today, Chad tours the country as a musician, both as a solo artist and as one-half of a duo named the Weary Ramblers. The Iowa duo was even considered for seven Grammy nominations this year.

Chad created all of his art in a home studio before his family moved to Jefferson in 2023. Inspired by the community's vibrant support for the arts, the Elliotts decided to open a brick-and-mortar location to create, sell, and teach art to aspiring artists. The studio is sectioned into a gallery in the front that displays finished pieces and a workshop in the back to develop art. The Elliotts also purchased a pottery wheel and kiln to create ceramics pieces in the studio. The studio has grown to become more than an art space, hosting concerts with local artists, open mic nights, and song circles.

Chad and Alyssa manage Elliott Art Studio, with their children contributing their own artwork to the gallery. Recently, the couple expanded their products to offer hoodies and home decor featuring Chad's designs. They also plan to launch painting and pottery classes, as well as artistic workshops.

To give back to the community that helped inspire the studio, the Elliotts are active in the Jefferson community through their involvement on the downtown Jefferson business promotions team, which helps support small businesses in the community. Chad also shares his talents throughout Iowa, painting murals in Coon Rapids, Spencer, and his hometown of Guthrie Center. The business looks forward to celebrating their second anniversary in Jefferson in May 2025.

Elliott Art Studio's commitment to inspire the next generation of Iowa artists is commendable. I want to congratulate the Elliotts for their creativity and dedication to growing the art community, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL COURTNEY

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, with my colleagues Senator MIKE CRAPO and Congressman MIKE SIMPSON, we congratulate and honor the retirement of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Twin Falls District Manager Michael ''Mike'' Courtney after 33 years of faithful service.

Mike grew up in Twin Falls and attended the University of Idaho, where he received a bachelor's degree in rangeland resource management. His Federal career started in 1991 as a rangeland management specialist and wild horse and burro specialist in the BLM Salmon District Office. He then

served in the Jarbidge Field Office in Twin Falls as the rangeland management specialist, Burley field office manager, and the Twin Falls acting district manager. For the last decade, Mike has proudly served as the BLM Twin Falls District Manager. During his career, Mike has held many roles, including temporary details as the Shoshone field manager, Twin Falls associate district manager, deputy State director for resources in the Idaho State BLM Office, and as the Nevada BLM State director.

Mike has managed many issues and policies in the Magic Valley and Idaho, including the Murphy Complex Fire, the Sage Grouse Initiative, innovative grazing management, gun range development, fire rehabilitation and reseeding, and more. Throughout his career, Mike has been a calm, levelheaded leader who works to find solutions.

After the Murphy Complex Fire, one of Idaho's largest rangeland fires, Mike was instrumental in establishing and developing Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPA) in Idaho. Through the program, the BLM trains farmers, ranchers, and local communities how to fight fires to better equip them to be the first line of defense on rangeland fires. RFPAs have had a positive and substantial impact in helping to minimize and control rangeland fires, which threaten people and property in Idaho and throughout the West.

Mike has received numerous awards for his work in the BLM, including Outstanding Rangeland Management Specialist, Outstanding Service and Leadership as Deputy State Director, Exemplary Contributions to the Sage Grouse Initiative, Director's Excellence through Team Accomplishment, and the Director's Excellence in Leadership. He has also been recognized as the Idaho Cattle Association Friend of the Industry.

Mike is a dedicated public servant, helping with the Kimberly School District's athletic programs and becoming an integral part of Kimberly, Twin Falls, and the Magic Valley communities.

Congratulations, Mike Courtney, on your well-earned retirement. Your deep roots, extensive knowledge, and experience in Idaho have been a great benefit to our State and the Nation. Thank you for your outstanding and distinguished service to the BLM and the people of Idaho. We wish you the best in your future endeavors.●

REMEMBERING JIM JOHNSTON

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my colleagues Senator MIKE CRAPO and Congressman MIKE SIMPSON, to honor the life and legacy of Jim Johnston, who passed away on November 26, 2024. Jim was not just a resident of Pocatello; he was its biggest and most enthusiastic supporter, a presence felt at every grand opening, community event, and local initiative.

Jim's impact on Pocatello cannot be overstated. He was a dedicated public servant who served multiple terms on the Pocatello City Council and was a friend to many. His unwavering support for Idaho State University and its initiatives—such as the Welcome Back Orange and Black and Celebrate Idaho State events—highlighted his passion for uplifting our community.

Beyond his numerous accolades, including the Distinguished Citizen and Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pocatello-Chubbuck Chamber of Commerce, Jim was a man of action. As a founding member of Citizens Community Bank, a board trustee for the Idaho State Historical Society, and a significant contributor to Habitat for Humanity and the Chief Pocatello statue project, Jim's life was a testament to public service. His selflessness is illustrated in a story shared by his son Greg about how Jim won a dream vacation for himself and his wife Karen but chose instead to donate the $10,000 prize to Habitat for Humanity. This act of generosity encapsulated Jim's character and desire to improve the lives of others.

A devoted member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Jim held several leadership positions. Jim and Karen, his wife of nearly 60 years, took pride in instilling their values of faith and service to their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We thank them for their commitment, which has undoubtedly bettered the lives of countless Idahoans and members of the Pocatello community.

As we reflect on Jim Johnston's remarkable life, we remember a man who embodied the spirit of Pocatello—a successful businessman, realtor, volunteer, and above all, a loving father and grandfather. His contributions to the city, our State, and the people of Idaho will resonate for generations to come.

Today, we honor Jim Johnston's memory by continuing his legacy of service, kindness, and community spirit. He will be dearly missed, but his impact will endure in the hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing him.●

TRIBUTE TO DANIELA BECERRA

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize Daniela Becerra, a fall 2024 intern with my Orlando office, for the good work she did for my office and the people of Florida.

Daniela is currently a student at the University of Central Florida, where she is majoring in legal studies and finance. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who was devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Daniela, and I look forward to hearing of her good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENNAN MICHAEL BORALLY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize Brennan Michael Borally, a fall 2024 intern with my Orlando office, for the good work he did for my office and the people of Florida.

Brennan is currently a student at Stetson University, where he is majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who was devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Brennan, and I look forward to hearing of his good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JULIA ROSE GIBBS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize Julia Rose Gibbs, a fall 2024 intern with my Orlando office, for the good work she did for my office and the people of Florida.

Julia is currently a student at the University of Central Florida, where she is majoring in political science and pursuing an intelligence and national security minor. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who was devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Julia, and I look forward to hearing of her good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO DALEZKA ASTRID DE LA MATA GOGNY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize Dalezka Astrid De La Mata Gogny, a fall 2024 intern with my Orlando office, for the good work she did for my office and the people of Florida.

Dalezka is currently a student at Seminole State College, where she is majoring in finance. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who was devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Dalezka, and I look forward to hearing of her good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MIAH JAZMINE PEREZ

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize Miah Jazmine Perez, a fall 2024 intern with my Orlando office, for the good work she did for my office and the people of Florida.

Miah is currently a student at the University of Florida and Valencia College, where she is majoring in political science and psychology. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who was devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Miah, and I look forward to hearing of her good work in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 2:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 4199. An act to authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships.

H.R. 1097. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the Nation.

H.R. 3254. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3797. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an alternative manner of furnishing certain health insurance coverage statements to individuals.

H.R. 3801. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to streamline and improve the employer reporting process relating to health insurance coverage and to protect dependent privacy.

H.R. 5301. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to require agencies to include a list of outdated or duplicative reporting requirements in annual budget justifications, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6829. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize and support the creation and dissemination of cardiomyopathy education, awareness, and risk assessment materials and resources to identify more at-risk families, to authorize research and surveillance activities relating to cardiomyopathy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6960. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children program.

H.R. 7872. An act to amend the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act to modify certain requirements applicable to salinity control units, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills, except S. 4199, were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

At 2:20 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 59. An act to implement merit-based reforms to the civil service hiring system that replace degree-based hiring with skills- and competency-based hiring.

S. 141. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for home and community based services for veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 223. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Act to fix a technical error in the definitions.

S. 932. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the halt in pension payments for Members of Congress sentenced for certain offenses, and for other purposes.

S. 2414. An act to require agencies with working dog programs to implement the recommendations of the Government Accountability Office relating to the health and welfare of working dogs, and for other purposes.

S. 2513. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 3938. An act to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Lynchburg, Virginia, as the ''Private First Class Desmond T. Doss VA Clinic''.

S. 3946. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1106 Main Street in Bastrop, Texas, as the ''Sergeant Major Billy D. Waugh Post Office''.

S. 3998. An act to provide for the permanent appointment of certain temporary district judgeships.

S. 4077. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 180 Steuart Street in San Francisco, California, as the ''Dianne Feinstein Post Office''.

S. 4610. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to designate the bald eagle as the national bird.

S. 4716. An act to amend section 7504 of title 31, United States Code, to improve the single audit requirements.

S. 5314. An act to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as the James Mountain Inhofe VA Medical Center.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1377. An act to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to take certain actions to enhance the representation of the United States and promote United States leadership in communications standards-setting bodies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3293. An act to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to establish an interagency strike force to ensure that certain Federal land management agencies, including the organizational units of such agencies, prioritize the review of requests for communications use authorizations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3343. An act to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a plan for the Assistant Secretary to track the acceptance, processing, and disposal of certain Form 299s, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4534. An act to require a review of women and lung cancer, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4955. An act to name the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Henry Parham VA Clinic''.

H.R. 6020. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to eliminate consideration of the income of organ recipients in providing reimbursement of expenses to donating individuals, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6244. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1535 East Los Ebanos Boulevard in Brownsville, Texas, as the ''1st Lieutenant Andres Zermeno Post Office Building''.

H.R. 6394. An act to provide for the creation of a Congressional time capsule in commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7188. An act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a national, evidence-based education campaign to increase public and health care provider awareness regarding the potential risks and benefits of human cell and tissue products transplants, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7224. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond to Health and Wellness Training Program.

H.R. 8150. An act to require the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to establish procedures for conducting maintenance projects at ports of entry at which the Office of Field Operations conducts certain enforcement and facilitation activities.

H.R. 8667. An act to rename the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Cadillac, Michigan, as the ''Duane E. Dewey VA Clinic''.

H.R. 9124. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Auburn, California, as the ''Louis A. Conter VA Clinic''.

H.R. 9487. An act to amend the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 to authorize the Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives to designate more than one of the attorneys of the Office of the Legislative Counsel as a Deputy Legislative Counsel, and for other purposes.

H.R. 9489. An act to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, and for other purposes.

H.R. 9595. An act to improve Federal technology procurement, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 7213) to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance and reauthorize activities and programs relating to autism spectrum disorder, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1377. An act to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to take certain actions to enhance the representation of the United States and promote United States leadership in communications standards-setting bodies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3293. An act to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to establish an interagency strike force to ensure that certain Federal land management agencies, including the organizational units of such agencies, prioritize the review of requests for communications use authorizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3343. An act to require the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to submit to Congress a plan for the Assistant Secretary to track the acceptance, processing, and disposal of certain Form 299s, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4534. An act to require a review of women and lung cancer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 4955. An act to name the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Henry Parham VA Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 6020. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to eliminate consideration of the income of organ recipients in providing reimbursement of expenses to donating individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 6244. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1535 East Los Ebanos Boulevard in Brownsville, Texas, as the ''1st Lieutenant Andres Zermeno Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 6394. An act to provide for the creation of a Congressional time capsule in commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

H.R. 7224. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond to Health and Wellness Training Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 8667. An act to rename the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Cadillac, Michigan, as the ''Duane E. Dewey VA Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 9124. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Auburn, California, as the ''Louis A. Conter VA Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 8150. An act to require the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to establish procedures for conducting maintenance projects at ports of entry at which the Office of Field Operations conducts certain enforcement and facilitation activities.

H.R. 9489. An act to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–6834. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Truth in Lending (Regulation Z) Annual Threshold Adjustments (Credit Cards, HOEPA, and Qualified Mortgages)'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6835. A communication from the Counsel, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold'' (RIN1557–AF28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6836. A communication from the Senior Congressional Liaison, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fair Credit Reporting Act Disclosures'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2024; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6837. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Eighth Biennial Report to Congress: Estimates of Natural Gas and Oil Reserves, Reserves Growth, and Undiscovered Resources in Federal and State Waters off the Coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama''; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–6838. A communication from the Biologist of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Services, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Swale Paintbrush'' (RIN1018–BF79) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6839. A communication from the Manager of Delisting and Foreign Species, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for the Fluminense Swallowtail Butterfly, Harris' Mimic Swallowtail Butterfly, and Hahnel's Amazonian Swallowtail Butterfly'' (RIN1018–BG69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6840. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Reports of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee in FY 2023 and FY 2024''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6841. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress on Department of State Actions in FY 2023 and FY 2024 Pursuant to the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6842. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revised Timeline Regarding Implementation of Amended Section 6050W(e)'' (Notice 2024–85) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2024; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6843. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Exempt organization rulings and determination letters procedures'' (Rev. Proc. 2025–5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2024; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6844. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Taxable Income or Loss and Currency Gain or Loss with Respect to a Qualified Business Unit'' (RIN1545–BO07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 11, 2024; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6845. A communication from the Chief of Policy Analysis and Program Standards, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Black Lung Benefits Act: Authorization of Self-Insure'' (RIN1240–AA16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–6846. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Personal Protective Equipment in Construction'' (RIN1218–AD25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–6847. A communication from the Director of the Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the period of April 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6848. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to compliance by the United States courts of appeals and district courts with the time limitations established for deciding habeas corpus death penalty petitions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6849. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on applications for delayed-notice search warrants and extensions during fiscal year 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6850. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Changes in Rates VA Pays for Special Modes of Transportation; Delay of Effective Date from February 16, 2025, until February 16, 2029'' (RIN2900–AS19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 12, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 131. A bill to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to cover, for purposes of workers' compensation under such chapter, services by physician assistants and nurse practitioners provided to injured Federal workers, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–299).

S. 2270. A bill to establish and maintain a database within each agency for executive branch ethics records of noncareer appointees (Rept. No. 118–300).

S. 3926. A bill to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to ensure that other transaction agreements are reported to USAspending.gov, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–301).

S. 4700. A bill to modify the government-wide financial management plan, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–302).

S. 5312. A bill to require agencies to create consistent organizational hierarchies, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–303).

H.R. 3208. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a DHS Cybersecurity On-the-Job Training Program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–304).

H.R. 6972. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require an Executive agency whose head is a member of the National Security Council to notify the Executive Office of the President, the Comptroller General of the United States, and congressional leadership of such head becoming medically incapacitated within 24 hours, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–305).

H.R. 7528. An act to amend section 206 of the E-Government Act of 2002 to improve the integrity and management of mass comments and computer-generated comments in the regulatory review process, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–306).

H.R. 8631. An act to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from procuring certain foreign-made batteries, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–307).

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

H.R. 9592. An act to amend title 44, United States Code, to modernize the Federal Register, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–308).

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 690. A bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to evaluate and consider the impact of the telecommunications network equipment supply chain on the deployment of universal service, and for other purposes.

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1008. A bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a consumer product safety standard with respect to rechargeable lithium-ion batteries used in micromobility devices, and for other purposes.

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2238. A bill to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to develop a National Strategy to Close the Digital Divide, and for other purposes.

S. 2645. A bill to reduce the health risks of heat by establishing the National Integrated Heat Health Information System within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Integrated Heat Health Information System Interagency Committee to improve extreme heat preparedness, planning, and response, requiring a study, and establishing financial assistance programs to address heat effects, and for other purposes.

S. 2714. A bill to establish the National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource, and for other purposes.

S. 3162. A bill to improve the requirement for the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish testbeds to support the development and testing of trustworthy artificial intelligence systems and to improve interagency coordination in development of such testbeds, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. REED for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Gregory J. Brady, to be Lieutenant General.

*Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Johhny K. Davis, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Walter H. Allman III and ending with Capt. Thomas J. Zerr, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 12, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Andrew M. Biehn and ending with Capt. Brian A. Metcalf, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 12, 2024.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Col. Timothy S. Brady, Jr. and ending with Col. Jeremy S. Winters, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lh) John E. Dougherty IV and ending with Rear Adm. (lh) Douglas L. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Thomas M. Henderschedt, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lh) Christopher D. Alexander and ending with Rear Adm. (lh) Michael S. Wosje, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

*Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Luke C. G. Cropsey, to be Lieutenant General.

*Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Mark B. Pye, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Matthew C. Brown, to be Brigadier General.

*Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Joseph P. McGee, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Tonri C. Brown, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. John W. Sannes, to be Brigadier General.

*Army nomination of Lt. Gen. Curtis A. Buzzard, to be Lieutenant General.

*Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Brett G. Sylvia, to be Lieutenant General.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Air Force nominations beginning with Justin S. Alberico and ending with Jonathan A. Zannis, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Stephen M. Addington and ending with Joshua J. Wolfram, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Lee Edmond Akers and ending with Michael Gray Yttri, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Phillip N. Alvarez and ending with Stanley Y. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Eric Starr Buss and ending with Jonathan M. Walker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Stephen V. S. Alexander and ending with Yesun Yoon, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Lakisha N. Albertie and ending with Keri L. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 18, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with John C. Batka and ending with Richard Y. K. Yoo, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 18, 2024.

Air Force nomination of Keith A. Schultz, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Francis X. Parr III, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Jay E. Butterfield, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Thomas A. Hutton and ending with Robert D. Mcallister, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Air Force nominations beginning with Robert L. Bell and ending with Daniel J. Brown, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Air Force nomination of Gabriel R. Bultz, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Cora L. Allen and ending with 0003434384, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Army nomination of Rafael J. Kaplan, to be Major.

Navy nominations beginning with Christopher D. Caraway and ending with Bradford M. Winkelman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2024.

Navy nomination of Erik C. Hedval, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Keith C. Braddy, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Space Force nomination of Kenneth N. Wooten, to be Major.

Space Force nomination of Brenda L. Beegle, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. 5544. A bill to reduce the number of student visas available to nationals of the People's Republic of China until China removes certain restrictions on United States students pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities in China and to restrict the types of postsecondary study available to Chinese nationals in the United States to include sensitive topics with potential dual-use military application; Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. KIM):

S. 5545. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to laws relating to the payment of certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that are affected by death, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 5546. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide funding for innovations in community policing, mental health care, and community safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 5547. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to verify certain eligibility criteria for individuals enrolled for medical assistance quarterly, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 5548. A bill to amend title III of the Social Security Act to improve the accuracy of payment of unemployment compensation benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 5549. A bill to establish a grant program within the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to award grants to States that require the recording of all child welfare forensic interviews with children and adults, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mrs. BRITT):

S. 5550. A bill to amend the mission statement of the United States Military Academy to include the phrase ''Duty, Honor, Country''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself and Ms. ERNST):

S. 5551. A bill to extend the statute of limitations for offenses relating to pandemic-era programs to be 10 years; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5552. A bill to modify a provision supporting the execution of bilateral agreements concerning illicit transnational maritime activity and to authorize the President to impose sanctions with respect to illegal , unreported, or unregulated fishing and the sale, supply, purchase, or transfer of endangered species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 5553. A bill to provide for the use of capability-based analysis of price of goods or services offered by nontraditional defense contractors; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 5554. A bill to authorize the conveyance by the Secretary of the Army of certain property located in Paris, Texas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 5555. A bill to provide authority to use Defense Modernization Account funds for time-sensitive equipment modernization; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 5556. A bill to require a solid rocket motor industrial base strategy; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 5557. A bill to require identification in medical records of the Department of Defense of the affiliation of certain non-Department of Defense health care providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 5558. A bill to require all high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles of the Army to be equipped with an anti-lock brake system and electronic stability control kit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 5559. A bill to amend the Act of August 9, 1955 (commonly known as the ''Long-Term Leasing Act''), to authorize leases of up to 99 years for land in the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation and land held in trust for the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 5560. A bill to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 with respect to the eligibility of youth sports facilities for certain grants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 5561. A bill to establish a Federal standard in order to improve the Nation's resilience to current and future flood risk; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. BUDD):

S. 5562. A bill to modify United States-Israel anti-tunnel cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 5563. A bill to require the use of prescription drug monitoring programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 5564. A bill to increase the rate of duty on garlic originating from the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. OSSOFF (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 5565. A bill to encourage States to report to the Attorney General certain information regarding inmates who give birth in the custody of law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 5566. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any judgments, awards, and settlements with respect to sexual assault or sexual harassment claims, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 5567. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to assess the unintended impacts on the health and safety of people engaged in transactional sex, in connection with the enactment of the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 and the loss of interactive computer services that host information related to sexual exchange, to direct the Attorney General to submit a report on human trafficking investigations and prosecutions in connection with the same, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 5568. A bill to amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to provide that the supplemental security income benefits of adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities shall not be reduced by reason of marriage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 5569. A bill to establish a State rail formula grant program, to direct Federal Railroad Administration to create a Green Railroads Fund, to expand passenger rail programs, to address air quality concerns, to establish rail workforce training centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 5570. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish a grant program to rebuild and improve transportation infrastructure at urban waterfronts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 5571. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons that knowingly engage in significant operations in the defense and related materiel sector or the surveillance technology sector of the economy of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 5572. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from procuring certain foreign-made batteries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. COTTON, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 5573. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for a safe harbor from infringement of a method of use patent relating to drugs or biological products; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. REED):

S. 5574. A bill to support Lebanon's rule of law and democratic institutions through sanctions, grants, and scholarships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 5575. A bill to designate the Patsye Crites Forest; considered and passed.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LEE, Mr. LANKFORD, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S.J. Res. 122. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Waste Emissions Charge for Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems: Procedures for Facilitating Compliance, Including Netting and Exemptions''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. RICKETTS (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. Res. 928. A resolution honoring the life of Nebraska community leader John Edmund Gottschalk; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 929. A resolution expressing support for the designation of November 20, 2024, through December 20, 2024, as ''National Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. Res. 930. A resolution condemning the Government of Azerbaijan for perpetrating an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 931. A resolution recognizing the exceptional service of Ambassador Michael Herzog during his tenure as Ambassador of Israel to the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. Res. 932. A resolution designating the month of October 2024 as ''National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 262

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont

(Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 262, a bill to prohibit, or require disclosure of, the surveillance, monitoring, and collection of certain worker data by employers, and for other purposes.

S. 291

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 291, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 296

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 296, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 334

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 334, a bill to modify the restriction in section 3326 of title 5, United States Code, relating to the appointment of retired members of the Armed Forces to positions in the Department of Defense to apply to positions at or above the GS–14 level.

S. 1370

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1370, a bill to reauthorize and limit the pre-disaster mitigation program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 1441

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1441, a bill to establish a Center for Biomedical Innovation and Development in order to accelerate innovation and development of advanced medical countermeasure products.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to amend chapter 110 of title 18, United States Code, to prohibit gender transition procedures on minors, and for other purposes.

S. 1631

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1631, a bill to enhance the authority granted to the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice with respect to unmanned aircraft systems and unmanned aircraft, and for other purposes.

S. 1673

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1673, a bill to amend title XVIII to protect patient access to ground ambulance services under the Medicare program.

S. 2085

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2085, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests.

S. 2330

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2330, a bill to authorize the Small Business Administration to provide business loans to finance business software or cloud computing services, and for other purposes.

S. 2372

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2372, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 2477

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2477, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide pharmacy payment of certain services.

S. 3015

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3015, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to address telework for Federal employees, and for other purposes.

S. 3047

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3047, a bill to award payments to employees of Air America who provided support to the United States from 1950 to 1976, and for other purposes.

S. 3229

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3229, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies from restricting the use of convertible virtual currency by a person to purchase goods or services for the person's own use, and for other purposes.

S. 3698

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3698, a bill to amend title 11, District of Columbia Official Code, to revise references in such title to individuals with intellectual disabilities.

S. 4035

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4035, a bill to require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to take certain actions with respect to the health insurance program carried out under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 4374

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4374, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include screening for loneliness and coordination of supportive services and health care to address the negative health effects of loneliness, to require a report on loneliness, and for other purposes.

S. 4510

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4510, a bill to amend the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 to delay implementation of the inclusion of oral-only ESRD-related drugs in the Medicare ESRD prospective payment system.

S. 4588

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4588, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement a process for sharing military service data with States.

S. 4715

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4715, a bill to require the National Cyber Director to submit to Congress a plan to establish an institute within the Federal Government to serve as a centralized resource and training center for Federal cyber workforce development.

S. 4766

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4766, a bill to strengthen requirements for the use of accessible information and communications technology by Federal departments and agencies.

S. 4821

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4821, a bill to require executive agencies to take steps to better meet the statutory deadline for processing communications use applications, and for other purposes.

S. 4933

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4933, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the tax-exempt controlled entity rules with respect to certain stock of government-sponsored enterprises.

S. 5080

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5080, a bill to amend title 39 of the United States Code to require the Postmaster General to be appointed by the President, subject to Senate confirmation, and for other purposes.

S. 5097

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5097, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to establish a demonstration project to improve outpatient clinical care for individuals with sickle cell disease.

S. 5224

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5224, a bill to prohibit the imposition of requirements that handguns have certain features generally absent from firearms in common use, to restore the civil and natural rights of the people of the United States in States hostile to liberty, and for other purposes.

S. 5322

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 5322, a bill to amend the United States Sentencing Guidelines applicable to human smuggling offenses, and for other purposes.

S. 5388

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5388, a bill to restore funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

S. 5408

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 5408, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the life and legacy of Roberto Clemente.

S. 5428

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5428, a bill to provide women with increased access to preventative and life-saving cancer screening.

S. 5523

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5523, a bill to provide clarification of assistance related to safeguarding and the elimination of landmines, other explosive remnants of war, and conventional arms.

S. 5528

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5528, a bill to require an updated assessment of the public schools on installations of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3332

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mr. SCHIFF), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3332 intended to be proposed to H.R. 5009, a bill to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 928—HONORING THE LIFE OF NEBRASKA COMMUNITY LEADER JOHN EDMUND GOTTSCHALK

Mr. RICKETTS (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 928

Whereas John Edmund Gottschalk was born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1943;

Whereas John Edmund Gottschalk served as the chief executive officer and publisher of the Omaha World-Herald from 1989 to 2008, which he ran with tremendous integrity and led its modernization effort;

Whereas John Edmund Gottschalk was inducted into the Omaha Business Hall of Fame and the Nebraska Press Association Hall of Fame and was recognized in 1994 for his civic leadership and philanthropy by being named as the 98th King of Aksarben;

Whereas John Edmund Gottschalk's extensive civic life included such varied positions as chairman of the United Service Organizations Board of Governors, national president of the Boy Scouts of America, and chairman of Omaha Performing Arts;

Whereas John Edmund Gottschalk was dedicated to the preservation of downtown Omaha, and as an avid outdoorsman, he fought to conserve Nebraska's wildlife for future generations; and

Whereas, together with his wife, John Edmund Gottschalk fostered over 100 infants awaiting adoption: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of John Edmund Gottschalk;

(2) honors the life and legacy of John Edmund Gottschalk for his unwavering dedication to Nebraska as a civic leader and philanthropist; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the family of John Edmund Gottschalk.

SENATE RESOLUTION 929—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF NOVEMBER 20, 2024, THROUGH DECEMBER 20, 2024, AS ''NATIONAL SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 929

Whereas the United States faces a national public health crisis of gun violence;

Whereas, on average, over 20,000 homicides each year continue to rob families and communities of loved ones;

Whereas homicides increased by 30 percent in 2020, compounding the many deaths caused by COVID–19;

Whereas, for every 1 homicide victim, there are at least 10 surviving family members, and the number of survivors of homicide victims grows greater each year as they navigate life after the tragic loss of their loved one;

Whereas homicide victims are loved and grieved by parents, grandparents, siblings, family members, partners, children, friends, neighbors, classmates, colleagues, and communities across the country;

Whereas, in the United States, almost 1 in 4 Black and Hispanic or Latinx adults report having lost a loved one to a gun-related homicide;

Whereas losing a loved one to homicide is one of the most traumatic events a person can experience;

Whereas, in the United States, homicide is the leading cause of death for Black teenagers and the second leading cause of death for teenagers overall;

Whereas more than ½ of women who are victims of homicides are killed because of intimate partner violence;

Whereas 40 percent of homicides in the United States go unsolved;

Whereas losing a loved one to homicide results in short-term and chronic physical and behavioral health consequences that carry significant behavioral and economic burdens on families and communities impacted by murder, trauma, grief, and loss;

Whereas all families of homicide victims deserve to be treated with dignity and compassion;

Whereas surviving family members need holistic, coordinated, compassionate, and consistent support and services in the immediate aftermath of a homicide and ongoing opportunities for healing in the months and years afterward;

Whereas surviving family members want to remember and honor their loved ones' lives regardless of the circumstances surrounding their death;

Whereas survivors of homicide victims are transforming their pain into purpose by informing, influencing, and impacting public policy, and working to create and sustain an environment where all families can live in peace and all people are valued;

Whereas survivors, advocates, and providers are working together to implement equitable and effective community-based responses to homicide;

Whereas the leadership of surviving family and community members is essential to disrupting cycles of violence and promoting peace in all communities; and

Whereas recognition of the needs of survivors can help combat trauma, foster healing, and inform joy for families and communities impacted by homicide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of November 20, 2024, through December 20, 2024, as ''National Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month'';

(2) supports efforts to—

(A) raise awareness of survivors of homicide victims;

(B) take care of those affected by homicide, including families, schools, and communities, with appropriate services and information; and

(C) encourage research to—

(i) better address the needs of families and communities severely impacted by violence; and

(ii) consider ways to improve access to, and the quality of, behavioral health services for survivors of homicide victims; and

(3) calls on the people of the United States, interest groups, and affected persons to—

(A) promote awareness of survivors of homicide victims;

(B) take an active role in the fight to end gun violence and homicide;

(C) respond to all families suffering in the aftermath of homicide with consistency, compassion, and competence, and by centering the principles of love, unity, faith, hope, courage, justice, and forgiveness; and

(D) observe National Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month with appropriate activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 930—CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF AZERBAIJAN FOR PERPETRATING AN ETHNIC CLEANSING CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE ARMENIAN POPULATION OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 930

Whereas Nagorno-Karabakh is part of the traditional homeland of the Armenian people and has been a center of Armenian life and culture for millennia;

Whereas the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh have continually sought to exercise their right of self-determination and established a government separate from Azerbaijan;

Whereas, on December 12, 2022, the Government of Azerbaijan initiated a grueling blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh that deprived the region's population of food, medicine, fuel, and other necessities for nearly 10 months;

Whereas, on September 19, 2023, the Government of Azerbaijan launched a full-scale military offensive against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh that took the lives of hundreds of soldiers and dozens of civilians;

Whereas the Government of Azerbaijan used the threat of further violence to coerce the Armenian leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh to surrender their autonomy and dissolve their governing institutions;

Whereas over 100,000 Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, facing the threat of further ethnic violence, fled to Armenia as refugees within 2 weeks of Azerbaijan's assault;

Whereas the rhetoric of President Ilham Aliyev and other Azerbaijani officials demonstrates a clear ethnic animus that continues to undermine efforts to build a durable and dignified peace;

Whereas international legal experts, including former Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno Ocampo and former United Nations genocide expert Juan Mendez, have determined that Azerbaijan's blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh violated the United Nations Genocide Convention;

Whereas Azerbaijan has a responsibility to protect ethnic Armenian cultural heritage sites in Nagorno-Karabakh, including churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and other cultural monuments and should support UNESCO to assess and catalog the region's many culturally significant sites;

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom recommends that Azerbaijan be designated as a country of particular concern, in part because of the destruction of Christian religious sites in Nagorno-Karabakh;

Whereas, according to the Government of Armenia, dozens of Armenian prisoners of war, civilian captives, and members of the political leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh are now unjustly imprisoned in Azerbaijan on politically motivated charges or no charges at all;

Whereas the political leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh now imprisoned by the Government of Azerbaijan, including Davit Manukyan, Davit Babayan, Levon Mnatsakanyan, Arkadi Ghukasyan, Bako Sahakyan, Arayik Harutyunyan, Davit Ishkhanyan, and Ruben Vardanyan, should be afforded due process in accordance with the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Azerbaijan is a party;

Whereas there are still thousands missing from the over 30-year conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh;

Whereas the Government of Azerbaijan has a well-documented record of subjecting Armenian prisoners to torture, humiliation, and other violations of fundamental rights afforded by the Geneva Conventions;

Whereas, as a result of Azerbaijan's ethnic cleansing campaign, over 100,000 displaced persons from Nagorno-Karabakh now seek refuge in Armenia where, because of the country's limited resources, they face difficulties accessing housing, food security, employment, and health care;

Whereas the United States Government has announced more than $10,700,000 in urgent humanitarian assistance to respond to the crisis, but much more is needed;

Whereas international law provides for a right of return for populations displaced from their country of origin, including under the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the European Convention on Human Rights to which Azerbaijan is a party;

Whereas the International Court of Justice issued a binding provisional measure in November 2023 requiring the Government of Azerbaijan to provide for the safe, unimpeded, and expeditious return of Armenian refugees who wish to return to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh;

Whereas, in 2024, Freedom House, in partnership with Armenian and international human rights organizations, issued a report that they hope will contribute to the finding that the Azerbaijani authorities have engaged in a systematic and deliberate campaign aimed at the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population from Nagorno-Karabakh, thereby committing egregious violations of human rights and international law;

Whereas, prior to the Azerbaijani assault on Nagorno-Karabakh, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia Yuri Kim testified before Congress that the United States Government ''will not tolerate'' any Azerbaijani attack on Nagorno-Karabakh;

Whereas the United States Government has yet to impose meaningful accountability measures on Azerbaijan for perpetrating an inhumane blockade and campaign of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh;

Whereas failing to hold the Government of Azerbaijan accountable for ethnic cleansing emboldens Azerbaijan's leaders to engage in further anti-Armenian aggression;

Whereas, in recent years, the Government of Armenia has sought to deepen its ties to the United States and other liberal democracies and to distance itself from Russia;

Whereas the Government of Azerbaijan illegally occupies approximately 200 square kilometers of Armenia's internationally recognized territory, including approximately 150 square kilometers captured during the aggressive military actions from 2020 to 2023;

Whereas the United States Government has a special interest in ensuring that Armenia's security is not jeopardized because of its embrace of democracy and rejection of Vladimir Putin's murderous regime;

Whereas the Government of Azerbaijan continues to demand unilateral territorial concessions from Armenia through the threat of force, often referring to portions of sovereign Armenian territory as ''western Azerbaijan'';

Whereas the United States Government has taken a direct role in facilitating a durable conflict-resolution process between Armenia and Azerbaijan; and

Whereas the Government of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia continue to engage in talks that have yet to finalize a peace agreement, leaving many concerned about potential for future violence: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the atrocities perpetrated by the Government of Azerbaijan against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh;

(2) recognizes that Azerbaijan's blockade and subsequent military offensive against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh constitute acts of ethnic cleansing;

(3) affirms the fundamental right of displaced Armenians to return to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh with strong protections in place to ensure their security; and

(4) calls on the President and the relevant Federal agencies to take immediate action to—

(A) impose targeted sanctions on Azerbaijani government officials complicit in human rights abuses;

(B) restrict United States military aid to Azerbaijan consistent with 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act (Public Law 102–511; 22 U.S.C. 5812 note) ;

(C) reaffirm the findings of the 2024 Freedom House report which documented a deliberate campaign by the Government of Azerbaijan to ethnically cleanse the Armenian population from Nagorno-Karabakh and recognizes that these actions against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh constitute ethnic cleansing;

(D) provide robust humanitarian assistance to respond to the refugee crisis in Armenia and rally the international community to do the same;

(E) continue to strengthen the United States-Armenia security partnership as the Government of Armenia bolsters its ties to Western allies; and

(F) facilitate diplomacy to achieve a just and lasting peace in the South Caucasus that provides for the release of all Armenians unjustly imprisoned by the Government of Azerbaijan, establishes a right of return and security guarantees for the displaced Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, and preserves the Armenian cultural heritage of Nagorno-Karabakh.

SENATE RESOLUTION 931—RECOGNIZING THE EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE OF AMBASSADOR MICHAEL HERZOG DURING HIS TENURE AS AMBASSADOR OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 931

Whereas, since November 15, 2021, Ambassador Michael Herzog has served as Ambassador of Israel to the United States;

Whereas, prior to serving as Ambassador of Israel to the United States, Ambassador Herzog served the State of Israel as—

(1) the head of the Strategic Planning Division;

(2) Military Secretary and Chief of Staff to four Defense Ministers; and

(3) a special envoy for diplomatic negotiations for the Prime Minister;

Whereas, during his entire tenure as Ambassador of Israel to the United States, Ambassador Herzog has worked in a bipartisan manner, stating, ''Bipartisan support for Israel is a fundamental component of our relations with the United States'';

Whereas Ambassador Herzog has been one of the most effective voices for the State of Israel and has been instrumental in meeting Israel's needs during this traumatic time in the history of the Jewish State; and

Whereas Ambassador Herzog has worked tirelessly to build on the success of the Abraham Accords and advance normalization efforts between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the exceptional service of Ambassador Michael Herzog during his tenure as Ambassador of Israel to the United States;

(2) commends Ambassador Herzog for his commitment to building a more peaceful region through his work to further expand upon the Abraham Accords; and

(3) encourages the United States and the State of Israel to continue to build off the work Ambassador Herzog has done during his tenure to ensure the relationship between Israel and the United States continues to grow and prosper.

SENATE RESOLUTION 932—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024 AS ''NATIONAL MILITARY TOXIC EXPOSURES AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. MORAN (for himself and Ms. ROSEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 932

Whereas the profound impacts of military toxic exposures on generations of veterans and military families have created the persistent and urgent need for enhanced public awareness and preventative health measures;

Whereas the history of military toxic exposures dates back more than a century, particularly with the use of chemical warfare in World War I;

Whereas, despite reductions in certain chemical agents during World War II, members of the Armed Forces continued to face significant toxic exposures, including hazardous substances from naval vessels and herbicides during the Korean War and Agent Orange and other tactical herbicides during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the impact of toxic exposure is not limited to veterans alone, but can also affect their families, including their children with medical conditions potentially related to their parents' service, including children born with health issues following the Vietnam War;

Whereas the legacy of toxic exposure extends to veterans known as ''Atomic Veterans'', who experienced hazardous radiation exposure, further compounding the health risks associated with service in the Armed Forces;

Whereas generations of veterans have faced toxic exposures while serving abroad;

Whereas veterans have encountered other toxic exposures and environmental hazards during service in the Armed Forces, including contaminated drinking water, asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyl, lead, and radiation;

Whereas, in 1991, the Vietnam Veterans of America achieved a significant legislative victory, when Congress passed the Agent Orange Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–4), leading to the recognition of Agent Orange as a presumptive hazard and paving the way for benefits for affected veterans;

Whereas subsequent conflicts, including the Persian Gulf War, have seen soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines facing similar debilitating health issues due to toxic exposures, reinforcing the need for continued advocacy and research;

Whereas multiple veterans service organizations, including Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Vietnam Veterans of America, and others have worked tirelessly to secure legislative improvements, including studies on the effects of toxic exposure and the passage of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–168), also known as the PACT Act;

Whereas the PACT Act expanded eligibility for benefits and health care to veterans of all eras who were exposed to toxic substances;

Whereas the PACT Act established a new, responsive framework so that the Department of Veterans Affairs could more rapidly and transparently make decisions on the presumption of connection to service in the Armed Forces for illnesses and other conditions associated with toxic exposure;

Whereas burn pits, hazardous particulate matter, Agent Orange, oil well fires, fuel leaks, and other toxic events present in various conflicts have emerged as significant health concerns, necessitating research into their long-term effects on veterans and their families;

Whereas the lessons from toxic exposures guide the work and research of the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Congress;

Whereas the effects of toxic exposure are not confined to members of the Armed Forces and their family members, but also can impact civilian workers and residents of military installations exposed to hazardous materials;

Whereas continued vigilance is necessary to prevent future incidents of toxic exposure; and

Whereas the designation of October 2024 as ''National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month'' serves to highlight the historical significance of toxic exposure during service in the Armed Forces, raise awareness of toxic exposure, and commend the work of veterans and veterans' advocates who labor to meet the needs of former members of the Armed Forces who were exposed to toxic substances while in service of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 2024 as ''National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month'';

(2) recognizes the profound impact toxic exposures have had on veterans, members of the Armed Forces, their families, and their survivors;

(3) honors the sacrifices of individuals impacted by toxic exposure in the Armed Forces;

(4) calls upon the Department of Defense to reinforce the commitment by the Federal Government to prevent future incidents of toxic exposure among members of the Armed Forces;

(5) will continue to explore legislative initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes and preventive measures for current and future generations of members of the Armed Forces and veterans;

(6) commends the Department of Defense for striving to meet or exceed industry standards while working within status of forces agreements with host partner nations overseas in various international locations and urges continued efforts to meet or exceed such standards;

(7) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month by—

(A) honoring the sacrifices of individuals impacted by toxic exposure in the Armed Forces;

(B) promoting awareness of the ongoing challenges and of the resources available to veterans and their families, caregivers, and survivors from the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(C) supporting affected veterans and their families; and

(8) encourages the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue educating the public and advocating for veterans and their families and survivors affected by toxic exposure by—

(A) promoting awareness of the impact of toxic exposure on veterans, members of the Armed Forces, and their families;

(B) encouraging veterans to utilize available resources from the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans service organizations, and other entities;

(C) providing opportunities for research to understand the impacts of toxic exposure and to prevent future incidents of toxic exposure;

(D) reaching all veterans who may have encountered toxic exposures during service in the Armed Forces and offering screenings and relevant information;

(E) improving clinical practice guidelines for veterans exposed to toxic substances that best meet the unique medical needs of those veterans; and

(F) working with civic-minded groups and the people of the United States to thank members of the Armed Forces and veterans for their service and sacrifice.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3333. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3334. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3335. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 82, to amend title II of the

Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3336. Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 82, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3337. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3338. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3339. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HAGERTY)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 3502, to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

SA 3340. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. PETERS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4181, to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

SA 3341. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Ms. HASSAN)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1299, to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes.

SA 3342. Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1144, to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3333. Mr. SANDERS proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 5009, reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was oredred to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REDUCTION IN MILITARY SPENDING.

The total amount of funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act is hereby reduced by 10 percent, with the amount of such reduction to be applied on a pro rata basis among the accounts and funds for which amounts are authorized to be appropriated by this Act, excluding accounts and funds relating to military personnel, the Defense Health Program, and assistance to Ukraine. The amount of reduction for each account and fund subject to such requirement shall be applied on a pro rata basis across each program, project, and activity funded by such account or fund.

SA 3334. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SPENDING REDUCTIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF AN UNQUALIFIED AUDIT OPINION.

If during any fiscal year after fiscal year 2024, the Secretary of Defense determines that a department, agency, or other element of the Department of Defense has not achieved an unqualified opinion on its full financial statements for the calendar year ending during such fiscal year—

(1) the amount available to such department, agency, or element for the fiscal year in which such determination is made shall be equal to the amount otherwise authorized to be appropriated minus 1.0 percent;

(2) the amount unavailable to such department, agency, or element for that fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be applied on a pro rata basis against each program, project, and activity of such department, agency, or element in that fiscal year; and

(3) the Secretary shall deposit in the general fund of the Treasury for purposes of deficit reduction all amounts unavailable to departments, agencies, and elements of the Department in the fiscal year pursuant to determinations made under paragraph (1).

SA 3335. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 82, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Social Security Fairness Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATING APPLICATION OF GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET AND WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN STATES THAT AGREE TO EXTEND SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE TO SUCH EMPLOYEES.

(a) GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET.—Section 202(k)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402(k)(5)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(D)(i) For purposes of subparagraph (A), in the case of an individual who receives a monthly periodic benefit which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of any State or political subdivision thereof, no reduction of a monthly insurance benefit under such subparagraph shall apply for any month beginning after the date of enactment of this subparagraph if, for such month, such State satisfies the conditions described in clause (ii).

''(ii)(I) The conditions described in this clause with respect to a State for any month are that an agreement has been entered into between the Commissioner of Social Security and such State to extend the insurance system established by this title to services performed by individuals as employees of such State or any political subdivision thereof such that, pursuant to such agreement, all such employees who, as of the effective date of such agreement, have not attained age 52 (or, in the case of employees in a position that is subject to a mandatory retirement age that is lower than age 62, have not attained the age that is 10 years less than such mandatory retirement age) shall be covered by the insurance system established by this title.

''(II) The requirements of section 218 shall apply to an agreement described in subclause (I).

''(iii) In the case of any individual who received periodic benefits under a retirement system before the date of enactment of this subparagraph, clause (i) shall apply with respect to any monthly insurance benefit of such individual for any month beginning after the date of enactment of this subparagraph in which the State that established such retirement system satisfies the conditions described in clause (ii).

''(iv) For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'political subdivision' has the same meaning given such term under section 218(b)(2).

''(E)(i) For purposes of subparagraph (A), in the case of an individual who receives a monthly periodic benefit which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of the Federal Government, no reduction of a monthly insurance benefit under such subparagraph shall apply for any month beginning on or after the date specified in clause (iii).

''(ii) In the case of any individual who, before the date specified in clause (iii), received a monthly periodic benefit which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of the Federal Government, clause (i) shall apply with respect to any monthly insurance benefit of such individual for any month beginning on or after such date.

''(iii) The date specified in this clause is the first day of the first month as of which, in every State, the service of at least 50 percent of all employees of the State or any political subdivision thereof constitutes 'employment' as defined in section 210.''.

(b) WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION.—Section 215 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''Nonapplication of Windfall Elimination Provision for Federal Employees and State and Local Government Employees in States That Agree to Extend Social Security Coverage to Such Employees

''(j)(1)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(7) or (d)(3), in the case of an individual who receives a monthly periodic payment for any month beginning on or after the date of enactment of this subsection which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of any State or political subdivision thereof (as defined in section 218(b)(2)), no computation or recomputation of the primary insurance amount of such individual under such subsection shall apply if, for such month, such State satisfies the conditions described in section 202(k)(5)(D)(ii).

''(B) In the case of any individual who received periodic payments under a retirement system (as defined in section 218(b)(4)) before the date of enactment of this subsection, the primary insurance amount of such individual shall be recomputed without regard to subsection (a)(7) or (d)(3), effective with the first month beginning after the date of enactment of this subsection in which the State that established such retirement system satisfies the conditions described in section 202(k)(5)(D)(ii).

''(2)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(7) or (d)(3), in the case of an individual who receives a monthly periodic payment for any month beginning on or after the date of enactment of this subsection which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of the Federal Government, no computation or recomputation of the primary insurance amount of such individual under such subsection shall apply for any month beginning on or after the date specified in section 205(k)(5)(E)(iii).

''(B) In the case of any individual who, before the date specified in section 205(k)(5)(E)(iii), received a monthly periodic payment which is based upon such individual's earnings while in the service of the Federal Government, the primary insurance amount of such individual shall be recomputed without regard to subsection (a)(7) or (d)(3), effective with the first month beginning on or after such date.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect

to monthly insurance benefits payable under title II of the Social Security Act for months beginning after December 31, 2024.

SA 3336. Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 82, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. REPLACEMENT OF THE WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION WITH A FORMULA EQUALIZING BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WITH NONCOVERED EMPLOYMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 215(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

''(8)(A) In the case of an individual whose primary insurance amount would be computed under paragraph (1) of this subsection—

''(i) who first becomes eligible for an old-age or disability insurance benefit after 2067,

''(ii) who subsequently becomes entitled to such benefit, and

''(iii) who has earnings derived from noncovered service performed in a year after 1977,

the primary insurance amount of such individual shall be the amount computed or recomputed under this paragraph.

''(B) The primary insurance amount of an individual described in subparagraph (A), as computed or recomputed under this paragraph, shall be the product derived by multiplying—

''(i) the individual's primary insurance amount, as determined under paragraph (1) of this subsection and subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, by

''(ii) a fraction—

''(I) the numerator of which is the individual's average indexed monthly earnings (determined without regard to subparagraph (C)), and

''(II) the denominator of which is an amount equal to the individual's average indexed monthly earnings (as determined under subparagraph (C)),

rounded, if not a multiple of $0.10, to the next lower multiple of $0.10.

''(C)(i) For purposes of determining an individual's primary insurance amount pursuant to clauses (i) and (ii)(II) of subparagraph (B), the individual's average indexed monthly earnings shall be determined by treating all recorded noncovered earnings (as defined in clause (ii)(I)) derived by the individual from noncovered service performed in each year after 1977 as 'wages' (as defined in section 209 for purposes of this title), which shall be treated as included in the individual's adjusted total covered earnings (as defined in clause (ii)(II)) for such calendar year together with amounts consisting of 'wages' (as so defined without regard to this subparagraph) paid during such calendar year and self-employment income (as defined in section 211(b)) for taxable years ending with or during such calendar year.

''(ii) For purposes of this subparagraph:

''(I) The term 'recorded noncovered earnings' means earnings derived from noncovered service (other than noncovered service as a member of a uniformed service (as defined in section 210(m)) for which satisfactory evidence is determined by the Commissioner to be available in the records of the Commissioner.

''(II) The term 'adjusted total covered earnings' means, in connection with an individual for any calendar year, the sum of the wages paid to the individual during such calendar year (as adjusted under subsection (b)(3)) plus the self-employment income derived by the individual during any taxable year ending with or during such calendar year (as adjusted under subsection (b)(3)).

''(iii) The Commissioner of Social Security shall provide by regulation or other public guidance for methods for determining whether satisfactory evidence is available in the records of the Commissioner for earnings for noncovered service (other than noncovered service as a member of a uniformed service (as defined in section 210(m))) to be treated as recorded noncovered earnings. Such methods shall provide for reliance on earnings information which is provided to the Commissioner by employers and which, as determined by the Commissioner, constitute a reasonable basis for treatment of earnings for noncovered service as recorded noncovered earnings. In making determinations under this clause, the Commissioner shall also take into account any documentary or other evidence of earnings derived from noncovered service by an individual which is provided by the individual to the Commissioner and which the Commissioner considers appropriate as a reasonable basis for treatment of such earnings as recorded noncovered earnings.

''(D) Upon the death of an individual whose primary insurance amount is computed or recomputed under this paragraph, such primary insurance amount shall be computed or recomputed under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(E) In the case of any individual whose primary insurance amount would be computed under this paragraph who first becomes entitled after 1985 to a monthly periodic payment made by a foreign employer or foreign country that is based in whole or in part upon noncovered service, the primary insurance amount of such individual shall be computed or recomputed under paragraph (7) or paragraph (1), as applicable, for months beginning with the first month of the individual's initial entitlement to such monthly periodic payment.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 215(a)(7)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)(7)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by striking ''after 1985'' and inserting ''after 1985 and before 2068''; and

(B) by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) in clause (ii)—

(A) by striking ''after 1985'' each place it appears and inserting ''after 1985 and before 2068''; and

(B) by adding ''or'' at the end;

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

''(iii) is an individual described in paragraph (8)(E),''; and

(4) by striking ''hereafter in this paragraph and in subsection (d)(3)'' and inserting ''in this paragraph, paragraphs (8) and (9), and subsection (d)(3)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to monthly insurance benefits payable on or after January 1, 2025.

SEC. 3. BENEFIT CALCULATION DURING TRANSITION PERIOD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 215(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)), as amended by section 2, is further amended by inserting after paragraph (8) the following:

''(9) In the case of an individual whose primary insurance amount would be computed under paragraph (1) of this subsection—

''(A) who first becomes eligible for an old-age or disability insurance benefit after 2024 and before 2068,

''(B) who subsequently becomes entitled to such benefit, and

''(C) who has earnings derived from noncovered service performed in a year after 1977,

the primary insurance amount of such individual shall be the higher of the amount computed or recomputed under paragraph (7) without regard to this paragraph or the amount that would be computed or recomputed under paragraph (8) if the individual were an individual described in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 215(a)(7)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)(7)(A)), as amended by section 2(b), is further amended by striking ''shall be computed or recomputed'' and inserting ''shall, subject to paragraph (9), be computed or recomputed''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to monthly insurance benefits payable on or after January 1, 2025.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL MONTHLY PAYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHOSE BENEFIT AMOUNT IS REDUCED BY THE WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 215(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)), as amended by sections 2 and 3, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(10)(A) For any month beginning at least 270 days after the date of enactment of the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2024, the Commissioner of Social Security shall, subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), make an additional monthly payment of $100 to each individual who is an eligible individual for such month, and an additional monthly payment of $50 to each individual (other than an eligible individual) who is entitled to a benefit under section 202 for such month on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of such eligible individual.

''(B) For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'eligible individual' for a month means an individual who—

''(i)(I) first becomes eligible for an old-age or disability insurance benefit under this title before 2025, or

''(II) is an individual described in paragraph (8)(E), and

''(ii) is entitled to an old-age or disability insurance benefit under this title for such month based on a primary insurance amount that was computed or recomputed under paragraph (7) (and not subsequently recomputed under any other paragraph of this subsection).

''(C) In any case in which this title provides that no monthly benefit under section 202 or 223 shall be paid to an individual for a month, no additional monthly payment shall be paid to the individual for such month. This subparagraph shall not apply in the case of an individual whose monthly benefit under section 202 or 223 is reduced, regardless of the amount of the reduction, based on the individual's receipt of other income or benefits for such month or the application of section 203(a) or due to the adjustment or recovery of an overpayment under section 204.

''(D)(i) An individual is not entitled to receive more than one additional monthly payment for a month under this paragraph.

''(ii) An eligible individual who is entitled to a benefit under section 202 on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of another eligible individual for a month shall receive an additional monthly payment under this paragraph in the amount of $100 for such month.

''(E) Except for purposes of adjustment or recovery of an overpayment under section 204, an additional monthly payment under this paragraph shall not be subject to any reduction or deduction under this title.

''(F) Whenever benefit amounts under this title are increased by any percentage effective with any month as a result of a determination made under subsection (i), each of the dollar amounts in subparagraph (A) shall be increased by the same percentage for months beginning with such month.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to monthly insurance benefits payable for months beginning at least 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. REPORTING OF NONCOVERED EARNINGS ON SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT STATEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1143(a)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–13(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (E) as subparagraphs (C) through (F); and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) the amount of earnings derived by the eligible individual from service performed after 1977 which did not constitute employment (as defined in section 210), not including service as a member of a uniformed service (as defined in section 210(m)), as shown by the records of the Commissioner at the date of the request;''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to Social Security account statements issued on or after January 1, 2025.

SEC. 6. STUDY ON PARTNERING WITH STATE AND LOCAL PENSION SYSTEMS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of Social Security shall study and test the administrative feasibility of partnering with State and local pension systems, or other governmental entities, to improve the collection and sharing of information relating to State and local noncovered pensions.

(2) COORDINATION WITH STATE AND LOCAL PENSION SYSTEMS.—In conducting the study described in paragraph (1), the Commissioner shall coordinate with State and local pension systems that reflect the diversity of systems and individual experiences to explore the development of automated data exchange agreements that facilitate reporting of information relating to noncovered pensions.

(b) REPORT.—The Commissioner of Social Security shall conclude the study described in subsection (a) not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act. As soon as possible after conclusion of the study and not later than 4½ years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report on the results of the study. Such report shall include the following:

(1) A discussion of how the automated data exchange agreements could be implemented to cover noncovered pensions nationally, including the range of implementation timelines across State and local pension systems, or with other governmental entities.

(2) An analysis of the barriers to developing automated data exchange agreements and lessons learned that can help address these barriers.

(3) A description of alternative methods for obtaining information related to noncovered pensions, and an analysis of the barriers to obtaining noncovered pension data through such methods.

(4) An explanation of how coverage information is obtained by the Social Security Administration when an individual purchases service credits to apply to a new covered or noncovered pension after moving from another covered or noncovered pension within the State or in another State.

(5) An estimate of the total amount, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, of noncovered pensions not reported to the Social Security Administration as a result of noncompliance with voluntary reporting policies.

(c) STATE AND LOCAL PENSION INFORMATION TO BE REQUESTED BY THE COMMISSIONER.—Section 202 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 402) is amended by inserting after subsection (l) the following:

''(m) STATE AND LOCAL PENSION INFORMATION TO BE REQUESTED BY THE COMMISSIONER.—

''(1) The Commissioner may partner with States to request information, including the information specified in paragraph (2), with respect to any designated distribution (as defined in section 3405(e)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) from an employer deferred compensation plan (as defined in section 3405(e)(5) of such Code) of the State (or political subdivision thereof) to a participant of such plan in any case in which any portion of such participant's earnings for service under such plan did not constitute 'employment' as defined in section 210 for purposes of this title.

''(2) The information specified in this paragraph is the following:

''(A) The name and Social Security account number of the participant receiving the designated distribution.

''(B) The dollar amount of the designated distribution and the date paid.

''(C) The date on which the participant initially became eligible for a designated distribution under the plan and, if different, the date of payment of the initial designated distribution.

''(D) The dates of each period of service under the plan that did not constitute 'employment' as defined in section 210 for purposes of this title, and the dates of any other period of service under the plan.''.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''noncovered pension'' means a pension any part of which is based on noncovered service (within the meaning of section 215(a)(7) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(a)(7))); and

(2) the term ''covered pension'' means any other pension.

SA 3337. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—REPUBLIC ACT

SEC. ___01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Reforming Emergency Powers to Uphold the Balances and Limitations Inherent in the Constitution Act'' or the ''REPUBLIC Act''.

Subtitle A—Congressional Review of National Emergencies

SEC. ___11. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

The National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by inserting after title I the following:

''TITLE II—DECLARATIONS OF FUTURE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES

''SEC. 201. DECLARATIONS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) AUTHORITY TO DECLARE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—With respect to Acts of Congress authorizing the exercise, during the period of a national emergency, of any special or extraordinary power, the President is authorized to declare such a national emergency by proclamation. Such proclamation shall immediately be transmitted to Congress and published in the Federal Register.

''(b) SPECIFICATION OF PROVISIONS OF LAW TO BE EXERCISED.—No powers or authorities made available by statute for use during the period of a national emergency shall be exercised unless and until the President specifies the provisions of law under which the President proposes that the President or other officers will act in—

''(1) a proclamation declaring a national emergency under subsection (a); or

''(2) one or more Executive orders relating to the emergency published in the Federal Register and transmitted to Congress.

''(c) PROHIBITION ON SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS IF EMERGENCIES NOT APPROVED.—

''(1) SUBSEQUENT DECLARATIONS.—If a joint resolution of approval is not enacted under section 203 with respect to a national emergency before the expiration of the 30-day period described in section 202(a), or with respect to a national emergency proposed to be renewed under section 202(b), the President may not, during the remainder of the term of office of that President, declare a subsequent national emergency under subsection (a) with respect to the same circumstances.

''(2) EXERCISE OF AUTHORITIES.—If a joint resolution of approval is not enacted under section 203 with respect to a power or authority specified by the President in a proclamation under subsection (a) or an Executive order under subsection (b)(2) with respect to a national emergency, the President may not, during the remainder of the term of office of that President, exercise that power or authority with respect to that emergency.

''(d) EFFECT OF FUTURE LAWS.—No law enacted after the date of the enactment of this Act shall supersede this title unless it does so in specific terms, referring to this title, and declaring that the new law supersedes the provisions of this title.

''SEC. 202. EFFECTIVE PERIODS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) TEMPORARY EFFECTIVE PERIODS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A declaration of a national emergency shall remain in effect for a period of 30 calendar days from the issuance of the proclamation under section 201(a) (not counting the day on which the proclamation was issued) and shall terminate when such period expires unless there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval under section 203 with respect to the proclamation.

''(2) EXERCISE OF POWERS AND AUTHORITIES.—Any emergency power or authority made available under a provision of law specified pursuant to section 201(b) may be exercised pursuant to a declaration of a national emergency for a period of 30 calendar days from the issuance of the proclamation or Executive order (not counting the day on which such proclamation or Executive order was issued). That power or authority may not be exercised after such period expires unless there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval under section 203 approving—

''(A) the proclamation of the national emergency or the Executive order; and

''(B) the exercise of the power or authority specified by the President in such proclamation or Executive order.

''(3) EXCEPTION IF CONGRESS IS UNABLE TO CONVENE.—If Congress is physically unable to convene as a result of an armed attack upon the United States or another national emergency, the 30-day periods described in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall begin on the first day Congress convenes for the first time after the attack or other emergency.

''(b) RENEWAL OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—A national emergency declared by the President under section 201(a) or previously renewed under this subsection, and not already

terminated pursuant to subsection (a) or (c), shall terminate on the date that is one year after the President transmitted to Congress the proclamation declaring the emergency or Congress approved a previous renewal pursuant to this subsection, unless—

''(1) the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to Congress an Executive order renewing the emergency; and

''(2) there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval renewing the emergency pursuant to section 203 before the termination of the emergency or previous renewal of the emergency.

''(c) TERMINATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any national emergency declared by the President under section 201(a) shall terminate on the earliest of—

''(A) the date provided for in subsection (a);

''(B) the date provided for in subsection (b);

''(C) the date specified in an Act of Congress terminating the emergency; or

''(D) the date specified in a proclamation of the President terminating the emergency.

''(2) EFFECT OF TERMINATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date of the termination of a national emergency under paragraph (1)—

''(i) except as provided by subparagraph (B), any powers or authorities exercised by reason of the emergency shall cease to be exercised;

''(ii) any amounts reprogrammed or transferred under any provision of law with respect to the emergency that remain unobligated on that date shall be returned and made available for the purpose for which such amounts were appropriated; and

''(iii) any contracts entered into pursuant to authorities provided as a result of the emergency shall be terminated.

''(B) SAVINGS PROVISION.—The termination of a national emergency shall not affect—

''(i) any legal action taken or pending legal proceeding not finally concluded or determined on the date of the termination under paragraph (1);

''(ii) any legal action or legal proceeding based on any act committed prior to that date; or

''(iii) any rights or duties that matured or penalties that were incurred prior to that date.

''SEC. 203. REVIEW BY CONGRESS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) JOINT RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'joint resolution of approval' means a joint resolution that contains only the following provisions after its resolving clause:

''(1) A provision approving—

''(A) a proclamation of a national emergency made under section 201(a);

''(B) an Executive order issued under section 201(b)(2); or

''(C) an Executive order issued under section 202(b).

''(2) A provision approving a list of all or a portion of the provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution.

''(b) PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF JOINT RESOLUTIONS OF APPROVAL.—

''(1) INTRODUCTION.—After the President transmits to Congress a proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a), or an Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), a joint resolution of approval may be introduced in either House of Congress by any member of that House.

''(2) REQUESTS TO CONVENE CONGRESS DURING RECESSES.—If, when the President transmits to Congress a proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a), or an Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), Congress has adjourned sine die or has adjourned for any period in excess of 3 calendar days, the majority leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with and the concurrence of the minority leader of the Senate and the minority leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

''(3) CONSIDERATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, the following shall apply:

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred has not reported it at the end of 10 calendar days after its introduction, that committee shall be automatically discharged from further consideration of the resolution and it shall be placed on the calendar.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, when the committee to which a joint resolution of approval is referred has reported the resolution, or when that committee is discharged under subparagraph (A) from further consideration of the resolution, it is at any time thereafter in order (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) for a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The motion to proceed is subject to 4 hours of debate divided equally between those favoring and those opposing the joint resolution of approval. The motion is not subject to amendment, or to a motion to postpone, or to a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business.

''(C) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—A joint resolution of approval shall be subject to 10 hours of consideration, to be divided evenly between the proponents and opponents of the resolution.

''(D) AMENDMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), no amendments shall be in order with respect to a joint resolution of approval.

''(ii) AMENDMENTS TO STRIKE OR ADD SPECIFIED PROVISIONS OF LAW.—Clause (i) shall not apply with respect to any amendment—

''(I) to strike a provision or provisions of law from the list required by subsection (a)(2); or

''(II) to add to that list a provision or provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution of approval.

''(E) MOTION TO RECONSIDER FINAL VOTE.—A motion to reconsider a vote on passage of a joint resolution of approval shall not be in order.

''(F) APPEALS.—Points of order, including questions of relevancy, and appeals from the decision of the Presiding Officer, shall be decided without debate.

''(4) CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—In the House of Representatives, the following shall apply:

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred has not reported it to the House within 10 calendar days after the date of referral, such committee shall be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the third legislative day after the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred reports it to the House or has been discharged from further consideration, and except as provided in clause (ii), it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(ii) SUBSEQUENT MOTIONS TO PROCEED TO JOINT RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL.—A motion to proceed to consider a joint resolution of approval shall not be in order after the House has disposed of another motion to proceed on that resolution.

''(C) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—Upon adoption of the motion to proceed in accordance with subparagraph (B)(i), the joint resolution of approval shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except two hours of debate, which shall include debate on any amendments, equally divided and controlled by the sponsor of the joint resolution (or a designee) and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall not be in order.

''(D) AMENDMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), no amendments shall be in order with respect to a joint resolution of approval.

''(ii) AMENDMENTS TO STRIKE OR ADD SPECIFIED PROVISIONS OF LAW.—Clause (i) shall not apply with respect to any amendment—

''(I) to strike a provision or provisions of law from the list required by subsection (a)(2); or

''(II) to add to that list a provision or provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution.

''(5) RECEIPT OF RESOLUTION FROM OTHER HOUSE.—If, before passing a joint resolution of approval, one House receives from the other a joint resolution of approval from the other House, then—

''(A) the joint resolution of the other House shall not be referred to a committee and shall be deemed to have been discharged from committee on the day it is received; and

''(B) the procedures set forth in paragraphs (3) and (4), as applicable, shall apply in the receiving House to the joint resolution received from the other House to the same extent as such procedures apply to a joint resolution of the receiving House.

''(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The enactment of a joint resolution of approval under this section shall not be interpreted to serve as a grant or modification by Congress of statutory authority for the emergency powers of the President.

''(d) RULES OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE.—This section is enacted by Congress—

''(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in the House in the case of joint resolutions described in this section, and supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such other rules; and

''(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of

that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

''SEC. 204. APPLICABILITY.

''This title shall apply to a national emergency pursuant to which the President proposes to exercise emergency powers or authorities made available under any provision of law that is not a provision of law described in section 604(a).''.

SEC. ___12. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

Section 401 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the first sentence by inserting '', and make publicly available'' after ''transmit to Congress''; and

(B) in the second sentence by inserting '', and make publicly available,'' before ''a final report''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) REPORT ON EMERGENCIES.—The President shall transmit to the entities described in subsection (g), with any proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a) or any Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), a report, in writing, that includes the following:

''(1) A description of the circumstances necessitating the declaration of a national emergency, the renewal of such an emergency, or the use of a new emergency authority specified in the Executive order, as the case may be.

''(2) The estimated duration of the national emergency, or a statement that the duration of the national emergency cannot reasonably be estimated at the time of transmission of the report.

''(3) A summary of the actions the President or other officers intend to take, including any reprogramming or transfer of funds, and the statutory authorities the President and such officers expect to rely on in addressing the national emergency.

''(4) The total expenditures estimated to be incurred by the United States Government during such six-month period which are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by such declaration.

''(5) In the case of a renewal of a national emergency, a summary of the actions the President or other officers have taken in the preceding one-year period, including any reprogramming or transfer of funds, to address the emergency.

''(e) PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO CONGRESS.—The President shall provide to the entities described in subsection (g) such other information as such entities may request in connection with any national emergency in effect under title II.

''(f) PERIODIC REPORTS ON STATUS OF EMERGENCIES.—If the President declares a national emergency under section 201(a), the President shall, not less frequently than every 6 months for the duration of the emergency, report to the entities described in subsection (g) on the status of the emergency, the total expenditures incurred by the United States Government, and the actions the President or other officers have taken and authorities the President and such officers have relied on in addressing the emergency.

''(g) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The entities described in this subsection are—

''(1) the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

''(2) minority leader of the House of Representatives;

''(3) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

''(4) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.''.

SEC. ___13. EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN NATIONAL EMERGENCIES INVOKING INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as amended by this subtitle, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''TITLE VI—DECLARATIONS OF CERTAIN EMERGENCIES INVOKING INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT

''SEC. 604. APPLICABILITY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—This title shall apply to a national emergency pursuant to which the President proposes to exercise emergency powers or authorities made available under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

''(b) EFFECT OF ADDITIONAL POWERS AND AUTHORITIES.—This title shall not apply to a national emergency or the exercise of emergency powers and authorities pursuant to the national emergency if, in addition to the exercise of emergency powers and authorities described in subsection (a), the President proposes to exercise, pursuant to the national emergency, any emergency powers and authorities under any other provision of law.''.

(b) TRANSFER.—Sections 201, 202, and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as such sections appeared on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, are—

(1) transferred to title VI of such Act (as added by subsection (a));

(2) inserted before section 604 of such title (as added by subsection (a)); and

(3) redesignated as sections 601, 602, and 603, respectively.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title II of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as such title appeared the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, is amended by striking the heading for such title.

SEC. ___14. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) NATIONAL EMERGENCIES ACT.—Title III of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1631) is repealed.

(b) INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.—Section 207(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1706) is amended by striking ''concurrent resolution'' each place it appears and inserting ''joint resolution''.

SEC. ___15. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall—

(1) take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) except as provided in subsection (b), apply with respect to national emergencies declared under section 201 of the National Emergencies Act on or after such date.

(b) APPLICABILITY TO RENEWALS OF EXISTING EMERGENCIES.—With respect to a national emergency declared under section 201 of the National Emergencies Act before the date of the enactment of this Act that would expire or be renewed under section 202(d) of that Act (as in effect on the day before such date of enactment), that national emergency shall be subject to the requirements for renewal under section 202(b) of that Act, as amended by section ___11.

(c) SUPERSESSION.—This subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall supersede title II of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) as such title was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Limitations on Emergency Authorities

SEC. ___21. PROTECTIONS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS WITH RESPECT TO USE OF AUTHORITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

The International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 203 the following:

''SEC. 203A. PROTECTIONS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS.

''(a) LIMITATIONS FOR NECESSITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by paragraph (2) and in accordance with this section, no authority provided under section 203 may be exercised to target a United States person.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR ISSUANCE OF GENERAL LICENSES.—An authority provided under section 203 may be exercised to target a United States person if the President has, before using the authority, issued a general license that ensures that the United States person has sufficient access to the necessities of life, including food, nutritional support, water, shelter, clothing, sanitation, medicine, health care and other vital services, and gainful employment where necessary to provide the United States person a means for subsistence.

''(3) DUE PROCESS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—When taking an action pursuant to authority provided by section 203 to target a United States person, the President shall—

''(i) provide contemporaneous notice of the action to the United States person;

''(ii) not later than one week after taking the action, provide the United States person with the record on which the decision to take the action was based, including an unclassified summary, or a redacted version, of any classified information that provides the United States person with substantially the same ability to respond to that information as the classified information;

''(iii) provide the United States person with the opportunity to request review of the decision and to submit information in support of that request;

''(iv) provide the United States person with the opportunity for an administrative hearing not later than 90 days after requesting a review under clause (iii), unless the United States person agrees to a longer period; and

''(v) render a written decision on a request for review under clause (iii) not later than 90 days after the hearing under clause (iv), or, if no such hearing is requested, not later than 90 days after the later of—

''(I) the request for review; or

''(II) the submission of information in support of that request.

''(B) FAILURE TO RENDER TIMELY DECISION.—Failure to render a decision within the time frame specified in subparagraph (A)(v) shall be considered an agency action for purposes of section 702 of title 5, United States Code.

''(b) WARRANT FOR SEIZURE OF PROPERTY OF UNITED STATES PERSONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—When taking an action pursuant to authority provided by section 203 to target a United States person, the President may not block or otherwise prevent the access of the United States person to property in which the United States person has an ownership interest except pursuant to a warrant issued using the procedures described in the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (or, in the case of a court-martial or other proceeding under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code), issued under section 846 of title 10, United States Code (article 46 of

the Uniform Code of Military Justice), in accordance with regulations prescribed by the President) by a court of competent jurisdiction.

''(2) DELAYED WARRANTS.—To the extent consistent with the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, a court shall permit the temporary blocking of property under section 203 without a warrant on an emergency basis, or use other means lawfully available to the court, to enable the Federal Government to identify the property that is subject to blocking while reducing the risk of property flight.

''(c) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A United States person that is the target of an action taken by the President pursuant to any authority provided under section 203 may bring an action in a United States court of competent jurisdiction, after exhaustion of any available administrative remedies, to obtain judicial review of the lawfulness of that action, including whether the action was authorized by the Executive order or orders specifying the measures to be taken under section 203 in response to a determination issued under section 202.

''(2) CONDUCT OF REVIEW.—In an action brought under paragraph (1)—

''(A) the review of the court shall be de novo;

''(B) any party may introduce evidence not included in the administrative record;

''(C) any administrative record or portions thereof may be entered into evidence, and questions of authentication or hearsay shall bear on the weight to be accorded the evidence rather than its admissibility;

''(D) classified information shall be handled in accordance with the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.), except that references to the 'defendant' in such Act shall be deemed to apply to the plaintiff; and

''(E) the court shall have the authority to order injunctive relief, actual damages, and attorneys' fees.

''(3) OTHER MEANS OF REVIEW.—The availability of judicial review under this subsection shall not preclude other available means of judicial review, including under section 702 of title 5, United States Code, except that a person may not exercise the right to judicial review under more than one provision of law.

''(d) UNITED STATES PERSON DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'United States person' means—

''(1) a United States national; or

''(2) an entity—

''(A) organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States; and

''(B) in which more than 50 percent of the controlling interest is owned by a person described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. ___22. EXCLUSION OF AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE DUTIES AND IMPORT QUOTAS FROM INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

Section 203 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c)(1) The authority granted to the President by this section does not include the authority to impose duties or tariff-rate quotas or (subject to paragraph (2)) other quotas on articles entering the United States.

''(2) The limitation under paragraph (1) does not prohibit the President from excluding all articles, or all of a certain type of article, imported from a country from entering the United States.''.

SEC. ___23. PRESIDENTIAL WAR POWERS UNDER COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 706 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 606) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (c) through (g); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (c).

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 309(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 309(h)) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''and'' before ''(2)''; and

(2) by striking ''Act;'' and all that follows and inserting ''Act.''.

SEC. ___24. DISCLOSURE TO CONGRESS OF PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY ACTION DOCUMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 days after the conclusion of the process for approval, adoption, or revision of any presidential emergency action document, the President shall submit that document to the appropriate congressional committees.

(b) DOCUMENTS IN EXISTENCE BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees all presidential emergency action documents in existence before such date of enactment.

(c) OVERSIGHT.—

(1) SENATE.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate shall have—

(A) continuing legislative oversight jurisdiction in the Senate with respect to the proposal, creation, implementation, and execution of presidential emergency action documents; and

(B) access to any and all presidential emergency action documents.

(2) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—The Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives shall have—

(A) continuing legislative oversight jurisdiction in the House of Representatives with respect to the proposal, creation, implementation, and execution of presidential emergency action documents; and

(B) access to any and all presidential emergency action documents.

(3) DUTY TO COOPERATE.—All officers and employees of any Federal agency shall have the duty to cooperate with the exercise of oversight jurisdiction described in this subsection.

(4) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—The chairpersons and ranking members of the appropriate congressional committees, and designated staff of those committees, shall be granted all security clearances required to access, and granted access to, presidential emergency action documents, including under relevant Presidential or agency special access and compartmented access programs.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives.

(2) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term ''Federal agency''—

(A) has the meaning given the term ''agency'' in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) includes the Executive Office of the President, the Executive Office of the Vice President, the Office of Management and Budget, and the National Security Council.

(3) PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY ACTION DOCUMENT.—The term ''presidential emergency action document'' refers to any document created by any Federal agency before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act, that is—

(A) designated as a presidential emergency action document or presidential emergency action directive;

(B) designed to implement a presidential decision or transmit a presidential request when an emergency disrupts normal executive, legislative, judicial, or other Federal governmental processes;

(C) a Presidential Policy Directive, regardless of whether the directive is available to the public, that triggers any change in policies, procedures, or operations of the Federal Government upon the declaration by the President of an emergency; or

(D) any other document, briefing, or plan, regardless of whether the document, briefing, or plan exists in any tangible or written form, that triggers any change in operations of the Federal Government upon the declaration by the President of an emergency.

SA 3338. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—REPUBLIC ACT

SEC. ___01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Reforming Emergency Powers to Uphold the Balances and Limitations Inherent in the Constitution Act'' or the ''REPUBLIC Act''.

Subtitle A—Congressional Review of National Emergencies

SEC. ___11. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

The National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by inserting after title I the following:

''TITLE II—DECLARATIONS OF FUTURE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES

''SEC. 201. DECLARATIONS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) AUTHORITY TO DECLARE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—With respect to Acts of Congress authorizing the exercise, during the period of a national emergency, of any special or extraordinary power, the President is authorized to declare such a national emergency by proclamation. Such proclamation shall immediately be transmitted to Congress and published in the Federal Register.

''(b) SPECIFICATION OF PROVISIONS OF LAW TO BE EXERCISED.—No powers or authorities made available by statute for use during the period of a national emergency shall be exercised unless and until the President specifies the provisions of law under which the President proposes that the President or other officers will act in—

''(1) a proclamation declaring a national emergency under subsection (a); or

''(2) one or more Executive orders relating to the emergency published in the Federal Register and transmitted to Congress.

''(c) PROHIBITION ON SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS IF EMERGENCIES NOT APPROVED.—

''(1) SUBSEQUENT DECLARATIONS.—If a joint resolution of approval is not enacted under section 203 with respect to a national emergency before the expiration of the 30-day period described in section 202(a), or with respect to a national emergency proposed to be renewed under section 202(b), the President may not, during the remainder of the term of office of that President, declare a subsequent national emergency under subsection (a) with respect to the same circumstances.

''(2) EXERCISE OF AUTHORITIES.—If a joint resolution of approval is not enacted under section 203 with respect to a power or authority specified by the President in a proclamation under subsection (a) or an Executive order under subsection (b)(2) with respect to a national emergency, the President may not, during the remainder of the term of office of that President, exercise that power or authority with respect to that emergency.

''(d) EFFECT OF FUTURE LAWS.—No law enacted after the date of the enactment of this Act shall supersede this title unless it does so in specific terms, referring to this title, and declaring that the new law supersedes the provisions of this title.

''SEC. 202. EFFECTIVE PERIODS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) TEMPORARY EFFECTIVE PERIODS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A declaration of a national emergency shall remain in effect for a period of 30 calendar days from the issuance of the proclamation under section 201(a) (not counting the day on which the proclamation was issued) and shall terminate when such period expires unless there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval under section 203 with respect to the proclamation.

''(2) EXERCISE OF POWERS AND AUTHORITIES.—Any emergency power or authority made available under a provision of law specified pursuant to section 201(b) may be exercised pursuant to a declaration of a national emergency for a period of 30 calendar days from the issuance of the proclamation or Executive order (not counting the day on which such proclamation or Executive order was issued). That power or authority may not be exercised after such period expires unless there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval under section 203 approving—

''(A) the proclamation of the national emergency or the Executive order; and

''(B) the exercise of the power or authority specified by the President in such proclamation or Executive order.

''(3) EXCEPTION IF CONGRESS IS UNABLE TO CONVENE.—If Congress is physically unable to convene as a result of an armed attack upon the United States or another national emergency, the 30-day periods described in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall begin on the first day Congress convenes for the first time after the attack or other emergency.

''(b) RENEWAL OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—A national emergency declared by the President under section 201(a) or previously renewed under this subsection, and not already terminated pursuant to subsection (a) or (c), shall terminate on the date that is one year after the President transmitted to Congress the proclamation declaring the emergency or Congress approved a previous renewal pursuant to this subsection, unless—

''(1) the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to Congress an Executive order renewing the emergency; and

''(2) there is enacted into law a joint resolution of approval renewing the emergency pursuant to section 203 before the termination of the emergency or previous renewal of the emergency.

''(c) TERMINATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any national emergency declared by the President under section 201(a) shall terminate on the earliest of—

''(A) the date provided for in subsection (a);

''(B) the date provided for in subsection (b);

''(C) the date specified in an Act of Congress terminating the emergency; or

''(D) the date specified in a proclamation of the President terminating the emergency.

''(2) EFFECT OF TERMINATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date of the termination of a national emergency under paragraph (1)—

''(i) except as provided by subparagraph (B), any powers or authorities exercised by reason of the emergency shall cease to be exercised;

''(ii) any amounts reprogrammed or transferred under any provision of law with respect to the emergency that remain unobligated on that date shall be returned and made available for the purpose for which such amounts were appropriated; and

''(iii) any contracts entered into pursuant to authorities provided as a result of the emergency shall be terminated.

''(B) SAVINGS PROVISION.—The termination of a national emergency shall not affect—

''(i) any legal action taken or pending legal proceeding not finally concluded or determined on the date of the termination under paragraph (1);

''(ii) any legal action or legal proceeding based on any act committed prior to that date; or

''(iii) any rights or duties that matured or penalties that were incurred prior to that date.

''SEC. 203. REVIEW BY CONGRESS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCIES.

''(a) JOINT RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'joint resolution of approval' means a joint resolution that contains only the following provisions after its resolving clause:

''(1) A provision approving—

''(A) a proclamation of a national emergency made under section 201(a);

''(B) an Executive order issued under section 201(b)(2); or

''(C) an Executive order issued under section 202(b).

''(2) A provision approving a list of all or a portion of the provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution.

''(b) PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF JOINT RESOLUTIONS OF APPROVAL.—

''(1) INTRODUCTION.—After the President transmits to Congress a proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a), or an Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), a joint resolution of approval may be introduced in either House of Congress by any member of that House.

''(2) REQUESTS TO CONVENE CONGRESS DURING RECESSES.—If, when the President transmits to Congress a proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a), or an Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), Congress has adjourned sine die or has adjourned for any period in excess of 3 calendar days, the majority leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with and the concurrence of the minority leader of the Senate and the minority leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

''(3) CONSIDERATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, the following shall apply:

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred has not reported it at the end of 10 calendar days after its introduction, that committee shall be automatically discharged from further consideration of the resolution and it shall be placed on the calendar.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, when the committee to which a joint resolution of approval is referred has reported the resolution, or when that committee is discharged under subparagraph (A) from further consideration of the resolution, it is at any time thereafter in order (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) for a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The motion to proceed is subject to 4 hours of debate divided equally between those favoring and those opposing the joint resolution of approval. The motion is not subject to amendment, or to a motion to postpone, or to a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business.

''(C) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—A joint resolution of approval shall be subject to 10 hours of consideration, to be divided evenly between the proponents and opponents of the resolution.

''(D) AMENDMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), no amendments shall be in order with respect to a joint resolution of approval.

''(ii) AMENDMENTS TO STRIKE OR ADD SPECIFIED PROVISIONS OF LAW.—Clause (i) shall not apply with respect to any amendment—

''(I) to strike a provision or provisions of law from the list required by subsection (a)(2); or

''(II) to add to that list a provision or provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution of approval.

''(E) MOTION TO RECONSIDER FINAL VOTE.—A motion to reconsider a vote on passage of a joint resolution of approval shall not be in order.

''(F) APPEALS.—Points of order, including questions of relevancy, and appeals from the decision of the Presiding Officer, shall be decided without debate.

''(4) CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—In the House of Representatives, the following shall apply:

''(A) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—If the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred has not reported it to the House within 10 calendar days after the date of referral, such committee shall be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution.

''(B) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the third legislative day after the committee to which a joint resolution of approval has been referred reports it to the House or has been discharged from further consideration, and except as provided in clause (ii), it shall be in order to move to proceed to consider the joint resolution in the House. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is disposed of shall not be in order.

''(ii) SUBSEQUENT MOTIONS TO PROCEED TO JOINT RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL.—A motion to proceed to consider a joint resolution of approval shall not be in order after the House has disposed of another motion to proceed on that resolution.

''(C) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—Upon adoption of the motion to proceed in accordance with subparagraph (B)(i), the joint resolution of approval shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except two hours of debate, which shall include debate on any amendments, equally divided and

controlled by the sponsor of the joint resolution (or a designee) and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on passage of the joint resolution shall not be in order.

''(D) AMENDMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), no amendments shall be in order with respect to a joint resolution of approval.

''(ii) AMENDMENTS TO STRIKE OR ADD SPECIFIED PROVISIONS OF LAW.—Clause (i) shall not apply with respect to any amendment—

''(I) to strike a provision or provisions of law from the list required by subsection (a)(2); or

''(II) to add to that list a provision or provisions of law specified by the President under section 201(b) in the proclamation or Executive order that is the subject of the joint resolution.

''(5) RECEIPT OF RESOLUTION FROM OTHER HOUSE.—If, before passing a joint resolution of approval, one House receives from the other a joint resolution of approval from the other House, then—

''(A) the joint resolution of the other House shall not be referred to a committee and shall be deemed to have been discharged from committee on the day it is received; and

''(B) the procedures set forth in paragraphs (3) and (4), as applicable, shall apply in the receiving House to the joint resolution received from the other House to the same extent as such procedures apply to a joint resolution of the receiving House.

''(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The enactment of a joint resolution of approval under this section shall not be interpreted to serve as a grant or modification by Congress of statutory authority for the emergency powers of the President.

''(d) RULES OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE.—This section is enacted by Congress—

''(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in the House in the case of joint resolutions described in this section, and supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such other rules; and

''(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

''SEC. 204. APPLICABILITY.

''This title shall apply to a national emergency pursuant to which the President proposes to exercise emergency powers or authorities made available under any provision of law that is not a provision of law described in section 604(a).''.

SEC. ___12. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

Section 401 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the first sentence by inserting '', and make publicly available'' after ''transmit to Congress''; and

(B) in the second sentence by inserting '', and make publicly available,'' before ''a final report''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) REPORT ON EMERGENCIES.—The President shall transmit to the entities described in subsection (g), with any proclamation declaring a national emergency under section 201(a) or any Executive order specifying emergency powers or authorities under section 201(b)(2) or renewing a national emergency under section 202(b), a report, in writing, that includes the following:

''(1) A description of the circumstances necessitating the declaration of a national emergency, the renewal of such an emergency, or the use of a new emergency authority specified in the Executive order, as the case may be.

''(2) The estimated duration of the national emergency, or a statement that the duration of the national emergency cannot reasonably be estimated at the time of transmission of the report.

''(3) A summary of the actions the President or other officers intend to take, including any reprogramming or transfer of funds, and the statutory authorities the President and such officers expect to rely on in addressing the national emergency.

''(4) The total expenditures estimated to be incurred by the United States Government during such six-month period which are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by such declaration.

''(5) In the case of a renewal of a national emergency, a summary of the actions the President or other officers have taken in the preceding one-year period, including any reprogramming or transfer of funds, to address the emergency.

''(e) PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO CONGRESS.—The President shall provide to the entities described in subsection (g) such other information as such entities may request in connection with any national emergency in effect under title II.

''(f) PERIODIC REPORTS ON STATUS OF EMERGENCIES.—If the President declares a national emergency under section 201(a), the President shall, not less frequently than every 6 months for the duration of the emergency, report to the entities described in subsection (g) on the status of the emergency, the total expenditures incurred by the United States Government, and the actions the President or other officers have taken and authorities the President and such officers have relied on in addressing the emergency.

''(g) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The entities described in this subsection are—

''(1) the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

''(2) minority leader of the House of Representatives;

''(3) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

''(4) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.''.

SEC. ___13. EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN NATIONAL EMERGENCIES INVOKING INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as amended by this subtitle, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''TITLE VI—DECLARATIONS OF CERTAIN EMERGENCIES INVOKING INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT

''SEC. 604. APPLICABILITY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—This title shall apply to a national emergency pursuant to which the President proposes to exercise emergency powers or authorities made available under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

''(b) EFFECT OF ADDITIONAL POWERS AND AUTHORITIES.—This title shall not apply to a national emergency or the exercise of emergency powers and authorities pursuant to the national emergency if, in addition to the exercise of emergency powers and authorities described in subsection (a), the President proposes to exercise, pursuant to the national emergency, any emergency powers and authorities under any other provision of law.''.

(b) TRANSFER.—Sections 201, 202, and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as such sections appeared on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, are—

(1) transferred to title VI of such Act (as added by subsection (a));

(2) inserted before section 604 of such title (as added by subsection (a)); and

(3) redesignated as sections 601, 602, and 603, respectively.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title II of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), as such title appeared the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, is amended by striking the heading for such title.

SEC. ___14. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) NATIONAL EMERGENCIES ACT.—Title III of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1631) is repealed.

(b) INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.—Section 207(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1706) is amended by striking ''concurrent resolution'' each place it appears and inserting ''joint resolution''.

SEC. ___15. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall—

(1) take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) except as provided in subsection (b), apply with respect to national emergencies declared under section 201 of the National Emergencies Act on or after such date.

(b) APPLICABILITY TO RENEWALS OF EXISTING EMERGENCIES.—With respect to a national emergency declared under section 201 of the National Emergencies Act before the date of the enactment of this Act that would expire or be renewed under section 202(d) of that Act (as in effect on the day before such date of enactment), that national emergency shall be subject to the requirements for renewal under section 202(b) of that Act, as amended by section ___11.

(c) SUPERSESSION.—This subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall supersede title II of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) as such title was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Limitations on Emergency Authorities

SEC. ___21. PROTECTIONS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS WITH RESPECT TO USE OF AUTHORITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

The International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 203 the following:

''SEC. 203A. PROTECTIONS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS.

''(a) LIMITATIONS FOR NECESSITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by paragraph (2) and in accordance with this section, no authority provided under section 203 may be exercised to target a United States person.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR ISSUANCE OF GENERAL LICENSES.—An authority provided under section 203 may be exercised to target a United States person if the President has, before using the authority, issued a general license that ensures that the United States person has sufficient access to the necessities of life, including food, nutritional support, water, shelter, clothing, sanitation, medicine, health care and other vital services, and gainful employment where necessary to provide the United States person a means for subsistence.

''(3) DUE PROCESS FOR UNITED STATES PERSONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—When taking an action pursuant to authority provided by section 203 to target a United States person, the President shall—

''(i) provide contemporaneous notice of the action to the United States person;

''(ii) not later than one week after taking the action, provide the United States person with the record on which the decision to take the action was based, including an unclassified summary, or a redacted version, of any classified information that provides the United States person with substantially the same ability to respond to that information as the classified information;

''(iii) provide the United States person with the opportunity to request review of the decision and to submit information in support of that request;

''(iv) provide the United States person with the opportunity for an administrative hearing not later than 90 days after requesting a review under clause (iii), unless the United States person agrees to a longer period; and

''(v) render a written decision on a request for review under clause (iii) not later than 90 days after the hearing under clause (iv), or, if no such hearing is requested, not later than 90 days after the later of—

''(I) the request for review; or

''(II) the submission of information in support of that request.

''(B) FAILURE TO RENDER TIMELY DECISION.—Failure to render a decision within the time frame specified in subparagraph (A)(v) shall be considered an agency action for purposes of section 702 of title 5, United States Code.

''(b) WARRANT FOR SEIZURE OF PROPERTY OF UNITED STATES PERSONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—When taking an action pursuant to authority provided by section 203 to target a United States person, the President may not block or otherwise prevent the access of the United States person to property in which the United States person has an ownership interest except pursuant to a warrant issued using the procedures described in the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (or, in the case of a court-martial or other proceeding under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code), issued under section 846 of title 10, United States Code (article 46 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), in accordance with regulations prescribed by the President) by a court of competent jurisdiction.

''(2) DELAYED WARRANTS.—To the extent consistent with the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, a court shall permit the temporary blocking of property under section 203 without a warrant on an emergency basis, or use other means lawfully available to the court, to enable the Federal Government to identify the property that is subject to blocking while reducing the risk of property flight.

''(c) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A United States person that is the target of an action taken by the President pursuant to any authority provided under section 203 may bring an action in a United States court of competent jurisdiction, after exhaustion of any available administrative remedies, to obtain judicial review of the lawfulness of that action, including whether the action was authorized by the Executive order or orders specifying the measures to be taken under section 203 in response to a determination issued under section 202.

''(2) CONDUCT OF REVIEW.—In an action brought under paragraph (1)—

''(A) the review of the court shall be de novo;

''(B) any party may introduce evidence not included in the administrative record;

''(C) any administrative record or portions thereof may be entered into evidence, and questions of authentication or hearsay shall bear on the weight to be accorded the evidence rather than its admissibility;

''(D) classified information shall be handled in accordance with the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.), except that references to the 'defendant' in such Act shall be deemed to apply to the plaintiff; and

''(E) the court shall have the authority to order injunctive relief, actual damages, and attorneys' fees.

''(3) OTHER MEANS OF REVIEW.—The availability of judicial review under this subsection shall not preclude other available means of judicial review, including under section 702 of title 5, United States Code, except that a person may not exercise the right to judicial review under more than one provision of law.

''(d) UNITED STATES PERSON DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'United States person' means—

''(1) a United States national; or

''(2) an entity—

''(A) organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States; and

''(B) in which more than 50 percent of the controlling interest is owned by a person described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. ___22. EXCLUSION OF AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE DUTIES AND IMPORT QUOTAS FROM INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.

Section 203 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c)(1) The authority granted to the President by this section does not include the authority to impose duties or tariff-rate quotas or (subject to paragraph (2)) other quotas on articles entering the United States.

''(2) The limitation under paragraph (1) does not prohibit the President from excluding all articles, or all of a certain type of article, imported from a country from entering the United States.''.

SEC. ___23. PRESIDENTIAL WAR POWERS UNDER COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934.

Section 706 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 606) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by inserting ''and declares a national emergency'' after ''in the interest of national security or defense,''; and

(2) in subsection (d), by striking ''there exists'' and inserting ''a national emergency exists by virtue of there being''.

SEC. ___24. DISCLOSURE TO CONGRESS OF PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY ACTION DOCUMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 days after the conclusion of the process for approval, adoption, or revision of any presidential emergency action document, the President shall submit that document to the appropriate congressional committees.

(b) DOCUMENTS IN EXISTENCE BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees all presidential emergency action documents in existence before such date of enactment.

(c) OVERSIGHT.—

(1) SENATE.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate shall have—

(A) continuing legislative oversight jurisdiction in the Senate with respect to the proposal, creation, implementation, and execution of presidential emergency action documents; and

(B) access to any and all presidential emergency action documents.

(2) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—The Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives shall have—

(A) continuing legislative oversight jurisdiction in the House of Representatives with respect to the proposal, creation, implementation, and execution of presidential emergency action documents; and

(B) access to any and all presidential emergency action documents.

(3) DUTY TO COOPERATE.—All officers and employees of any Federal agency shall have the duty to cooperate with the exercise of oversight jurisdiction described in this subsection.

(4) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—The chairpersons and ranking members of the appropriate congressional committees, and designated staff of those committees, shall be granted all security clearances required to access, and granted access to, presidential emergency action documents, including under relevant Presidential or agency special access and compartmented access programs.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives.

(2) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term ''Federal agency''—

(A) has the meaning given the term ''agency'' in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) includes the Executive Office of the President, the Executive Office of the Vice President, the Office of Management and Budget, and the National Security Council.

(3) PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY ACTION DOCUMENT.—The term ''presidential emergency action document'' refers to any document created by any Federal agency before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act, that is—

(A) designated as a presidential emergency action document or presidential emergency action directive;

(B) designed to implement a presidential decision or transmit a presidential request when an emergency disrupts normal executive, legislative, judicial, or other Federal governmental processes;

(C) a Presidential Policy Directive, regardless of whether the directive is available to the public, that triggers any change in policies, procedures, or operations of the Federal Government upon the declaration by the President of an emergency; or

(D) any other document, briefing, or plan, regardless of whether the document, briefing, or plan exists in any tangible or written form, that triggers any change in operations of the Federal Government upon the declaration by the President of an emergency.

SA 3339. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HAGERTY)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 3502, to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Homebuyers Privacy Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF PRESCREENING REPORT REQUESTS.

Section 604(c) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681b(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) TREATMENT OF PRESCREENING REPORT REQUESTS.—

''(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

''(i) CREDIT UNION.—The term 'credit union' means a Federal credit union or a State credit union, as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C 1752).

''(ii) INSURED DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term 'insured depository institution' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813(c)).

''(iii) RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOAN.—The term 'residential mortgage loan' has the meaning given the term in section 1503 of the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5102).

''(iv) SERVICER.—The term 'servicer' has the meaning given the term in section 6(i) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2605(i)).

''(B) LIMITATION.—If a person requests a consumer report from a consumer reporting agency in connection with a credit transaction involving a residential mortgage loan, that agency may not, based in whole or in part on that request, furnish a consumer report to another person under this subsection unless that other person—

''(i) has submitted documentation to that agency certifying that such other person has, pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the authorization of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates; or

''(ii)(I) has originated a current residential mortgage loan of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates;

''(II) is the servicer of a current residential mortgage loan of the consumer to whom the consumer report relates; or

''(III)(aa) is an insured depository institution or credit union; and

''(bb) holds a current account for the consumer to whom the consumer report relates.''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3340. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. PETERS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4181, to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency; as follows:

On page 12, line 15, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''any'' on line 16, and insert the following:

(E) specific strategies for identifying, addressing, preventing, and mitigating discriminatory actions or decisions based on political affiliation; and

(F) any

SA 3341. Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Ms. HASSAN)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1299, to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. PERIODIC REVIEW OF AUTOMATIC MAXIMUM COVERAGE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE AND VETERANS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage

''(a) IN GENERAL.—On January 1, 2025, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

''(1) complete a review of how the amount specified in section 1967(a)(3)(A)(i) compares to the amount described in subsection (b); and

''(2) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate the results of the review, which may serve as a guide for coverage increases within the existing administrative incremental structure.

''(b) AMOUNT DESCRIBED.—The amount described in this subsection is the amount equal to—

''(1) $500,000; multiplied by

''(2) the average percentage by which the Consumer Price Index changed during the five fiscal years preceding the review under subsection (a).

''(c) CONSUMER PRICE INDEX DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'Consumer Price Index' means the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 19 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1980A the following new item:

''1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage.''.

SA 3342. Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1144, to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Invest to Protect Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) DE-ESCALATION TRAINING.—The term ''de-escalation training'' means training relating to taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary.

(2) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the Office.

(3) ELIGIBLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ''eligible local government'' means—

(A) a county, municipality, town, township, village, parish, borough, or other unit of general government below the State level that employs fewer than 175 law enforcement officers; and

(B) a Tribal government that employs fewer than 175 law enforcement officers.

(4) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term ''law enforcement officer'' has the meaning given the term ''career law enforcement officer'' in section 1709 of title I the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10389).

(5) OFFICE.—The term ''Office'' means the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the Department of Justice.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Office a grant program to—

(1) provide training and access to mental health resources to local law enforcement officers; and

(2) improve the recruitment and retention of local law enforcement officers.

(c) AUTHORITY.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall award grants to eligible local governments as a part of the grant program established under subsection (b).

(d) APPLICATIONS.—

(1) BARRIERS.—The Attorney General shall determine what barriers exist to establishing a streamlined application process for grants under this section.

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall submit to Congress a report that includes a plan to execute a streamlined application process for grants under this section under which an eligible local government seeking a grant under this section can reasonably complete the application in not more than 2 hours.

(B) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—The plan required under subparagraph (A) may include a plan for—

(i) proactively providing eligible local governments seeking a grant under this section with information on the data eligible local governments will need to prepare before beginning the grant application; and

(ii) ensuring technical assistance is available for eligible local governments seeking a grant under this section before and during the grant application process, including through dedicated liaisons within the Office.

(3) APPLICATIONS.—In selecting eligible local governments to receive grants under this section, the Director shall use the streamlined application process described in paragraph (2)(A).

(e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible local government that receives a grant under this section may use amounts from the grant only for—

(1) de-escalation training for law enforcement officers;

(2) victim-centered training for law enforcement officers in handling situations of domestic violence;

(3) evidence-based law enforcement safety training for—

(A) active shooter situations;

(B) the safe handling of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals;

(C) rescue situations;

(D) recognizing and countering ambush attacks; or

(E) response to calls for service involving—

(i) persons with mental health needs;

(ii) persons with substance use disorders;

(iii) veterans;

(iv) persons with disabilities;

(v) vulnerable youth;

(vi) persons who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or trafficking; or

(vii) persons experiencing homelessness or living in poverty;

(4) the offsetting of overtime costs associated with scheduling issues relating to the participation of a law enforcement officer in the training described in paragraphs (1) through (3), (9), and (10);

(5) a signing bonus for a law enforcement officer in an amount determined by the eligible local government;

(6) a retention bonus for a law enforcement officer—

(A) in an amount determined by the eligible local government that does not exceed 20 percent of the salary of the law enforcement officer; and

(B) who—

(i) has been employed at the law enforcement agency for not fewer than 5 years;

(ii) has not been found by an internal investigation to have engaged in serious misconduct; and

(iii) commits to remain employed by the law enforcement agency for not less than 3 years after the date of receipt of the bonus;

(7) a stipend for the graduate education of law enforcement officers in the area of mental health, public health, or social work, which shall not exceed the lesser of—

(A) $10,000; or

(B) the amount the law enforcement officer pays towards such graduate education;

(8) providing access to patient-centered behavioral health services for law enforcement officers, which may include resources for risk assessments, evidence-based, trauma-informed care to treat post-traumatic stress disorder or acute stress disorder, peer support and counselor services and family supports, and the promotion of improved access to high quality mental health care through telehealth;

(9) the implementation of evidence-based best practices and training on the use of lethal and nonlethal force;

(10) the implementation of evidence-based best practices and training on the duty of care and the duty to intervene; and

(11) data collection for police practices relating to officer and community safety.

(f) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish reasonable reporting requirements specifically relating to a grant awarded under this section for eligible local governments that receive such a grant in order to assist with the evaluation by the Office of the program established under this section.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing requirements under paragraph (1), the Director shall consider the capacity of law enforcement agencies with fewer than 175 officers to collect and report information.

(g) DISCLOSURE OF OFFICER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION BONUSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which an eligible local government that receives a grant under this section awards a signing or retention bonus described in paragraph (5) or (6) of subsection (e), the eligible local government shall disclose to the Director and make publicly available on a website of the eligible local government the amount of the bonus.

(2) REPORT.—The Attorney General shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an annual report that includes each signing or retention bonus disclosed under paragraph (1) during the preceding year.

(h) GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All grants awarded by the Director under this section shall be subject to the accountability provisions described in this subsection.

(2) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term ''unresolved audit finding'' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the audited grantee has used grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months from the date when the final audit report is issued.

(B) AUDITS.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this subsection, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this section to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(C) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of grant funds under this section that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this section during the first 3 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

(D) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an eligible local government is awarded grant funds under this section during the 3-fiscal-year period during which the eligible local government is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the Attorney General shall—

(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(3) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the fiscal year during which audits commence under paragraph (2)(B), the Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives an annual certification—

(A) indicating whether—

(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice under paragraph (2) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director;

(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (2)(C) have been issued; and

(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (2)(D) have been made; and

(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (2) from the previous year.

(i) PROGRAM EVALUATION.—Not less frequently than annually, the Attorney General shall analyze the information provided by eligible local governments pursuant to the reporting requirements established under subsection (f)(1) to evaluate the efficacy of programs funded by the grant program under this section.

(j) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Before the Director awards a grant to an eligible local government under this section, the Attorney General shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded by the Attorney General to determine if grant awards are or have been awarded for a similar purpose.

(2) REPORT.—If the Attorney General awards grants to the same applicant for a similar purpose, whether through the grant program under this section or another grant program administered by the Department of Justice, the Attorney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(A) a list of all such grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any such grants awarded; and

(B) the reason the Attorney General awarded multiple grants to the same applicant for a similar purpose.

(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section not more than $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have three requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it recess until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, December 18, and that all postcloture time with respect to the House message with respect to H.R. 5009 be considered expired at 11:45 a.m.; further, that upon disposition of the House message, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 693, H.R. 82, and that the cloture motion with respect to the motion to proceed ripen at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:40 p.m., recessed until Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DR. THOMAS G. LUM, SPECIALIST IN ASIAN AFFAIRS AT THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Thomas G. Lum, a Specialist in Asian Affairs at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), for his distinguished career in service to Congress.

Tom retires on December 31st after more than a quarter century with CRS, throughout which he has provided exceptional contributions to Congress as an expert on various critical issues. His areas of expertise have included human rights and social control in the People's Republic of China (PRC), U.S. foreign assistance to the Indo-Pacific region, and U.S. policy in the Pacific Islands, the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos.

As just one example of Tom's work, he brought a deep understanding of the United States' historical relationship with the Freely Associated States (FAS) to bear in assisting Congress' understanding and evaluation of the role of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau in protecting U.S. national security. He made especially vital contributions to the renewal of the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) in 2003, 2004 and 2023. One of the rare U.S. experts with experience analyzing multiple generations of the COFA, Tom provided Members of Congress with detailed analysis of the Compacts and the policy debates around them, helping Congress shape and conduct oversight of their implementation. I can personally attest to Tom's unseen but major hand in developing and passing the COFA renewal of 2023.

Congress also has relied on Tom for exceptional support on issues related to civil and human rights in the PRC and the Chinese Communist Party's extensive efforts at social control. Having received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California at Santa Barbara and written an important book—Problems of Democratization in China—on this issue, Tom came to Congress in 1999 with expertise he further honed on the job. His analysis of the PRC's evolving society amplified Congress' understanding of the country and contributed to a far more informed and sophisticated policy discussion on related issues. Again, I found his briefings, which were really more deep discussions, not only highly insightful but prescient.

Tom's passion for his work and his dedication to providing authoritative, non-partisan analysis to support Congress' legislative and oversight functions have been invaluable. His deep understanding of U.S. foreign assistance in the Indo-Pacific region was also of great help to Congress.

Congress has benefitted enormously from Tom's large body of work and his steadfast commitment, in fact passion, to providing Members and Congressional staff outstanding consultative support. Over the course of his career, Tom's analysis informed numerous pieces of legislation, including on such issues as the PRC's use of forced labor, the oppression of China's Uyghur minority, the U.S. alliance with the Philippines and support for FAS immigrants in the United States.

His calm, easy-going demeanor and his understated yet ever-present sense of humor made him a great pleasure for his colleagues and the Congressional community to work with. In addition, his commitment to collaboration and to mentoring colleagues has made an indelible contribution to the CRS that will far outlast his service.

For our Congress and our country, I extend my gratitude and warm mahalo to Tom Lum for his outstanding contributions. We in Congress offer him best wishes in his retirement.

HONORING SENATOR KAY PATTERSON

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, my deepest sympathy to the family of Senator Kay Patterson. We were both elected in the State Senate Class of 1984 and developed a friendship, despite ideological differences. I cherish our co-sponsoring of legislation to encourage UPS job creation at Columbia Airport, presented as the 'Lion And The Lamb Bill.'

I include in the RECORD the obituary of Senator Kay Patterson.

''Former state Sen. Kay Patterson, known for his colorful language and wit, died Friday after being sick, sources with knowledge confirmed to The State. He was 93.

Described as a civil rights icon, the former Richland County lawmaker served in the General Assembly for 32 years.

Patterson was a member of the state House from 1975 through 1985 representing District 73 and in the state Senate from 1985 through 2007 representing District 19.

''His unwavering commitment to the education, civil rights and the well-being of all South Carolinians has left an indelible mark our state. Sen. Patterson commanded everyone's attention with his wit and wisdom.'' S.C. Democratic Party Chairwoman Christale Spain said in a statement. ''His leadership and dedication to our community inspired me and many others.''

Patterson had a bachelor's degree from Allen University and served two years in U.S. Marine Corps.

State Sen. Tameika Isaac Devine, D–Richland, who now holds the seat previously held by Patterson, called him a towering champion for ''justice, equality and education.''

''As a legislator, educator, and mentor, he consistently fought to uplift the marginalized, amplify unheard voices, and ensure a brighter future for all South Carolinians,'' Devine posted on X. ''His unwavering commitment to civil rights and education reform has touched countless lives and will continue to inspire generations to come.''

U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, D–Santee, called Patterson a ''treasured friend'' and noted how he was a long-time proponent of removing the Confederate flag from atop the State House dome.

''He was a passionate voice for South Carolina's families, serving over three decades in public service,'' Clyburn said in a statement.

Former state Sen. Dick Harpootlian, D–Richland, said Patterson will be sorely missed and described Patterson as a civil rights icon.

''He was an extraordinary public servant and an extraordinary example for anyone in public service,'' Harpootlian said. ''He wasn't looking for a way to get something for him. He was looking for a way to get something for his community.''

During his career in public service, Patterson served as a commissioner for the South Carolina Department of Highways and Public Transportation, chairman of the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, chairman of the Richland County Legislative Delegation, and as a trustee on the University of South Carolina Board.

He was the first Black person to serve on the USC Board since Reconstruction.

Former state Sen. Joel Lourie, D–Richland, whose father, Isadore, was friends with Patterson, said Patterson was an inspirational and transformational leader.

''Sen. Patterson was a force for change. He was not afraid to speak out against prejudice or injustice, both as an educator and a public servant,'' Lourie said in a statement.

Patterson taught for 14 years at W.A. Perry Middle School, C.A. Johnson High School and Benedict College and served for 16 years as a UniServ representative for the South Carolina Education Association.

State Sen. Darren Jackson, D–Richland, said Patterson was a politician who could keep the attention of young people. Jackson said Patterson motivated him to go into politics.

''He spoke to us, not at us,'' Jackson said. ''He used colorful language and kept us at the end of our seat.''

Patterson's oratory ability is what most remember him for which included his ability to use wit to his advantage.

''He was not a giant of a man until he opened his mouth and stood on his credentials,'' said House Minority Leader Todd Rutherford, D–Richland.

''Everyone took note when he started to talk,'' Rutherford added. ''He had an uncanny ability to take street talk and turn it into intelligent talk and take intelligent talk and turn it into street talk.''

Former Columbia Mayor Bob Coble said he was advised to never speak after Patterson.

''He would always bring the house down,'' Coble said.

''He did it with a flair. He left you laughing, but while you were laughing, you knew what his point was,'' said Senate Minority Leader Brad Hutto, D–Orangeburg.

● This ''bullet'' symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

COMMEMORATING THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 10th Mountain Division. On November 6, 1944, during the height of America's involvement in World War II, the 10th Mountain Division was activated to master mountain and winter warfare in order to prepare themselves for operations in some of the world's most unforgiving climates and terrains.

After rigorous training in the Colorado Rockies, these brave soldiers made their mark during the Italian Campaign where they seized German positions on Riva Ridge and Mount Belvedere and broke through the German mountain defenses into the Po River Valley. During nearly five months of intense ground combat in Italy, the 10th Mountain Division fought against 100,000 German troops, effectively defeating five German divisions and drawing enemy forces away from other theaters. Their success in these critical battles contributed to the eventual liberation of Italy and showcased the effectiveness of specialized warfare in extreme conditions.

Following World War II, the division was reactivated in 1985 at Fort Drum in Upstate New York, which the unit has since called home. The North Country's austere environment and cold winters were chosen to host the newly reactivated light infantry division to ensure it was ready to fight and win in every environment.

Between 1984 and 2001, 10th Mountain Division soldiers deployed around the world, from supporting Operation Desert Storm in the Middle East to providing disaster relief in Florida after Hurricane Andrew, the 10th Mountain Division's commitment to service never wavered. In 2001, the 10th Mountain Division provided the first conventional combat forces to respond to the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. Since that first deployment in support of the Global War on Terror, the 10th Mountain Division has become the most deployed unit in the United States Army.

The 10th Mountain Division has a proven and unique ability to adapt to rapidly changing combat environments. Whether operating in the steep, high-altitude terrain of Afghanistan or conducting urban operations in Iraq, 10th Mountain Division soldiers have consistently demonstrated that they are always able to innovate to meet the demands of the mission. Their dedication, skill, and professionalism have been vital in the fight against terrorism, defending American interests and promoting stability in some of the world's most volatile regions.

The 10th Mountain Division has set a high standard for service, exemplifying leadership, resilience, and innovation. Because of this the 10th Mountain Division is now at the forefront of Army modernization efforts and 10th Mountain Division soldiers are closing the Army's most critical capability gaps including developing solutions for counter-drone, drone, and electronic warfare problems. Over the last 40 years, the 10th Mountain Division has integrated itself into the North Country community, where soldiers and their families form a strong network of support that strengthens the entire force. As we reflect on the division's distinguished history, we must also honor the sacrifices made by their families, who stand alongside their soldiers every step of the way.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, we commemorate the 10th Mountain Division's 80th year and will honor its past by ensuring a strong future for the 10th Mountain Division and for all who serve in our Armed Forces. Climb to Glory.

BERING RIVER COAL FIELD

HON. JEFF DUNCAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a piece of property in South Central Alaska known as the Bering River Coal Field located in the magnificent Copper River Delta. This issue goes back to the days of Theodore Roosevelt as a conservation effort.

The United States government has the opportunity to purchase the mineral rights to this field.

This Congress provided the U.S. Forest Service $8 million to buy the Bering River Coal Field through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but the appraisal came in at $6 million.

The Korean Alaska Development Company that owns it will sell for $8 million, and I want to thank a gentleman, Joe Shinn, and the KADCO board of directors for staying at the table.

We have an opportunity, and I believe the members on both sides of the aisle would agree if you could by acclamation to give the Forest Service the ability to purchase this remarkable property for conservation. But the United States government cannot pay more than appraised value unless we in Congress authorize them to do that.

The difference is between $6 million and $8 million dollars, and I ask my colleagues, if not now then, in the future, to help the United States of America to set aside the Bering River Coal Field in perpetuity for all future generations to enjoy.

THANKING REPRESENTATIVE CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS FOR HER SERVICE

SPEECH OF

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and thank my colleague and dear friend, Chairwoman CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS.

For two decades, CATHY has committed herself to this body and this country, working tirelessly in pursuit of public service. She was established as a leader early on, and this was no accident. CATHY is a light and a voice of reason. Her faith guides her above all else, and for that, she stood apart. Her colleagues knew that she was someone they could trust, someone who could support them—and they were right. However, while the country knows her as a political leader, she's much more—she's also a leader in faith and fellowship.

Relationships can be complicated in this town, but CATHY uncomplicated them. She brought people together. I have been blessed to witness her leadership firsthand in our work together on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. I built my career in the energy business, and she gave me the opportunity to speak to what I know best. I'm proud of all we accomplished over these last four years, but that's only a part of CATHY's legacy.

I thank CATHY for leading us with passion and grace. I look forward to seeing her journey continue, and God bless her and her beautiful family.

HONORING MARK COOPER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Mark Cooper for his exemplary career in public service and his dedication to education and community health.

Dr. Cooper was born in San Francisco, California, and earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of the Pacific. As a dentist, he generously supported Lake County's Healthy Start program, ensuring that every child in the community received dental sealants and treatment for major dental issues before entering kindergarten.

Dr. Cooper is a committed and hard-working public servant. Dr. Cooper was first elected in 1992 to the Lake County Board of Education where he worked tirelessly to advocate for Lake County students. Prior to his service on the Lake County Board of Education, he served for 12 years as a member of the Konocti Unified School District Board of Education. In 2001, he was elected President of the California County Boards of Education, where he helped shape the California School Boards Association's Professional Governance Standards. These standards have guided school board members statewide, while raising public awareness about the critical role school boards play in advancing educational excellence.

Dr. Cooper's contributions extend beyond the fields of education. Dr. Cooper served as a president of Rotary Club of Clear Lake and has continued to advocate for youth dental health as a member of the Oral Health Coalition of Lake and Mendocino Counties. Dr. Cooper was instrumental in the establishment of the Kenocti Wellness Center, the first school-based clinic in a rural community in California, ensuring that all students have access to quality healthcare.

Additionally, Dr. Cooper resides in Clearlake with his wife, Janice. They are the proud parents of their three children: Benjamin, Brian, and Jacqueline. In his free time, Dr. Cooper enjoys playing the drums, a passion Dr. Cooper will continue into his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I extend our community's heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Mark Cooper for his decades of service to education, health, and our community. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING PA–1'S HOMETOWN HEROES: BUCKS COUNTY WOMEN'S SENIOR A DRAGON BOAT TEAM

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—A team that has gone above and beyond their call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize the Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team:

Deb Bray, Jan Buhler, Kelly Chase, Gwen Coverdale, Bonnie Gepner, Lisa Hearn, Deb Jennings, Kimbriell Kelly, Christine Kerrigan, Kim King, Cynthia Laggan, Heidi Lengel, Angie Lin, Larraine Lodise, Karen Lust, Heydi Lynch, Leanne Lyons.

Cindy Manzo, Chezza Martineau, Margie Milburn, Christy Murphy, Carrie Myers, Kimmel Nacewicz, Kelly Noonan, Lina Peterson, Maureen Petrosky, Kelly Quinn, Olivia Quinn, Marie Quizon, Laura Scaperotto, Jackie Squares, Joanne Stein, Jacquelyn Wetzel, Chris Wetzel (Coach), Tommy Leonardi (Coach).

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades, but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. The Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

This remarkable group has brought honor to our community on the global stage and demonstrates what it means to be a champion in every sense of the word. Led by the incredible Chris and Jaquelyn Wetzel, the Bucks Dragon Boat Association recently competed on the world stage in Ravenna, Italy, against the top dragon boat teams from around the globe. They brought home two silver medals and a gold—an achievement that speaks volumes about their talent, determination, and dedication. But as impressive as these victories are, their most profound accomplishment wasn't measured in medals but in saving a life.

On September 3rd, following a grueling 2000-meter race that earned them the silver medal, Christy Murphy and her Women's Senior A teammates were paddling back to the docks when they saw a man in the water, struggling to stay afloat. It was a moment that could have paralyzed many with fear, but instead, it became a moment of pure heroism. Without a second thought, Christy sprang into action, drawing on the same strength, precision, and teamwork that had carried them through the race. She knew every second was crucial.

With her teammates rallying behind her, Christy plunged into the water and swam to the struggling man. With the help of her teammates, they pulled him onto their boat and safely transferred him to the motor rescue they had flagged down. On that day, this remarkable group of Bucks County women did not just prove themselves as world-class athletes—they showed us all what it means to be true heroes. This extraordinary and selfless act transcends any medal or title, reminding us of the power of human connection, teamwork, and what we are capable of when we come together.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to The Bucks County Women's Senior A Dragon Boat Team for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional organization, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JIM MCMILLAN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with Representative DESAULNIER, to honor the life and legacy of James ''Jim'' McMillan, a devoted public servant and trailblazing leader within Contra Costa County. Mr. McMillan passed away on November 28, 2024, at the age of 96. He leaves behind a legacy of dedication, integrity, and the relentless pursuit of justice.

Born in Mineral Wells, Texas, Mr. McMillan moved to Richmond, California in the 1950s, where he opened McMillan Pharmacy—the first Black-owned pharmacy in the city. McMillan Pharmacy became a vital gathering place for Richmond's African American community, fostering dialogue and action on critical social issues.

Mr. McMillan made history as the first African-American graduate of the College of Pharmacy at Oregon State University. He was also the second Black graduate in the university's history. He brought his pioneering spirit to every endeavor, whether as a pharmacist, mentor, or elected official.

In 1983, Mr. McMillan was elected to the Richmond City Council, where he served with distinction for three terms. He worked to combat systemic racism and police brutality in Richmond, calling for reform and accountability within the police department. He was instrumental in creating Richmond's first police review commission, which served as a model for oversight and community trust.

Beyond his political achievements, Mr. McMillan was a compassionate neighbor and mentor. Mr. McMillan was known for his sharp sense of style and unwavering kindness and was deeply respected and loved by those who knew him. He devoted his life to uplifting others by mentoring aspiring leaders, delivering local newspapers to keep his neighbors informed, or simply offering a kind word and a helping hand.

As a community health leader, he provided care and counsel to countless individuals in Richmond, often visiting patients in hospitals and ensuring they received the medical attention they needed. His contributions extended far beyond his profession. His work laid the foundation for lasting change, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations to come. On behalf of the constituents of California's 8th and 10th Congressional Districts, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Mr. McMillan's loved ones. We know they and the people of Contra Costa County will join us in celebrating his life and legacy.

HONORING JOHN D. FRESHMAN

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished and long career of John D. Freshman, whose unwavering commitment to ensuring clean water for the United States spanned over fifty years.

After graduating from Middlebury College in Vermont, John began his career working for Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, followed by Governor (and then Senator) Robert Stafford of Vermont. When Senator Stafford joined the Senate, he was appointed to the Public Works Committee, and it was here that John found himself in the heart of the 1972 Clean Water Act conference. In a 2003 interview with Bates College, John recalled the significance of that experience, saying, ''This is the most interesting, stimulating, important thing I've ever seen in my life. This is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life.''

John's passion for the Clean Water Act continued with his service on the National Commission on Water Quality, chaired by Nelson Rockefeller, with Senator Edmund Muskie serving as one of the vice chairs. John became Senator Muskie's right hand on the Committee, working tirelessly on the Clean Water Act, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

After his distinguished service in Congress, John continued his work in public service under President Jimmy Carter. He first contributed to the President's Reorganization Project, focusing on emergency preparedness, natural resources, and economic development. John later served as the Associate Director for the U.S. Regulatory Council and as Special Advisor to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, working closely with Administrator Douglas Costle.

Throughout his career, both in and out of government, John remained dedicated to advancing clean water initiatives and investments. He worked with communities in California and across the nation to ensure access to clean water, building on the protections and principles established by the Clean Water Act.

It has been a great privilege to work with John Freshman over the years. His partnership and perseverance in ensuring that communities have access to clean water and his tireless efforts to protect the principles of the Clean Water Act will have enduring impact. I thank John for his lifelong service and unwavering commitment to clean water and to our country.

HONORING KAY GRANGER

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, today, I honor someone who has been more than a colleague. KAY GRANGER has been a trailblazer, a mentor, and a dear friend. As a leader within the Texas delegation, she embodied the best of Texas, and the best of America.

KAY was the first Republican woman to chair the powerful House Appropriations Committee—arguably the most influential committee in the House. The ''power of the purse'' is no small responsibility, and KAY's leadership exemplified strength, fairness, and resolve—qualities that defined her career. She has an innate ability to navigate the complexities of governance, always keeping the needs of Texas and the nation at heart.

When KAY talks, people listen. Her voice commands respect because it is grounded in wisdom and a deep understanding of the challenges facing our country. She is warm, endearing, and can guide with kindness, but you never want to cross her—not because she is harsh, but because her strength and pragmatism are unmatched.

As we hand the torch to a new generation, we're reminded of KAY's legacy. Her kindness and determination have left an indelible mark on all of us. We will miss her dearly—not just for the work she accomplished, but for the person she is. KAY GRANGER's legacy is one of strength, grace, and unwavering service to her constituents and her country.

I thank KAY for her unparalleled contributions. Her example inspires us, and her absence will be deeply felt in the halls of Congress.

May we honor her legacy by continuing to lead with the same courage and conviction she exemplified.

RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR JANET BUCKNER

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor State Senator Janet Buckner for her commitment and faithful public service to the state of Colorado.

Senator Buckner has been a resident and leader in our community for decades. Early in her career, she worked with children and family as a speech and language therapist. Senator Buckner worked for decades in medical sales before then serving our community as an elected official and public servant.

After the death of her late husband, Senator Buckner was unanimously elected to serve the remainder of his term representing the people of House District 40. The Honorable John W. Buckner, like his wife, spent much of his life dedicated to educating the youth of the district, as a teacher and principal at Overland High School.

In 2016 and 2018, she was re-elected to continue her service in the Colorado General Assembly. During then-Representative Buckner's tenure in the House, she was appointed to serve in leadership as Speaker Pro Tempore. During this time, she helped to pass the historic Equal Pay for Equal Work Act of 2019 to prohibit sex discrimination in the workplace.

In 2020, Senator Buckner was elected to the Colorado State Senate, where she served as the Senate Majority Caucus Chair, Chair of the Education Committee, and as a member of the Finance Committee. During this time, she championed legislation to create the Department of Early Childhood and the Universal Preschool program, bringing resources and universal preschool to all children in Colorado.

Senator Buckner has always put people first and believes in giving all individuals a seat at the table regarding policy and legislative issues. She leads by example with grace, inclusivity, and empathy.

I thank Senator Janet Buckner for decades of dedicated service and commitment to representing her constituents and our community.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF MIKE MCGUIRE

HON. RITCHIE TORRES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to celebrate Director Mike McGuire's incredible body of work as he retires from his position as Director of the Mason Tenders' District Council PAC and from Laborers' Local 79.

During his 28 years as Director, Mike worked to protect and strengthen safe, local, well-paying union jobs. Mike navigated the competitive New York City construction industry with grace, all while putting the worker before anything else. This passion stemmed from his 44 years in Laborers' Local 79 where he worked diligently for other members both on and off job sites.

Labor protections and unions are paramount, especially in New York's most dangerous large industry. Mike advocated his hardest for the safety of the individuals tasked with building our communities. I thank him for all of his amazing work and look forward to hearing about his next chapter.

HONORING KAY GRANGER

SPEECH OF

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a remarkable leader, dedicated public servant, and good friend—Chairwoman KAY GRANGER.

Chairwoman GRANGER's tenure in public service began long before she came to the United States Congress. From her time as a teacher and businesswoman, to becoming the first female mayor of Fort Worth, she has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to serving her community and her country.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have worked side by side with Chairwoman GRANGER, and her leadership on the Committee has delivered on real conservative priorities. She has led critical policies that have touched every corner of our Nation—from bolstering our national security and supporting our veterans, to investing in American technology and backing rural America, her work here in Congress will continue to help Americans for decades to come.

Her departure from Congress is not just the end of an era for Texas' 12th District, but a significant moment for all of us who had the privilege of serving alongside her.

As she begins this new chapter of her life, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for her decades of service and wish her the best for all that lies ahead. I thank the Chairwoman for her incredible service to our Nation and the communities across Texas' 12th District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to physically record my vote on suspensions. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on Roll Call No. 505; YES on Roll Call No. 504; YES on Roll Call No. 503; and YES on Roll Call No. 502.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LAUREN BOEBERT

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 504, I mistakenly voted NAY when I intended to vote YEA.

RECOGNIZING JOHN HATTER

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and express gratitude to a terrific public servant, a trusted advisor to me and so many others, John Hatter. John Hatter, my District Director, has been serving the Hoosiers of Indiana's Sixth District for over a decade.

John has consistently given my constituents the support they need when dealing with the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense. John is a humble man and a role model for public service.

As this chapter in Congress comes to a close, I am beyond grateful for John, his service, and his friendship. Mr. Speaker, may God bless John.

HONORING THE CONTINUED SERVICE OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DARREN SILL

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Lieutenant Commander Darren Sill, United States Navy, during his outstanding service as a legislative fellow in my Washington, D.C. office this year. Throughout 2024, Darren has played a critical role in supporting my work on the House Armed Services Committee and representing the proud Navy community in eastern Connecticut.

As Ranking Member of the House Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, which has the solemn, critical duty of overseeing much of our Nation's Navy, Marine Corps, and various Air Force programs and policies, his perspective and helpful insights were essential to me and my office's work. Year in, and year out, the Department of Defense's legislative fellowship program brings highly talented individuals to Capitol Hill who provide invaluable benefits to Members of the House and Senate defense committees. Officers, like Darren, bring real-world experience from their time in the classroom at the various academies and experiences from their time serving on active duty. This year, as our subcommittee actively worked to shape our Nation's critical shipbuilding programs, particularly focused on the pursuit to add another Virginia Class submarine to the budget in the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, Darren provided exquisite judgement in navigating the landscape of crafting such a large and critical piece of legislation.

Darren has also seized initiative in a variety of areas beyond naval affairs that benefit eastern Connecticut. He worked tirelessly to provide insight into our Navy's planned shipbuilding programs, visited with leadership at Naval Submarine New London to discuss ongoing installation and submarine force operations, toured General Dynamics Electric Boat Shipyard, focused on submarine industrial base issues crucial to sustaining the Navy's fleet, and gained first-hand experience in Connecticut's substantial aerospace industrial base. He also used his recent shore assignment as a department head aboard the USS *Texas* (SSN 775) to provide invaluable insight on the Navy's submarine maintenance and sustainment capacity throughout the calendar year, providing a unique perspective on the challenges at our public shipyards. Lastly, he engaged in persistent communication with the embassies of Australia and the United Kingdom to facilitate various engagements in my office and around Capitol Hill and, most importantly, leveraged those relationships as Congress continued oversight of the trilateral AUKUS security agreement.

Darren's work ethic, diligence, intelligence, and first-hand experience as a Submarine Officer made an immediate benefit and memorable impact on my office and subcommittee staff. He was also an energetic, affable colleague to my entire congressional staff, willing to help in small ways and big ways to serve the constituents of Connecticut's 2nd Congressional District. His thoughtfulness on issues outside of his Navy portfolio were much appreciated by the whole team, and they will be friends for life.

After his Junior Officer tour aboard USS *Scranton* (SSN 756), a department head tour on USS *Texas* (SSN 775), a tour at the Pentagon with N133, and numerous stints in Groton at the Submarine Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, I am thankful for his family's tremendous sacrifice to our Nation and for landing in the District of Columbia for the current phase of their life. Though Darren's presence will be deeply missed by both my personal staff and Seapower staff, I know full-well that he will make his presence known as he heads back to the Pentagon to serve in the Secretary of the Navy's office as Director of White House and Congressional Affairs. I look forward to seeing Darren back in Groton when he attends the Submarine Command Course to prepare himself for command assignments in our Nation's submarine force.

Mr. Speaker, as has also been the case for each of his predecessors that my office has had the opportunity to host, I have benefited greatly from Darren's training and background. This recurring process that the fellowship program fosters, strengthens civilian-military understanding for future leaders of the greatest military in the world, which I believe is a necessary component of a strong democracy. Our Nation is best served at sea and here onshore by officers and leaders of the highest caliber, like Darren. He embodies such qualities and has a promising career ahead in continued service to our Nation, and we owe him such gratitude. To that end, I ask that the House join me in wishing LCDR Darren Sill, his wife Andi, and their two children, Dawson and Mckenna, the best of luck in their next life chapter.

RECOGNIZING KAZAKHSTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 33rd Independence Day of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan's Independence Day, celebrated on December 16, represents the fulfillment of a long-cherished dream: a sovereign nation charting its own course in the modern world. It is a day to honor the heroes who played instrumental roles in achieving independence and shaping a vision of freedom and self-determination for Kazakhstan for future generations.

On December 16, 1991, Kazakhstan declared its independence, officially breaking away from the Soviet Union. The United States, recognizing the significance of this achievement, was among the first nations to acknowledge Kazakhstan's sovereignty on December 25, 1991. Furthermore, the United States demonstrated its commitment by opening its embassy in January 1992 and has consistently emphasized its support for Kazakhstan's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has emerged as a respected member of the international community. The nation has fostered diplomatic relations, contributed to global peace and security, and driven economic development. The relationship between Kazakhstan and the United States has grown robust and wide-ranging, further strengthened by the Enhanced Strategic Partnership.

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's dedication to political and societal reforms is particularly commendable. Despite external challenges, Kazakhstan has remained a peaceful and stabilizing force in Central Asia, demonstrating its commitment to democracy and civilizational orientation toward the West.

Kazakhstan remains one of the United States' most reliable and trusted partners, both regionally and globally, particularly as an active member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This long-standing partnership underscores the importance of advancing efforts to establish Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR), serving as a pragmatic acknowledgment of the progress Kazakhstan has made and a necessary step to reinforce America's strategic relationship with Central Asia.

Looking ahead, the United States and Kazakhstan are ready to strengthen their partnership through ongoing dialogue, trade, and cooperation on mutual objectives. Together, we remain dedicated to promoting peace, security, and prosperity, both in Central Asia and across the globe.

HONORING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 10TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION'S TRIUMPH AT RIVA RIDGE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 80th anniversary of the 10th Mountain Division's heroic role in the Battle of Riva Ridge.

Eighty years ago, the United States and its allies waged a historic campaign to liberate Europe from Nazi Germany. Pivotal to these efforts, were the brave soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division who embarked on the formidable mission of breaching the German Gothic Line, a 108-mile-long defensive barrier stretching across the Apennine Mountains in northern Italy. Breaking through this line was vital for the Allied forces to advance across Europe and retake control of the continent. The Germans held the strategic high ground allowing them to dominate key terrain, obstruct Allied assaults, and block critical supply routes in Europe. The Allies determined that the only path forward was to scale the ice and snow-covered cliffs of Riva Ridge, which stood thousands of feet above the valley where the 10th Mountain Division was stationed.

The Germans believed these cliffs were insurmountable. However, they underestimated the determination, versatility, and unparalleled skill of the 10th Mountain Division, a regiment composed of elite mountaineers, trappers, and outdoorsmen who trained and were battle-readied in the rugged Colorado Rockies.

In the evening of February 18, 1945, 700 soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division ascended the treacherous, ice-covered slopes of Riva Ridge. Moving under the cover of darkness and a concealing fog, they scaled 2,000

feet to confront the unsuspecting enemy. Catching the Germans off guard as they slept in their dugouts, the 10th Mountain Division successfully seized the ridge. They defended their hard-won position for five grueling days, enduring heavy fighting that claimed the lives of 17 American soldiers and left 51 others wounded. In nearly five months, they faced off against 100,000 German troops, ultimately liberating the Po River Valley which led to freeing Italy. The courage and sacrifice demonstrated by the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division is truly inspiring. Their bravery in overcoming extreme adversity remains a powerful example of valor and determination.

Under the leadership of 10th Mountain Division's former Commanding General Gregory K. Anderson and the current Commanding General Scott M. Nauman, the 10th Mountain Division is valiantly returning to their Alpine roots to ensure the U.S. Army is ready to fight in diverse, mountainous terrains, just as they did 80 years ago.

On behalf of New York's 21st district, we honor the 10th Mountain Division's heroic actions at the Battle of Riva Ridge and celebrate their enduring legacy of service and sacrifice on this 80th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING PA–1'S HOMETOWN HEROES: THE QUEEN BEES

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize extraordinary individuals from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize the Queen Bees Group:

Helen Irvine, Kelly Kemmerer, Robin Kemmerer, Missy Kitzmiller, Christina Swain.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. The Queen Bees have embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

As co-founders of the Langhorne-Levittown-based non-profit, The Queen Bees, this remarkable all-female organization has not only served our community but transformed countless lives. They have dedicated their time and efforts to uplift those in the community facing adversity, channeling their collective strength towards a singular mission: creating positive change for those in need. Constituents like The Queen Bees strengthen the fabric of our district and prove that when driven by purpose, compassion, and a resolute sense of duty, individuals can leave a lasting and profound impact on an entire community.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of organizations like The Queen Bees that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit. Their service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor The Queen Bees not just for their remarkable deeds, but for who they are—true heroes, in every sense of the word.

Mr. Speaker, it is through the work of organizations like The Queen Bees that our communities thrive, and our Nation grows stronger. Their actions remind us that progress is not forged in grand gestures, but in the cumulative power of selfless acts. They embody the timeless American values of resilience, generosity, and compassion, showing us that the future is built by those who care deeply, act decisively, and give without hesitation.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to The Queen Bees for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these exceptional individuals, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

HONORING MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT ARTHUR ''ARTIE'' ALLEN, III, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. MARK TAKANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur ''Artie'' Allen, III for his unwavering service to our Nation and his exemplary commitment to veterans and the community. Throughout his distinguished 26-year career in the United States Marine Corps, Artie has demonstrated remarkable leadership, sacrifice, and dedication. Upon retiring from active duty, he has continued his legacy of service through an extraordinary range of volunteerism, outreach, and community involvement.

Artie's professional affiliations include roles such as Chairman and District 3 Appointee of the Riverside County Veterans' Advisory Committee, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Life Member & Trustee of Post 4089, Temecula Valley, and Life Member of the Marine Corps League, Southwest Riverside County Detachment 1057. His commitment to veterans and their families is exemplified through his involvement with the Veterans Experience Committee at VA Loma Linda Medical Center & Healthcare System and his service as a Docent for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Museum Foundation.

In addition to his professional contributions, Artie has dedicated countless hours to volunteerism, serving as a key figure in numerous veterans' organizations and community outreach programs. From participating in ''Buddy Poppy'' drives, organizing events for the City of Menifee, and volunteering at Homeless Veterans Stand Downs, to his involvement with ''Homes For Our Troops'' and numerous Veterans Expos, Artie's tireless efforts have positively impacted the lives of veterans, active military, and their families.

Artie has also been recognized for his volunteerism with awards such as the President's Volunteer Service Award at both the Bronze and Silver levels and the prestigious Riverside Area Veteran Honoree Program award. His leadership in the veteran community and his dedication to preserving the stories and legacies of service members is further illustrated through his work with ''King High Remembers'' and various speaking engagements.

After years of dedicated service, both in uniform and in his community, I am pleased to wish Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur Allen, III a happy and well-deserved retirement. His lifelong commitment to our country and our veterans is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and celebrating the life, service, and contributions of Master Gunnery Sergeant Arthur ''Artie'' Allen, III. We thank him for his sacrifices, his leadership, and his ongoing legacy of service to our great Nation. Happy retirement, Artie.

CELEBRATING IRONTON FOOTBALL'S STATE TITLE

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the incredible football season of the 2024 Ironton Tigers, capping it off with a 28–17 victory over Liberty Center in the Division 5 State Championship. This is Ironton High School's third state title and their first in thirty-five years.

Finishing the season with a fifteen and one record, the Tigers outscored their opponents by nearly six hundred points throughout the season as they dominated teams from Southern Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

Led by Senior quarterback, Brayden Schreck, and Senior wide receiver, Shaun Terry, the duo combined for twenty-three receiving touchdowns, more than half of Schreck's season total of thirty-seven. Terry finished the season with more than 1,500 yards, ranking him in the top twenty-five nationally for reception yards.

I am so proud of the Ironton Tigers' phenomenal season, and I am even more proud of how they distinguished themselves with a victory in the state final. The Ironton School District's motto is ''To Teach, To Nurture, To Serve'' and now they can add ''To Win'' to the list as well.

Congratulations to all of the Ironton community and especially to the coaches and athletes that made this victory possible.

HONORING MAYOR RONALD KOTT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ronald ''Ron'' Kott for his years of exceptional service and contributions to our City of Rio Vista as both a city council member and mayor.

Mayor Kott's career in public service began in 2014 when he was elected to the Rio Vista City Council. With decades of professional experience in the financial sector, Mayor Kott

brought a thoughtful, pragmatic, and compassionate approach to governance. During his tenure, he served as a strong advocate for Rio Vista, representing our city on numerous regional boards and agencies, including the Solano County Water Agency, Solano Transportation Authority, and Local Agency Formation Commission, where he also served as Chair. Appointed Vice Mayor in 2016 and Mayor in 2017, Mayor Kott provided steadfast leadership during some of the most challenging times in Rio Vista's recent history.

Under Mayor Kott's leadership, Rio Vista navigated significant trials, including the global COVID–19 pandemic. Amid the pandemic, Mayor Kott spearheaded the county's first pilot program to administer lifesaving vaccinations, ensuring the health and safety of his constituents. His collaboration with North Bay Health also paved the way for the future opening of a much-needed urgent care facility in the city. Additionally, through his strategic partnership with CalTrans, Mayor Kott secured millions of dollars in funding to improve Highway 12, a vital transportation artery for Rio Vista.

Beyond his official duties, Mayor Kott remains deeply engaged with the Rio Vista community. A long-time volunteer for the IRS-sponsored Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, he has provided free tax preparation services to low- and middle-income families.

Known for his quick wit, warm demeanor, and genuine care for others, Mayor Kott has left an indelible impact on his family, friends, and neighbors. A proud husband, father of three, and grandfather of six, Mayor Kott has always balanced his public service with his love for his family. Whether playing golf, gardening, sailing, or attending local music events, he embodies the vibrant and community-focused spirit of Rio Vista.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that we recognize Mayor Kott for his dedication, leadership, and enduring contributions to our City of Rio Vista. His tireless service and unwavering commitment to his constituents have left a lasting legacy. Today, we honor Mayor Kott and thank him for his efforts to make Rio Vista a better place for all.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN SPRATT

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers go to the family of former Congressman John Spratt. Representing South Carolina's Fifth District for nearly 30 years, Congressman Spratt was already the Dean of the South Carolina Delegation in the House when I assumed office. I had the privilege of serving with him on the Armed Services Committee, where he was a respected leader and very knowledgeable on a wide range of national security issues.

Include in the RECORD the obituary of former Congressman John Spratt.

John Spratt, a longtime member of the U.S. Congress from South Carolina, died Saturday night, his daughter said.

''I am heartbroken to announce that my father passed away last night,'' Catherine Spratt said on Facebook. He ''passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family . . . due to complications from Parkinson's disease.''

Spratt, 82, a Democrat who represented South Carolina's 5th District from 1983–2011, was mourned by President Joe Biden, former President Bill Clinton and Current U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-Santee, among others.

''Guided by his wit, wisdom, decency, and grace, John deeply understood the promise of America, and he fought tirelessly to bring people together to help us live up to that promise,'' Biden wrote in a condolence letter to the family, according to Catherine.

The 5th District includes all of Cherokee, Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Union and York counties, in addition to parts of Newberry, Spartanburg and Sumter counties.

''Today, the South Carolina Democratic Party joins countless South Carolinians and Americans in mourning the loss of a true statesman, former Congressman John Spratt. His passing leaves a profound void in the hearts of those who knew him, worked alongside him, and benefited from his tireless advocacy for our state and nation,'' S.C. Democratic Party Chair Christale Spain said Sunday. ''Congressman Spratt represented South Carolina's 5th Congressional District with unmatched dedication and grace for nearly three decades.''

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1942; Spratt grew up in York, South Carolina, and graduated from both York High School and Davidson College. He was awarded a Marshall Scholarship to Oxford, where he studied economics, and earned a Law degree from Yale.

Spratt also served in the U.S. Army from 1969–71, rising to the rank of captain, and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, his daughter said.

After being elected to Congress, Spratt was the second-highest ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee. He served as chairman of the House budget committee; among his accomplishments was the passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

Although Spratt was known for his intellect and thoughtful decisions, he was not averse to going to the ends of the earth—literally—to seek to understand complicated areas of the federal budget over which his committee assignments gave him jurisdiction.

In 1991, for example, Spratt spent 18 hours aboard a nuclear-powered submarine as it cruised beneath the North Pole.

''It was a very valuable experience,'' said, Spratt, chairman of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Panel at the time. ''I certainly have a new appreciation for the very capable men and women who staff these subs and the incredibly diffIcult task they perform.''

Camden Mayor Vincent Sheheen, a former state senator from Kershaw County, said on Monday, ''I was a page in his office in the summer of 1991, and he was so kind and inclusive to a college student who didn't know anything. He was really a teacher of all things to all people, from a lowly college page to a corporate CEO, and he treated everyone the same.''

Clinton said Spratt ''was a skilled and deeply principled lawmaker,'' his daughter said. Clinton continued, saying Spratt ''was masterful in his knowledge of policy and was willing to work with anyone to pass legislation that would make a difference in people's lives. He had a unique ability of knowing when to hold the line and when to compromise, and it earned him the respect of all in Washington. I'll always be grateful for the chance to work with him, especially on the Balanced Budget of 1997 which he co-authored and helped produce record surpluses. John was a true public servant and a really good man.''

Closer to home in South Carolina, Spratt worked to settle the Catawba Indian land claim that cleared the title to 225 square miles of land in York and Lancaster and paved the way for development in the area to thrive, the Rock Hill Herald previously reported. Spratt also was instrumental in securing more than $120 million in building projects for Shaw Air Force Base.

''Serving in Congress with John Spratt was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.'' Clyburn said on social media. ''He was a friend and confidant, a colleague and counselor, and a mentor and partner. His love of country and respect for humanity were always on display. He was an inconspicuous genius and the most ordinary, extraordinary person I have ever known. I have been missing him for a long time and will always remember his wise counsel.'' Spratt was well respected by members of both sides of the aisle in Congress.

''Above all else, John Spratt was an incredibly smart and decent man. He dedicated his life to serving the people of South Carolina,'' Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca, said Monday. ''While we were on opposite sides of the aisle, I appreciated how John was always trying to find common ground for the greater good. In my view, his disposition and approach to the job represented the best of public service.

John was a good friend, and he will be missed. May he rest in peace.''

Spratt is survived by wife, Jane Stacy Spratt; daughters Susan Elizabeth Spratt (David Tendler), Sarah Stacy Spratt (Brian Brennan), and Catherine Bratton Spratt, among other family members. No funeral arrangements have. been announced.

Mandy Powers Norell, Trav Robertson and Jaime Harrison were among many involved in Palmetto State politics who shared memorials about Spratt. ''Congressman John Spratt was my friend, mentor, and one of the greatest statesmen in Congress—and his passing breaks my heart. He was respected by Democrats and Republicans alike in our beloved home state of South Carolina as well as on Capitol Hill,'' Harrison said.

''Congressman Spratt was a miracle worker. As chairman of the House Budget Committee, he would find common ground to get things done for the people—often engaging in shuttle diplomacy to garner the support of a range of groups, from Blue Dogs to Progressives. I often teased that Mr. Spratt had probably forgotten more about the federal budget than the majority of members had ever known.

''Congressman Spratt was brilliant, kind, and beloved by many. I will miss him, but his work and his legacy will live on with all of us.''

RECOGNIZING THE TRAIL-BLAZING, PROLIFIC SWIMMING CAREER OF NANCY HUNT WEIMAN

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the trail-blazing, prolific swimming career of Nancy Hunt Weiman.

Clearwater Beach, Florida, two weeks after the second devastating hurricane in a matter of days, hosted the 2024 Master's National Artistic (Synchronized) Swimming Championships. More than 300 Master's swimmers competed, the largest number of participants—all

ages—for this Master's meet since the Master's program was first established some five decades prior. Nancy Hunt Weiman competed in five events and medaled in all five.

Immediately after Labor Day, Nancy went to San Francisco to train and to prepare for the competition. Daily workouts—in the pool and land drills—with her Redwood Empire teammates (some of whom Nancy swam with back in 1969 to 1973). She decamped in Pacifica with her current duet partner and fellow member of the International Swimming Hall of Fame, Margo McGrath.

Nancy began her synchro career in St. Paul, Minnesota when she was nine. In 1969, Nancy moved to San Francisco to swim with the nationally and internationally famous San Francisco Merionettes. Four years later, in 1973, she ''retired'' after some 15 years of amateur competition. She got hitched a year later and moved to Washington, D.C. A year later, in 1975, now some 49 years ago, Nancy was one of the founders of Master's Synchronized Swimming. At that first meet, she performed ''triple duty'' as a swimmer, coach and Judge.

At the time, the Master's program was a step-child in the Synchro world. As such, few judges were willing to attend a ''Master's Meet.'' So, at that very first meet, held in Reading, Pennsylvania, Nancy was needed to judge. She wore ''Judge's whites'' as required, but had her swimsuit on underneath it. When it was her turn to compete, she took off her Judge's uniform, went on deck, waited for the whistle and then swam her event—scores provided by the remaining judges. As soon as she completed her routine, still wet, she put her on her judge's whites and climbed back on the judge's chair to continue judging. Nancy also wrote the first set of official rules that governed that competition. Over the past 49 years, Nancy competed in almost every national and criss-crossed the globe for international competition, doing so in six different age groups from in her 20's to now, in her 70's.

Along the way, Nancy has met wonderful people from around the world and had a few ''unique'' experiences. A year ago, after preliminaries in Japan at the World Master's Championships, the meet was halted for several days as a typhoon roared through. Nancy's flights home were canceled and to get home, she was routed to Tokyo, Paris, New York, and then back to D.C. She flew around the world to attend, compete, medal, and then work her way home. Luggage, phone and medals arrived about a week after she did.

Today, there is one major difference when she competes: she swims with two new hips and a new knee. Her surgeon's office keeps a framed photo of Nancy in their waiting room. Synchro, now Artistic Swimming, has come a long way since Reading. So Nancy is still practicing, still swimming and still competing. Meets in Canada and Singapore are now on the schedule in 2025 and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join me in recognizing the contributions Nancy Hunt Weiman has made to Synchro (now called ''Artistic'' Swimming).

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BURTONSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the 75th anniversary of the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department in Esperance, New York.

The first 22 members of what would become the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department convened on May 2, 1949, to elect its leadership and organize an all-volunteer company. After officially incorporating the department later that year, members held meetings in their private homes and barns as they had yet to establish a central station. The department was able to raise sufficient funding and purchased its first vehicle in 1950—a 1948 GMC truck—while additional equipment was stored on the premises of the local Methodist Church. Years later, after replacing the body of the original GMC, the department was colloquially known as the ''Pepsi Cola fire department'' for the red and white colors of its truck.

In 1951, the department passed a resolution to purchase land at the intersection of Burtonsville and Colyer Road for its firehouse. Construction began in 1952, and the first on-site meeting was held on May 13, 1954. In the decades that followed, the firehouse grew and started additionally serving as a community center that hosted bingo, concerts, movie nights, fundraisers, auctions, and many special dinners. An extension to the firehouse in 1990 expanded their premises, including a new bay for additional and larger trucks.

Since its incorporation, the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department has consistently modernized and increased its capabilities. The department formed an auxiliary in February 1955 to supplement their organization and welcomed its first female volunteers from this auxiliary in the 1960s. The organization has continued to grow in both its personnel and capabilities as some volunteers are now trained as First Responders and Emergency Medical Technicians to provide life-saving care at the scene of an emergency. Furthermore, the department's volunteers now respond to instances of flood and storm damage, as well as hazardous materials incidents, and cooperate with other New York State fire departments to assist in emergencies.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, it is an honor to recognize the history of the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department and the generations of brave volunteers who have worked to ensure the safety of their community.

RECOGNIZING PA–1'S HOMETOWN HERO: SHIR AMI REFORM SYNAGOGUE

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary organization from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—one that has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration I recognize the members Shir Ami Reform Synagogue, one of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. The members of Shir Ami Reform Synagogue have embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

As a generous charity, Shir Ami Reform Synagogue has not only served our community, but transformed the lives of those around them. In a remarkable display of community and compassion, the Shir Ami members united to collect over 30,000 pounds of food to donate to eight local hunger relief agencies. Beyond their efforts to assist local families experiencing food insecurity, the Synagogue also has a Code Blue initiative to house homeless community members, a vital lifeline throughout our blistery winters. In addition to their local efforts here in Bucks, the Synagogue also collects food for multiple relief agencies throughout the Philadelphia region and host a monthly meal-making project to support Caring for Friends, a nonprofit organization that provides meals to the homebound and homeless in our community and beyond. Their efforts exemplify the true essence of community service.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of organizations like the Shir Ami Reform Synagogue that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit. Their service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor Shir Ami Reform Synagogue not just for their remarkable deeds, but for who they are—true heroes, in every sense of the word.

Mr. Speaker, it is through the work of organizations like Shir Ami Reform Synagogue that our communities thrive, and our Nation grows stronger. Their actions remind us that progress is not forged in grand gestures, but in the cumulative power of selfless acts. They embody the timeless American values of resilience, generosity, and compassion, showing us that the future is built by those who care deeply, act decisively, and give without hesitation.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to the Shir Ami Reform Synagogue for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional organization, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

MARCO POLO REPORT

HON. MARY E. MILLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disapproval of Joe Biden's decision to issue a blanket pardon for his son Hunter Biden. During the time covered by the pardon, Hunter was working for entities controlled by foreign governments without registering as a foreign agent. According to the House Oversight Committee report, $20 million in cash and diamonds was paid to Biden LLCs by entities controlled by China, Russia, Romania, and Ukraine, yet there were no Foreign Agents Registration Act charges. Now, Biden issued his son a blanket pardon covering a decade of illicit activity. Hunter's crimes were published in the Marco Polo report. The report can be found at bidenreport.com. The American people deserve to know the truth.

HONORING FEDERAL GLOVER

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we rise today, along with Representative DESAULNIER, to recognize and honor Federal Glover on the occasion of his retirement following a meritorious career in public service, leadership, and commitment to the City of Pittsburg and Contra Costa County communities and beyond. For over two decades, Supervisor Glover has been a pillar of leadership, advocacy, and progress in our community.

Born and raised in Pittsburg, California, Supervisor Glover has spent his life committed to the betterment of his hometown and District 5. His public service journey began on the Pittsburg City Council in 1996, where he quickly rose through the ranks and later served as Mayor. Since his election to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors in 2000 he has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of his constituents, serving with honor, vision, and compassion.

Throughout his tenure, Supervisor Glover spearheaded numerous initiatives that have left an indelible mark on our communities. He was instrumental in securing $1 billion for Highway 4 improvements and the eBART extension to Antioch, which improved transportation and connectivity for thousands of residents. His leadership in consolidating rural fire districts into the East Contra Costa Fire Protection District enhanced fire protection and local control for our communities.

Supervisor Glover has also championed initiatives to support public safety, economic development, and youth engagement. From implementing safety improvements on Vasco Road to launching youth conferences that empower the next generation, he has always prioritized the well-being of his constituents. His commitment to inclusion and community building is reflected in programs like the Faith Initiative and the area's first Gang Task Force, which addressed critical social challenges through collaboration and holistic solutions.

In addition to his professional achievements, Supervisor Glover's personal story is one of resilience and gratitude. After surviving a life-threatening health crisis in 2015, including a 16-hour transplant surgery, he returned to his work with renewed purpose and dedication. His gratitude toward the donor who gave him a second chance at life, as well as the support of his wife Janis, their children, and grandchildren, has been a source of inspiration to all who know him.

Federal Glover's legacy of service, integrity, and leadership will continue to inspire those who follow in his footsteps. His work has not only improved infrastructure and services but has also fostered a sense of community and cooperation that will endure for generations. On behalf of the constituents of California's 8th and 10th Congressional Districts, we wish Supervisor Glover best wishes in his well-earned retirement and extend our sincere gratitude for his many years of service to the community.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM SCHLAGER

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and express my gratitude to a terrific public servant, a trusted advisor, and a young man whose future is limitless.

William Schlager is my Legislative Director and has for years served with distinction as a member of my staff. He came to this leadership position in my office the old-fashioned way: by rising up through the ranks of more junior roles with hard work, an eye for detail, and dedication to the constituents we serve. William's professional growth as a member of my staff has been nothing short of tremendous.

As I say farewell to this season of service in the United States House of Representatives, I thank William for his counsel and friendship. I am eager to watch William's career continue to unfold. I thank William Schlager.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF LOU CARNESECCA

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to honor the life and legacy of St. John's University's Hall of Fame Head Coach Lou Carnesecca, who passed away on November 30, 2024, at the age of 99.

Born to Alfred and Adele Carnesecca in 1925, Lou was raised with strong principles that would set the foundation for his legacy. After graduating from St. Ann's Academy—now known as Archbishop Molloy High School, Lou served in the Pacific Theater as a troop transporter for the United States Coast Guard during World War II.

Mr. Carnesecca is most well-known for his lifetime commitment to the game of basketball and its players, with roles as head basketball coach for St. Ann's Academy, St. John's University, and the ABA's New York Nets. ''Little Looie'' was an old-school coach recognized for his tenacity, energetic leadership, and his emphasis on the fundamentals. He was a two-time National Coach of the Year, a three-time Big East Coach of the Year, and an inductee to the New York City Basketball Hall of Fame. Lou's coaching led St. John's to 18 postseason appearances in the NCAA Tournament, including in the Final Four and Elite Eight, and he cinched a NIT Championship title. His dedication to the program yielded five Big East Conference Regular Season Championships, two Big East Conference Tournament Championships, and more than 40 NBA Draft picks.

As a believer in the value of mentorship, I commend Lou for his dedication to impacting the lives of the players he coached, the fans he inspired, and the community he served. The vision of a future we desire is determined by our willingness to invest in others—Lou did it every day.

Mr. Carnesecca is survived by his wife of 73 years, Mary, and his beloved family—daughter Enes, son-in-law Gerard (Jerry), granddaughter Ieva and fiancé Frank, niece and nephew, Susan Chiesa, John Chiesa and his wife, Nancy—and his extended family and many friends.

RECOGNIZING PA–1'S HOMETOWN HERO: PAULINE BIEDKA

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary individual from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize the late Pauline Biedka, one of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades, but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. Throughout her remarkable life, Pauline Biedka embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

At the age of 18, Pauline—one of our Nation's original Rosie the Riveters—joined the ranks of six million women across the country, during World War II, rolled up her sleeves, and went to work at Fleetwings Aircraft Plant in Bristol Borough. While there, she worked in the K9 department as the lead lady and guided other Rosies with riveting. According to Pauline: ''If you had a good team of riveters and buckers, you could go fast, down the line and get it done!'' Following her service during World War II, Pauline stepped up to serve our Nation once again and went back to work for Kaiser-Fleetwing in 1952 during the Korean

War. Her inspiring commitment to service, community, and country continued even after her many years as a Rosie. For twenty-five years, Pauline served as a dedicated Crossing Guard for the students and staff of the Neshaminy School District. A trailblazer, devoted wife, mother, grandmother of six, great-grandmother of twelve, Pauline led an extraordinary life of service to her family, community, and country,

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of individuals like Pauline that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit. Her service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor Pauline not just for her remarkable deeds, but for who she was—a true hero in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to the family of Pauline Biedka for her extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional individual, whose leadership and spirit of service will continue to inspire generations to come. May her legacy remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT ''BOB'' GABLE

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of a special man, Robert ''Bob'' Gable, of Frankfort, Kentucky. Mr. Gable passed away on November 29, 2024, at the age of 90.

Mr. Gable was born in New York City, grew up in Oregon and Arizona, and graduated from Stanford University. He served as an officer in the United States Navy. Mr. Gable and his wife Emily moved to Stearns, Kentucky, where they raised their three children. He ran The Stearns Lumber & Coal Co. founded by his great-grandfather.

In 1964, Mr. Gable's political activity began when he worked on Howard Baker's first campaign for the U.S. Senate in Tennessee. He then worked on the successful gubernatorial campaign of Kentucky's Louie Nunn. Following the election, Mr. Gable was appointed as the state parks commissioner and the family moved to Frankfort. Gable ran unsuccessfully for U.S. Senate in 1972. When his party needed someone to run for governor in 1975 against incumbent Julian Caroll, Gable agreed to enter the race. He ran for governor again in 1995 and was unsuccessful in the primary.

Mr. Gable was elected chairman of the Republican Party of Kentucky in 1986, at a time when Republicans were vastly outnumbered. A strong and unwavering leader, he began to lay the groundwork for changing the political landscape in Kentucky. His enthusiasm, optimism, and gracious demeanor never diminished. He took a close personal interest in candidates and party leaders, giving expert advice and counsel. Over the years he served as a mentor for countless young people with an interest in politics.

Mr. Gable's wife Emily passed way in 2017. He is survived by his three children James, Elizabeth, and John and his two grandchildren.

Bob Gable was a great patriot, one of my most valued political mentors, and a true Kentucky gentleman. I am most grateful for his loyal and genuine friendship, his sound advice, never-fail positive attitude, and kind, dignified manner. It is my honor to lift up his life before the House of Representatives.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF RHONDA SOLIS

HON. YADIRA CARAVEO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. CARAVEO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rhonda Solis, a distinguished member of the Colorado State Board of Education, who has served her community with passion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to improving educational opportunities for all students. As she concludes her tenure on the Board, I want to recognize her accomplishments, advocacy, and tireless dedication to our schools, our students, and our educators in Colorado.

Rhonda Solis has been a leader and a visionary on the Colorado State Board of Education. Representing her community with steadfast dedication, she has worked to ensure that every child has access to a quality education. Through her commitment to equity, inclusion, and academic excellence, Ms. Solis has advanced policies that have shaped our educational landscape and improved outcomes for students across the state.

Ms. Solis has been a fierce advocate for underrepresented communities, promoting programs and resources that uplift students of all backgrounds. She has championed initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by English Language Learners and low-income students, striving to create an education system that serves all children fairly. Her voice on the Board has consistently reflected her deep belief that every student deserves a chance to succeed, no matter their zip code or background.

In addition to her role on the Board, Ms. Solis has been active in her local community, inspiring and mentoring countless students, parents, and educators. Her work has extended beyond policy, touching lives and fostering an environment of compassion, respect, and understanding. She has earned the gratitude of those she serves, and her legacy will be felt for years to come.

As we celebrate Ms. Solis' dedication and contributions, I want to express my deepest gratitude for her service to Colorado. She has set a standard of excellence and integrity in public service, and her work has left an indelible mark on our state. On behalf of the people of Colorado's 8th Congressional District, I thank Rhonda Solis for her years of service, her passion for education, and her commitment to a brighter future for all our children.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF U.S. NAVY CORPSMAN JACK GUTMAN

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of WWII hero and U.S. Navy Corpsman Jack Gutman, who passed away just days short of his 99th birthday.

Born December 19, 1925, in San Francisco, California, Jack was the third of nine children. His father, who spoke seven languages, served in World War I, after which he worked at the Grand Hotel in Shanghai, China. Gutman's mother, from a wealthy Russian family, was a ballerina. When her family fled the Bolsheviks, they went to Shanghai, and the two met, married, and settled in America.

The Great Depression was a difficult time for the family and his father had to travel to make a living selling apples. By the time Jack was a teenager, the family was living in New York. Jack was hanging out with his high school friends when the news of Pearl Harbor broke. Gutman enlisted right away at age 17 as a Navy seaman. After boot camp, Gutman thought he was going to be an aerial radio man—but an urgent need arose for medics, and his training was diverted.

At age 18, Corpsman 1st Class Gutman provided treatment to the wounded and dying on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day and at some of the bloodiest battles throughout the European and Pacific theaters. Gutman vividly remembers when his unit landed on Utah Beach on June 6, 1944. With bullets flying, bombs exploding, and men dying all around him, Corpsman Gutman helped those he could, giving shots of morphine, applying bandages and tourniquets, and providing words of comfort to soldiers who died in his arms.

Gutman would later write a book about his experience titled ''One Veteran's Journey to Heal the Wounds of War.'' His story was recorded by the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana. Jack was also interviewed as part of a documentary film about the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

A quote from his book best describes the impact the war had on his life: ''I went into the war with a fervor to fight for my country and protect our freedom, but the experience had been nothing like what I thought when I signed up to join the Navy. Back at home, I thought constantly of the men that had died overseas. I wondered how and why I survived. There I was, a young teenager thrown into a crazy war with thousands of young men dying in front of me. I never dreamed it would be that awful, and that those horrifying images would stick with me now that I was safely at home, and for years to come.''

After his combat experiences, Gutman decided to become a doctor. He took night school classes, and before algebra, would tell jokes. He met his wife, Mary Jo, in that class, and they were married June 22, 1947, a union that lasted 77 years. Once his children came along, he never made it to medical school.

Throughout his life, Jack kept quiet about the flashbacks that haunted him ever since returning home from war. As a band-aid to cover his recurring nightmares, he immersed himself

in his work, including performing as a successful comedian under the name of Jackie Walker.

When things took a turn for the worse, he finally turned to the VA for help and was seen by a therapist, who diagnosed him with post-traumatic stress disorder and helped him receive treatment and VA benefits.

With a new lease on life, Jack began helping other veterans experiencing PTSD by encouraging them to seek support to live happy, productive lives.

Gutman's valiant service to both his country and his life of service to his fellow veterans serves as an inspiration for us all. For this reason, I ask my colleagues to join me celebrating the life and legacy of Jack Gutman, a true American hero.

HONORING TONY FLETCHER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tony Fletcher, a dedicated advocate in our Napa community. For thirty-five years, Mr. Fletcher has demonstrated unwavering commitment to enriching the lives of the blind and visually impaired (BVI) through his work with the Enchanted Hills Camp for the Blind.

Born and raised in Napa, Mr. Fletcher dedicated his career to serving our community and ensuring that visually impaired individuals have access to resources. Mr. Fletcher's journey with Enchanted Hills Camp began in 1989, marking the start of a lifelong career with LightHouse for the Blind. Later, in 1995 he earned a Master of Arts in Special Education with an emphasis on Orientation and Mobility from San Francisco State University. Mr. Fletcher is retiring after thirty-five years of serving Lighthouse for the Blind which oversees Enchanted Hills Camp concluding his career as the Senior Director of Services.

Under Mr. Fletcher's leadership, Enchanted Hills Camp has flourished as a safe, nurturing, and empowering environment where blind campers of all ages could explore, learn, and experience the joys of a traditional summer camp. Mr. Fletcher's vision and determination extended beyond the campgrounds, as he built partnerships with the County of Napa. In 2017, when devastating wildfires destroyed much of Enchanted Hills Camp, Mr. Fletcher in partnership with County Supervisor Ryan Gregory and the LightHouse organization, helped rebuild the camp. Today, Enchanted Hills Camp continues to be a fully accessible and inclusive retreat where blind, deafblind, and low-vision campers continue to thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Fletcher for his remarkable service to the Napa community and the BVI population. Mr. Fletcher's work has had a profound impact on generations of students. His dedication has cultivated a legacy of resilience and compassion that will benefit our community for years to come. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING PA–1'S HOMETOWN HERO: NEWTOWN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of individuals from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—people who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize several outstanding representatives of the Newtown Business Community as some of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Matt Arlen
Richard Fekete
Kathleen McCafferty
Gina Santoro

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades, but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. This group of remarkable individuals have embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

In 2021, Newtown business owners Gina Santoro, Richard Fekete, Matt Arlen, and Kathleen McCafferty approached Main Street Founder Keith Fenimore with an idea to bring our community together in support of local breast cancer patients. Their idea was to host a block party event that drives community members to come out and shop locally, with all proceeds going to Main Street, whose programs help local breast cancer patients and their families with food assistance, integrative services, counseling, therapy, out-of-pocket expenses, treatment transportation, comfort bags, treatment center support, and more. And so, the business owners along State Street changed their exterior lights with pink bulbs, hosted their first Light the Night Pink Block Party, and raised over $8,000. Seeing the impact they were able to have, the Newtown Business Community collectively decided to continue and grow their efforts and hosted their second Block Party in 2022, which raised $17,000. And in 2023, in an awe-inspiring show of unity and compassion, this incredible group of local entrepreneurs rallied together once more and raised over $70,000—the most money ever raised and donated by a single event to the Main Street organization.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of individuals like Gina, Richard, Matt, and Kathleen that reminds us of the power of the human spirit. Their service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor them not just for their remarkable deeds but for who they are—true heroes in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to these individuals for their extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional organization, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RACHEL ABRAHAM

HON. JAMAAL BOWMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I want to remember the beautiful life of Rachel Abraham of Mamaroneck. Rachel passed recently at the young age of 25 from complications due to pulmonary hypertension, a condition she was diagnosed with at birth.

Our community in Mamaroneck and across New York's 16th district is devastated by Rachel's passing. I want to send love and strength to Rachel's parents, Deborah and Stephen, her siblings, Leah and Joshua, and her fiancé, Dylan. I know that they are proud of Rachel's incredible life and all that she was able to accomplish.

After graduating from Mamaroneck High School, Rachel attended American University and was in the process of getting her masters degree from George Washington University. She was also working at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society as a Government Relations Manager, pursuing her goal of changing healthcare in the United States. Before her time at HIMSS, she worked for the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and ADvancing States and interned here in Congress.

We are all grateful for the contributions Rachel made to improving our healthcare across the country, work informed by her own experiences with the healthcare system throughout her life. Her commitment to public service and advocating for others is clear and we are all better for it.

My thoughts are with her family, friends, and loved ones in this difficult time. Rachel was a beautiful soul and an incredible part of our Mamaroneck community. It has been an honor to represent her and her family.

CONGRATULATING DR. MICHAEL C. BURGESS ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AFTER 22 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate my friend and colleague, Chair of the Rules Committee, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, on his retirement from the House of Representatives after a 22-year career representing the folks of Texas' 26th congressional district.

With his background as an OB–GYN doctor and the most senior medical doctor in the

House, Dr. BURGESS has been an important voice on every important healthcare debate during his two decades of service in the House. I've had the pleasure of working closely with Dr. BURGESS on the Energy and Commerce Committee for a long time, and whenever a bill related to healthcare was being debated or discussed, I knew I could count on Dr. BURGESS to provide clarity and insight from an experienced physician's perspective. Dr. BURGESS and I share a passion for our military servicemembers and for many Congresses have introduced the MISSION Zero initiative together to improve trauma care between the military and civilians. Seeing this bill signed into law was a major achievement together and I intend to ensure this program continues in his legacy. He has accomplished some truly amazing things during his time here including lowering drug costs, reigning in government waste, cutting taxes, and expanding healthcare options for folks around the country. Since being nominated as Chairman of the Rules Committee, Dr. BURGESS has worked tirelessly to ensure good legislation makes it to the floor and has been instrumental in our accomplishments in the 118th Congress.

I would like to thank Dr. BURGESS for his unwavering commitment to conservative principles and his sound leadership. On a personal note, I appreciate his friendship and counsel over the years. While his colleagues and the people in his district are sure to miss Dr. BURGESS in Congress, I know he is looking forward to spending more time with his family back home in his beloved Texas.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating my friend Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS on his retirement from the House of Representatives after 22 years of exemplary service to the people of Texas' 26th congressional district.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR MARIO FLORES, U.S. ARMY

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Major Mario Flores, U.S. Army, for his outstanding work on behalf of the Department of Defense. Major Flores served as a Department of Defense legislative fellow in the U.S. Senate, and later as a congressional liaison for the Army Reserve. Mario commissioned in the United States Army in 2011 through the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program at DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois where he received a B.S. in Business and later an M.S. in Legislative Affairs from George Washingtdn University.

Through various assignments with 3rd Special Forces Group, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Targeting Directorate, and Special Operations Command, Mario has made direct contributions to the U.S. National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy. Mario specializes in strategic and tactical targeting operations and is a graduate of the Joint Targeting School, the Joint Special Operations University's Special Operations Intelligence Course, and the Special Forces Combat Course—Support, and the Basic Airborne Course.

Mario is also a committed advocate for our Nation's veterans. In 2020, Mario was appointed by then-Virginia Governor Northam to serve a four-year appointment on the Virginia State Board on Veterans Services. In this role, he is responsible for advising the Virginia Department of Veterans Services on relevant policies in support of Virginia's veterans.

In addition to his military service, Mario's civilian background includes extensive government and private sector experience including being a Public Policy Congressional Fellow for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellowship Program, having various roles at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and joining General Dynamics Information Technology. Following his completion of his next level of military education in early 2025, he will be returning to the civilian workforce while also continuing his service in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Mario has been instrumental as an Army Reserve congressional liaison, especially working with my office to support Fort Knox. I thank Mario for his dedicated service, for his professionalism, and for his passionate service to our country and to our community. I also want to thank his wife, Jazmine, and I wish them both the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING U.S. ARMY CORPORAL WARREN J. WINNE, SR.

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of United States Army Corporal Warren J. Winne, Sr.

Warren was born on February 17, 1931, in Albany, New York, to Lyman and Gladys Winne. He grew up alongside his siblings: Franklin, Eugene, Eileen, and Dorothy. Warren started his education in Rensselaer, New York, and later enrolled at East Greenbush High School before enlisting in the United States Army on May 3, 1948.

Warren served on active duty with the Army from 1948 to 1952 and earned the rank of Corporal during his military career. Corporal Winne was a member of the 7th Infantry Division during the Korean War until his Honorable Discharge in 1952. Upon returning to civilian life, he married his wife Mary on September 21, 1952, at St. John's Church in Rensselaer and began a career as a pipe insulator for the Johns Manville Company.

Warren established deep roots within his community. He was a proud volunteer firefighter with the Clinton Heights Fire Department, a member of the Melvin Roads American Legion Post No. 1231, and the Umpire-in-Chief of the East Greenbush Girls Softball Organization. His commitment to the softball community was recognized with the dedication of the East Greenbush Girls Softball field in his honor. Warren was also an active member of the Asbestos Union No. 40, demonstrating his solidarity with his fellow workers. In his free time, Warren was a skilled hunter and avid fisherman. Above all, Warren cherished his time spent with his four children: Carol, Sandra, Colleen, and Warren Jr.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, it is an honor to recognize the extraordinary life of Corporal Warren J. Winne, Sr. and the enduring legacy of his character, selflessness, and dedication to his country and community.

RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES ARMY WORLD WAR II VETERAN GUIDO P. DiFRANCESCO'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent from my district, Guido P. DiFrancesco. He is a current resident of the Lutheran Community of Telford, Pennsylvania. Born in Philadelphia on December 17, 1924, Guido is celebrating his 100th birthday today.

He grew up on Mechanic Street in the Germantown section of Philadelphia with his four brothers and five sisters. At age 8, he constructed his own shoeshine box and started his own shoeshine business to help provide food for his parents and siblings. Guido had an amazing singing voice as a child, and he cultivated his love of music when he could by performing at school functions, weddings, and local night clubs. He attended Germantown High School until the Depression required him to leave high school and seek employment to help support his family.

As a teenager, he held several jobs including the Philadelphia Steel Mill and the famous Victor Harmonica factory where he learned to construct and play the harmonica before he entered the United States Army in 1941. He sailed to England on the RMS Mauretania where he entertained the troops with his gift of singing. He landed in Weymouth, England and prepared for the invasion of Normandy.

On D–Day, with G–Company, he landed on Omaha Beach with the First Infantry Division (The Big Red One), 18th Infantry Regiment. He was a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) Marksman and fought across France for 6 months in hedge row to hedge row battles until he finally reached Belgium. He became deathly ill and was hospitalized there and then transferred to a hospital in England. While recuperating in England, he entertained the patients with his singing. He eventually came back to America and continued his convalescence and his singing at the Convalescent Hospital in Camp Upton, New York until he was honorably discharged and returned home in the spring of 1943.

After he returned home, he married and lived on Boyer Street in Germantown and eventually moved to Horsham, Pennsylvania in 1952. He held several manufacturing positions including a plant manager position at Huntingdon Industries for 30 years and Mac Electric in Glenside for 10 years. He was also self-employed as a home-improvement specialist until he officially retired at age 85. Guido was an involved member of the Warrington Lions for many years and worked tirelessly at their events.

Guido finally received his high school diploma at age 93. His work ethic and ingenuity are exemplary. He was devoted to his first wife, Rose, who died in 1976 and his second wife, Kitty, who died in 2019. He is a proud parent, grandparent, and great-grandparent of a blended family including a daughter and

son-in-law, a stepson, two stepdaughters and sons-in-law, ten grandchildren, and twenty-five great-grandchildren. He is a loving role model to his family and is a living history of someone who served our country so valiantly.

Our Nation owes Guido a debt that can never be repaid. We wish Guido countless blessings, and I remain deeply appreciative to Guido DiFrancesco for his life of service and sacrifice for our community, district, and country. His commitment to his fellow neighbors, veterans, and service members alike is a testament to his character and spirit. I am more than honored to recognize him today and wish him nothing but the best for his 100th birthday and the future beyond.

HONORING EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK'S DISTRICT DIRECTOR DEE ROSARIO

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Board Director Dee Rosario as he prepares for retirement after an extraordinary 37 years of dedicated service to the East Bay Regional Park District. A proud native of the East Bay, Dee's journey began at Mt. Eden High School in Hayward, followed by an associate's degree from Chabot Community College and further studies at California State University, East Bay. His deep roots in this community have shaped both his personal and professional life, driving a career that has had a profound and lasting impact on our region.

Dee's career with the Park District began in 1975, where he took on a series of vital roles, including park ranger, firefighter, fire lieutenant, and ultimately, park supervisor of Reinhardt Redwood Regional Park. His unwavering commitment to preserving our natural resources and serving the public has left an indelible mark on the East Bay community.

During the 1991 Oakland Firestorm, his bravery and leadership were instrumental in mitigating the devastation. His steadfast dedication to both protecting lives and safeguarding our natural landscapes proved invaluable during that critical time, demonstrating his remarkable courage and deep sense of responsibility.

In November 2016, Dee transitioned to a new chapter as a Board Director, where his visionary leadership has shaped the direction of the Park District. Notably, he co-chaired Measure FF, a successful initiative that secured crucial funding for park improvements, wildfire prevention, and public safety—investments that will benefit generations to come. Dee's exceptional contributions to the Park District were recently recognized with the 2024 California Special Districts Association Board Member of the Year award, a fitting honor for his tireless work and dedication.

One of Dee's most lasting legacies is his role in renaming Redwood Regional Park in honor of Aurelia Reinhardt, a pioneering figure in the Park District's history. This thoughtful and meaningful tribute not only celebrated Reinhardt's contributions but also underscored Dee's commitment to preserving the rich heritage of our community and our parks.

Throughout his career, Dee has exemplified what it means to be a true leader. He has consistently sought to cultivate growth, creativity, and compassion in others, mentoring the next generation of public servants to continue his legacy of excellence and service. His belief that leadership is about empowering others will continue to resonate long after his retirement.

On behalf of the entire community, I extend our deepest gratitude to Board Director Dee Rosario for his outstanding service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to enhancing our natural and recreational resources. His legacy will continue to inspire us all.

REMEMBERING MY FRIEND GEORGE CECALA

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. House of Representatives unexpectedly lost a true public servant this week. My Chief of Staff, George Cecala, served with me from the day I was sworn into office on January 3, 2009, until his life was cut short earlier this week, suffering from a heart attack at the young age of 49.

George was a loving husband and father and leaves behind his wife Jennifer, whom he cherished and their daughter Genny who was the joy of his life. He also leaves a record of remarkable and sacrificial service to this institution and to the people of Florida's Space and Treasure Coasts.

Whether it is Kennedy Space Center, Patrick Space Force Base, Port Canaveral or our beautiful beaches, citrus groves or improvements to our highways or airports, George had a hand in it.

I saw both gentle care and dogged tenacity as George worked tirelessly against what seemed insurmountable odds to secure the safe return of abducted children from a war-torn region of the world to their grieving mothers.

To those who worked with George he was always encouraging. When someone was troubled or struggling, George was always there to offer a word of encouragement.

George was always attentive to the needs of those around him—the colleague sitting beside him, the visitor who just walked in the office door, the intern looking for that first job on the Hill, or the constituent on the other end of the line, calling the office to tell George how to fix Washington. George always went out of his way to serve others—the hallmark of a public servant.

He loved his Lord and Savior. He loved his church. He filled our office with stories of delight over Genny's latest achievements and her excitement over life's joys. And, he loved his community, even running for a seat in the Maryland House of Delegates.

The House of Representatives is a better place because of George Cecala. George will be deeply missed.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Legislative Day of Monday, December 16, 2024.

Routine Proceedings, pages S7063–S7120

Measures Introduced: Thirty-two bills and six resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 5544–5575, S.J. Res. 122, and S. Res. 928–932. **Pages S7104–05**

Measures Reported:

S. 131, to amend chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, to cover, for purposes of workers' compensation under such chapter, services by physician assistants and nurse practitioners provided to injured Federal workers, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–299)

S. 2270, to establish and maintain a database within each agency for executive branch ethics records of noncareer appointees, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–300)

S. 3926, to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to ensure that other transaction agreements are reported to USAspending.gov, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–301)

S. 4700, to modify the governmentwide financial management plan, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–302)

S. 5312, to require agencies to create consistent organizational hierarchies, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–303)

H.R. 3208, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a DHS Cybersecurity On-the-Job Training Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–304)

H.R. 6972, to amend title 5, United States Code, to require an Executive agency whose head is a member of the National Security Council to notify the Executive Office of the President, the Comptroller General of the United States, and congressional leadership of such head becoming medically incapacitated within 24 hours, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–305)

H.R. 7528, to amend section 206 of the E-Government Act of 2002 to improve the integrity and management of mass comments and computer-generated comments in the regulatory review process, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–306)

H.R. 8631, to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from procuring certain foreign-made batteries, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–307)

H.R. 9592, to amend title 44, United States Code, to modernize the Federal Register. (S. Rept. No. 118–308)

S. 690, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to evaluate and consider the impact of the telecommunications network equipment supply chain on the deployment of universal service, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 1008, to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a consumer product safety standard with respect to rechargeable lithium-ion batteries used in micromobility devices.

S. 2238, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to develop a National Strategy to Close the Digital Divide, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 2645, to reduce the health risks of heat by establishing the National Integrated Heat Health Information System within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Integrated Heat Health Information System Interagency Committee to improve extreme heat preparedness, planning, and response, requiring a study, and establishing financial assistance programs to address heat effects, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 2714, to establish the National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 3162, to improve the requirement for the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish testbeds to support the development and testing of trustworthy artificial intelligence systems and to improve interagency coordination in development of such testbeds, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Pages S7103–04

Measures Passed:

Honoring the Life of John Edmund Gottschalk: Senate agreed to S. Res. 928, honoring the life of Nebraska community leader John Edmund Gottschalk. **Pages S7068–69**

Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act: Senate passed S. 1277, to modify the boundary of the Mammoth Cave National Park in the State of Kentucky. **Page S7078**

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission Extension Act: Senate passed H.R. 1727, to amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission. **Page S7078**

Historic Greenwood District—Black Wall Street National Monument Establishment Act: Senate passed S. 3543, to establish the Historic Greenwood District-Black Wall Street National Monument in the State of Oklahoma, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7079**

Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center: Senate passed H.R. 6826, to designate the visitor and education center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine as the Paul S. Sarbanes Visitor and Education Center. **Page S7079**

Atchafalaya National Heritage Area: Senate passed H.R. 6843, to expand the boundaries of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area to include Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. **Page S7079**

Bureau of Reclamation Pumped Storage Development: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1607, to clarify jurisdiction with respect to certain Bureau of Reclamation pumped storage development, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S7079–85**

César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park Act: Senate passed S. 1097, to establish the César E. Chávez and the Farmworker Movement National Historical Park in the States of California and Arizona, after agreeing to the committee amendment. **Pages S7085–87**

Mountain View Corridor Completion Act: Senate passed H.R. 2468, to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey to the State of Utah certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management within the boundaries of Camp Williams, Utah. **Page S7087**

Great Salt Lake Stewardship Act: Senate passed H.R. 4094, to amend the Central Utah Project Completion Act to authorize expenditures for the conduct of certain water conservation measures in the Great Salt Lake basin. **Page S7087**

San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act: Senate passed S. 5005, to authorize additional funding for the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act. **Page S7087**

Utah State Parks Adjustment Act: Senate passed H.R. 7332, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain Federal land to the State of Utah for inclusion in certain State parks. **Page S7087**

Shasta-Trinity Marina: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3324, to extend the authority to collect Shasta-Trinity Marina fees through fiscal year 2029, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S7087–89**

Homebuyers Privacy Protection Act: Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of S. 3502, to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to prevent consumer reporting agencies from furnishing consumer reports under certain circumstances, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Page S7093**

Schumer (for Reed/Hagerty) Amendment No. 3339, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7093**

SHARE IT Act: Senate passed H.R. 9566, to require governmentwide source code sharing. **Page S7093**

Federal Emergency Mobilization Accountability (FEMA) Workforce Planning Act: Senate passed S. 4181, to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S7094–95**

Schumer (for Peters) Amendment No. 3340, to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop strategies for identifying, addressing, preventing, and mitigating discriminatory actions or decisions based on political affiliation. **Page S7094**

Fire Management Assistance Grants for Tribal Governments Act: Senate passed S. 4654, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian tribal governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S7095–96**

Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act: Committee on Veterans' Affairs was discharged

from further consideration of S. 1299, to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Page S7096**

Schumer (for Cornyn/Hassan) Amendment No. 3341, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7096**

Patsye Crites Forest: Senate passed S. 5575, to designate the Patsye Crites Forest. **Page S7096**

Opioid Overdose Data Collection Enhancement Act: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. 5130, to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S7096–97**

Invest to Protect Act: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. 1144, to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Page S7097**

Schumer (for Cortez Masto) Amendment No. 3342, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7097**

Native American Child Protection Act: Senate passed H.R. 663, to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act. **Page S7097**

IHS Workforce Parity Act of 2024: Senate passed S. 3022, to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to allow Indian Health Service scholarship and loan recipients to fulfill service obligations through half-time clinical practice, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S7097–98**

Sentencing Enhancements for Certain Criminal Offenses: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. 5398, to authorize sentencing enhancements for certain criminal offenses directed by or coordinated with foreign governments, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S7098–99**

National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 932, designating the month of October 2024 as "National Military Toxic Exposures Awareness Month". **Page S7099**

House Messages:

Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 5009, to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto:

Pending:

Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill. **Pages S7063–68, S7070–78**

Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Schumer Amendment No. 3317 (to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill), to add an effective date. **Page S7063**

Schumer Amendment No. 3318 (to Amendment No. 3317), to add an effective date. **Page S7063**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the House Message to accompany the bill, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, December 18, 2024; and that all post-cloture time with respect to the House Message be considered expired at 11:45 a.m.; and that upon disposition of the House Message to accompany the bill, Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 82, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions, and that the cloture motion with respect to the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 82 ripen at 2 p.m. **Page S7120**

Office of Congressional Workplace Rights Biennial Report—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Biennial Report from the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights be printed in the Record. **Page S7089**

Messages from the House: **Pages S7101–02**

Measures Referred: **Pages S7102–03**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S7103**

Executive Communications: **Page S7103**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S7104**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S7106–07**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S7107–09**

Additional Statements: **Pages S7100–01**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S7109–20**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S7120**

Recess: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and recessed at 7:40 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, December 18, 2024. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S7120.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported 851 military nominations in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Space Force.

LEGALIZED SPORTS GAMBLING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine legalized sports gambling, after receiving testimony from Johnson Bademosi, National Football League Players Association, and Keith Whyte, National Council on Problem Gambling, both of Washington, D.C.; Charlie Baker, National Collegiate Athletic Association, Indianapolis, Indiana; Harry Levant, Northeastern University School of Law Public Health Advocacy Institute, Boston, Massachusetts; and David Rebuck, Responsible Online Gaming Association, Moorestown, New Jersey.

ANTITRUST ENFORCEMENT AND REFORM

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Competition Policy, Antitrust, and Consumer Rights concluded a hearing to examine a bipartisan path forward for antitrust enforcement and reform, after receiving testimony from Gwendolyn J. Lindsay Cooley, former Wisconsin Assistant Attorney General, Mount Horeb, Wisconsin; Roger P. Alford, Notre Dame Law School, South Bend, Indiana; and John M. Newman, University of Miami School of Law, Miami, Florida.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 23 public bills, H.R. 10442–10464; and 3 resolutions, H.J. Res. 228; and H. Res. 1617–1618, were introduced. **Pages H7318–19**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H7320**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 5840, to require the Transportation Security Administration to streamline the enrollment processes for individuals applying for a Transportation Security Administration security threat assessment for certain programs, including the Transportation Worker Identification Credential and Hazardous Materials Endorsement Threat Assessment programs of the Administration, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–888);

H.R. 7983, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to define the term free trade agreement for purposes of the clean vehicle credit, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–889);

H.R. 7986, to modify and reauthorize the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–890);

H.R. 8261, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend certain flexibilities and payment adjustments under the Medicare program, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–891, Part 1);

H.R. 8291, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit certain tax-exempt organizations from providing funding for election administration, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–892);

H.R. 2407, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–893, Part 1);

H.R. 8914, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose penalties with respect to civil rights violations by certain tax-exempt educational institutions, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–894);

H.R. 7981, to ensure that goods made using or containing cobalt extracted or processed with the use of child or forced labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo do not enter the United States market, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–895); and

H.R. 8293, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the public reporting of data on certain contributions received by tax-exempt organizations from foreign sources, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–896, Part 1). **Page H7317**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Miller-Meeks to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7233**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:35 a.m. and reconvened at 12 p.m. **Page H7245**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:59 p.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m. **Page H7251**

Midnight Rules Relief Act: The House passed H.R. 115, to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for en bloc consideration in resolutions of disapproval for "midnight rules", by a yea-and-nay vote of 210 yeas to 201 nays, Roll No. 509. **Pages H7247–51, H7273–74**

Rejected the Ramirez motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary by a yea-and-nay vote of 198 yeas to 211 nays, Roll No. 508. **Page H7273**

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. **Page H7253**

H. Res. 1616, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 115) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 212 ayes to 197 noes, Roll No. 507, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 207 yeas to 192 nays, Roll No. 506. **Pages H7251–53**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Never Again Education Reauthorization Act: S. 3448, amended, to reauthorize the Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to support Holocaust education programs, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 402 yeas to 12 nays, Roll No. 510; **Pages H7274–75**

Jenna Quinn Law: S. 1147, amended, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to provide for grants in support of training and education to teachers and other school employees, students, and the community about how to prevent, recognize, respond to, and report child sexual abuse among primary and secondary school students; **Pages H7261–63**

National Advisory Council on Indian Education Improvement Act: S. 5355, to ensure that the National Advisory Council on Indian Education includes at least 1 member who is the president of a Tribal College or University; **Pages H7263–65**

Klamath Basin Water Agreement Support Act: H.R. 7938, amended, to amend the Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 to provide the Secretary of the Interior with certain authorities with respect to projects affecting the Klamath Basin watershed; **Pages H7265–66**

Modernizing Access to Our Public Waters Act: H.R. 6127, amended, to provide for the standardization, consolidation, and publication of data relating to public outdoor recreational use of Federal waterways among Federal land and water management agencies; **Pages H7266–68**

Lumbee Fairness Act: H.R. 1101, amended, to amend the Lumbee Act of 1956, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 311 yeas to 96 nays, Roll No. 511; **Pages H7268–72, H7275**

Think Differently Transportation Act: S. 4107, to require Amtrak to report to Congress information on Amtrak compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 with respect to trains and stations; **Pages H7276–77**

Think Differently Database Act: H.R. 670, amended, to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a clearinghouse on intellectual disabilities; **Pages H7277–78**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a website to promote awareness of available resources for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes"; **Page H7278**

9/11 Memorial and Museum Act: H.R. 5401, amended, to provide a one-time grant for the operation, security, and maintenance of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center to commemorate the events, and honor the victims, of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; **Pages H7281–83**

Jackie Robinson Commemorative Site Act: H.R. 8012, amended, to establish the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site in the State of Florida; **Pages H7283–84**

Reversionary Interest Conveyance Act: H.R. 8946, to convey the reversionary interest of the United States in certain land in Sacramento, California; **Pages H7285–86**

Redesignating Saratoga National Historical Park as Saratoga National Battlefield Park: H.R. 8931, to redesignate Saratoga National Historical Park as Saratoga National Battlefield Park; **Pages H7286–87**

Nutria Eradication and Control Reauthorization Act: H.R. 8308, to reauthorize the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003; **Pages H7287–88**

Fire Department Repayment Act: H.R. 3396, amended, to require the standardization of reciprocal fire suppression cost share agreements; and **Pages H7288–90**

Military Families National Parks Access Enhancement Act: H.R. 9516, amended, to amend the

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for lifetime National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes for family members of members of the Armed Forces who lost their lives while serving their country. **Pages H7290–91**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measure under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act: S. 1351, to study and prevent child abuse in youth residential programs; and **Pages H7278–81**

Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act: S. 3857, to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California. **Pages H7284–85**

Senate Referrals: S. 465 was held at the desk. S. 5300 was held at the desk. S. 5465 was held at the desk. S. 5543 was held at the desk. **Page H7245**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page .

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7251–52, H7252–53, H7273, H7273–74, H7274–75 and H7275.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Committee Meetings

OVERSIGHT OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SERVICES (CJIS) DIVISION

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Crime and Federal Government Surveillance held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division''. Testimony was heard from Timothy Ferguson, Assistant Director, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on H.R. 214, the ''Veterans' True Choice Act of 2023''; H.R. 3176, the ''Veterans Health Care Freedom Act''; H.R. 5287, the ''Veterans Access to Direct Primary Care Act''; H.R. 8481, the ''Emergency Community Care Notification Time Adjustment Act of 2024''; H.R. 10012, to amend title 38, United States Code, to include eyeglass lens fittings in the category of medical services authorized to be furnished to veterans under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes; H.R. 9924, the ''What Works for Preventing Veteran Suicide Act''; H.R. 8347, the ''Improving Menopause Care for Veterans Act''; H.R. 6333, the ''Veterans Emergency Care Reimbursement Act''; legislation on the Supporting Medical Students and VA Workforce Act; and H.R. 10267, the ''Complete the Mission Act of 2024''. Testimony was heard from Chairman Bost, and Representatives Rosendale, Maloy, Mast, Roy, Steube, Takano, Brownley, and Landsman; Hillary Peabody, Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Integrated Veteran Care, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1146)*

S. 3960, to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide a good faith exception to the imposition of fines for false assertions and certifications. Signed on December 17, 2024. (Public Law 118–151)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the climate-driven insurance crisis, 10 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of James Bernard Coughlan, of Illinois, and Halie L. Craig, of Pennsylvania, both to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Intellectual Property, to hold hearings to examine the RESTORE Patent Rights Act, focusing on restoring America's status as the global IP leader, 2 p.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Examining the Polar Security Cutter: An Update on Coast Guard Acquisitions'', 10 a.m., 310 Cannon.

Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''American Confidence in Elections: Prohibiting Foreign Interference'', 10 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, hearing entitled ''IP and Strategic Competition with China: Part IV—Patents, Standards, and Lawfare'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government, hearing entitled ''Revisiting the Implications of the FACE Act: Part II'', 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Restoring Congressional Power over VA After Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo'', 10:15 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Joint Meeting

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine trade wars and tariffs, 2:30 p.m., 210–CHOB.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, December 18

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the House Message to accompany H.R. 5009, Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025, post-cloture.

At 11:45 a.m., Senate will vote on Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Following disposition of the House Message to accompany H.R. 5009, Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 82, Social Security Fairness Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill at 2 p.m.

Additional roll call votes are expected during Wednesday's session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, December 18

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of measures under suspension of the Rules.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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