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No. 14

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
January 23, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK 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 3, 2025, 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.

### HONORING STEPHEN SIAO, DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANT

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

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a valued member of my team and a true American patriot, Mr. Stephen Siao.

Stephen has been my chief of staff since I first entered the House of Representatives in 2019. From day one, Stephen built and nurtured a high-functioning office dedicated to serving the people of Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District.

Over the course of three terms, Stephen consistently exceeded expectations and faithfully fulfilled his oath to the Constitution. Whether it meant staying up late to help a stranded constituent secure a passport or ensuring our servicemembers at Fort Campbell have the safest barracks, Stephen's dedication to public service was unwavering. Under his leadership, my office has helped over 7,100 constituents with casework, a testament to his tireless efforts.

Stephen is not only an exceptional leader but also a remarkable mentor. He has spent countless hours guiding and supporting junior staff, many of whom have gone on to achieve great things.

Stephen's generosity to others has been the hallmark of his time in the House of Representatives. He consistently encouraged his colleagues to do the right thing, even if it was the hard thing. He has a resolute commitment to faith, country, and those whom the Lord blesses him to lead and serve. His loyalty has meant the world to me and my team.

For me personally, I most admire Stephen's humility. I often describe him as having an ability-to-humility ratio of infinity.

At the beginning of the 118th Congress, my colleagues entrusted me with the chairmanship of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Among the most consequential decisions I made after taking the gavel was to bring Stephen on as the staff director. I knew Stephen's strong work ethic and unwavering integrity made him the ideal choice to lead the committee staff during a challenging time in America's history.

As staff director, he navigated the complex impeachment proceedings of a sitting Cabinet Secretary, a first in our Nation's history. Stephen also led the committee's efforts to write the border security portion of H.R. 2, the Secure

the Border Act. Additionally, Stephen spearheaded our efforts to modernize the Department of Homeland Security to address challenges of the 21st century. Thanks to his leadership, our Nation is safer.

Beyond his many accomplishments, Stephen will be dearly missed for the selfless love and unwavering support he has shown countless colleagues. While shunning the spotlight and any recognition, this dedicated public servant has always put others first. His mentorship and wisdom, often delivered with a touch of Tolkienian wit, will be deeply missed.

As he embarks on this new chapter, I wish him well, echoing the words of Gandalf the Grey: "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us." Stephen has taken this advice to heart, always using his time in this body wisely and inspiring us all to do the same.

On behalf of the people of the Seventh District of Tennessee and the United States Congress, I wish him well as our Nation calls him further up and further in toward another post serving our country. I thank Stephen. May God bless him.

### OPPOSING EXPANSIONIST RHETORIC

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

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs, I rise in strong opposition to the expansionist rhetoric that President Trump is directing toward America's strongest and longstanding allies and international partners.

Four days into the new administration, it is clear that the Trump foreign policy doctrine is motivated by territorial expansion and revanchism, or

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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the obsession to recover so-called lost land.

This distorted worldview is anathema to America's historic role in defense of freedom across the globe. It also mirrors the imperial ambitions that have misled the likes of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping into exerting economic and military power to attack and threaten sovereign nations and the rights of self-governing people in Ukraine, the Republic of Georgia, and Taiwan.

In his inaugural address, President Trump pronounced that the U.S. will "expand our territory." He has specifically proposed that we make Greenland great again by annexing the island from Denmark, which is a NATO ally that he has threatened with tariffs unless it cedes to his demands. When asked if he would use military force to seize Greenland, President Trump refused to rule it out.

The President has similarly suggested that the U.S. could annex Canada as the 51st State, vowing to wield economic retribution against a country that, after World War II, helped us establish the very rules-based international order that he is now attempting to subvert.

As a matter of fact, since the First World War, more than 2 million Canadian Armed Forces personnel have fought right alongside, shoulder to shoulder, U.S. troops in defense of freedom and security in Europe, the Pacific theater, Korea, Kosovo, Haiti, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Afghanistan. Nearly 120,000 Canadian servicemembers have made the ultimate sacrifice in support of these U.S.-led operations. Just last year, Canada marked the 80th anniversary since over 14,000 of its Canadian soldiers stormed the beaches on D-day alongside American troops.

President Trump has also declared that he is taking back the Panama Canal, which returned to Panamanian control under the treaties negotiated by the U.S. and Panama in 1977. When asked if he would rule out the use of force to regain its control, the President refused to do so. The Republic of Panama is a strategic U.S. partner whose cooperation to combat drug trafficking, illegal immigration, and maritime piracy is vital to our national security.

Understandably, our allies and international partners have responded to these expansionist threats by reaffirming their right to self-determination.

The Prime Minister of Greenland stated: "Our future and fight for independence is our business." The Foreign Minister of Denmark warned: "We can't have a world order where [big] countries . . . can just help themselves to what they want."

The Prime Minister of Canada declared: "The 51st State, it is not going to happen."

The President of Panama just alerted the United Nations Security Council that President Trump may be violating the U.N. charter, which prohibits the

use of threats and force against the territorial integrity or political independence of other states.

Mr. Speaker, if President Trump continues to pursue expansionism at the expense of freedom and national security, America will join the ranks of gangster nations whose imperialist dictators violate international law just to expand their territorial power.

As Russian President Putin tells it, Russia has no borders, and Ukraine is simply historically Russian land that has been stolen.

President Xi has professed that Taiwan is China's "sacred territory" and that reunification is a "historic inevitability."

An American President simply cannot be espousing similar views.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to firmly reject expansionist rhetoric and actions taken by President Trump.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE BERYL ANTHONY

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am joined today by the Arkansas delegation, Messrs. Womack, Crawford, and Hill. We rise in honor of the life and legacy of Beryl Franklin Anthony, Jr., who passed away on Saturday, January 11.

Mr. Anthony, born in El Dorado, proudly represented the Fourth District of Arkansas in the House of Representatives from 1978 to 1993. His devotion to his family and friends and his 24 years of public service and commitment to the Natural State leave an indelible mark on his legacy.

Not only do I share a connection with Mr. Anthony through proud service of the Fourth District in the House of Representatives, but we are also both proud alumni of the University of Arkansas and both represented the Razorback athletics program.

Mr. Anthony's history of public service began in Fayetteville at the university, and in 1963, with his juris doctor in hand, he was ready to serve the people of Arkansas.

After his time as State assistant attorney general and deputy prosecuting attorney for Union County, Mr. Anthony chose to turn to private practice, serving as counsel for his fourth-generation, family-owned timber company, Anthony Forest Products.

Later, Mr. Anthony returned to public service, utilizing his background in law to lead several initiatives for Arkansas criminal code reform and improving the professionalism of State prosecutors.

In 1978, Mr. Anthony was sworn in as a Member of Congress. Receiving the confidence of his fellow Members, he served as the vice president for his freshman class. This proved to serve him well, as he was appointed to the

House Ways and Means Committee, where he was a leader in tax code negotiations.

After countless wins in Congress, Mr. Anthony returned to private practice, still serving where he could through corporate boards or charitable organizations.

A true son of the Natural State, Mr. Anthony was a lover of the great outdoors and a genuine sportsman, teaching his grandchildren how to fish and spending his time photographing wildlife.

I express my deepest sympathies to Mr. Anthony's wife, Sheila; his family; and all who benefited from his leadership, dedication, and tireless efforts, not only in the Halls of Congress but across the State of Arkansas.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL.)

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WESTERMAN for yielding to me. It is such a pleasure to be with him, Congressman CRAWFORD, and Congressman WOMACK in tribute to our late friend and former Member of Congress, Beryl Anthony.

His unwavering commitment to Arkansas and its people has left an indelible mark on our State and this institution. Born in El Dorado in 1938, Beryl graduated from El Dorado High School and, as BRUCE said, went on to become an Arkansas Razorback. He came to the people's House in 1979 as Representative of the Fourth District, and he brought a deep sense of responsibility and commitment to the people of LA, lower Arkansas.

Over the next 14 years, he proved himself to be a tireless advocate, a thoughtful policymaker, and a champion for the working families in the Fourth District. As a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, he was instrumental in preserving Social Security's future through the Social Security Amendments of 1983.

I was a Senate staffer in the early 1980s, and I witnessed Beryl's dedication to the Natural State firsthand while working with the Arkansas delegation on the passage of the Arkansas Wilderness Act of 1984.

□ 1015

In a time when politics often divided us, Beryl understood the power of working across the aisle, and that dedication enabled him to achieve lasting results for his constituents. His commitment to bipartisanship became personal.

While attending new Member orientation in Williamsburg, Virginia, Beryl's daughter, Alison, met her future husband, Sam Bethune, the son of then Arkansas' Second District Congressman, Ed Bethune. Now, that is an Arkansas small-world, bipartisan love story.

Arkansas and our Nation have lost a great public servant in Beryl. My deepest condolences to Sheila, Alison, Lauren, and the entire Anthony family. It is a privilege to have witnessed

his service to our State and our country.

#### HONORING DR. NELLIE B. KING

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

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Dr. Nellie B. King, a trailblazer, educator, mentor, and a dear friend whose impact on western New York will resonate for generations to come.

Dr. King exemplified what it means to dedicate one's life of service, excellence, and empowerment, particularly to the youth of western New York, but to all her fellow human beings.

Born and raised in Foxworth, Mississippi, Dr. King's journey from humble beginnings to becoming an educational pioneer is a testament to her resilience and determination.

She earned her B.A. in social studies from Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, a historically Black college, followed by advanced degrees in education from Canisius College and Buffalo State College.

With over 35 years in education, Dr. King made history as the first Black superintendent of the Lackawanna City School District where she served for 9 transformative years.

Her innovative programs, including the Kids in Spotlight Program, Lackawanna Center for Family Achievement, and the District Model Aids Program set a high standard for educational excellence and student support.

Under her leadership, the district embraced groundbreaking initiatives like reduced class size for early elementary school, extended-day programs, and the GEAR UP Program, ensuring opportunities for all students to succeed.

Dr. King's dedication to education was seen on a national scale. She contributed research to the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, culminating in their report, "Gaining the Arts Advantage," which emphasized the critical role of arts in education.

Also, her service extended far beyond the classroom. Dr. King was a member of the Calvary Christian Methodist Episcopal Church where her faith guided her work and inspired those around her.

She was an active participant in organizations, such as the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, the Women's Missionary Council of the CME Church, and the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, just to name a few.

Most recently, Dr. King served as the president and founder of Unlimited Possibilities Overcoming Poverty Ministry, which provides guidance, leadership, and financial support to women from disadvantaged backgrounds who are enrolled in college or trade school.

Dr. King's contributions did not go unnoticed. Her numerous accolades in-

clude the National Association of Counties Achievement Award, the Buffalo Ambassador Award, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Education.

As a State Senator, I had the privilege of honoring Dr. Nellie B. King as a 2019 Woman of Distinction in the New York State Senate, a recognition that celebrated her lifelong dedication to education and bettering our community.

Dr. King's influence extended to countless students, colleagues, and leaders in our community. She was not only an educator, but also a role model, a mentor, and a friend, someone whose wisdom and compassion were a beacon of hope and inspiration.

Nellie was a loving mother to Bennie Omar King, and an adoring grandmother to Angeliya Bernice King, both of whom proudly carry on her legacy.

As we remember Dr. King, let us honor her by continuing her work, advocating for education, investing in our children, fostering innovation, and uplifting those who need it the most. Her life reminds us that one person's dedication can transform not just individuals, but entire communities.

Dr. Nellie B. King's legacy will live on in the lives she touched and the progress she championed, and it will endure as a source of inspiration for us all. I thank Dr. King for her boundless contributions, her unwavering faith, and her extraordinary vision.

We will miss her deeply. We love her, and we will carry on her lessons and her legacy for generations to come. May Dr. Nellie B. King rest in peace and power.

#### THANKING ROCKY DEAL

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

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I have been very fortunate, as have the people of my congressional district in the Gold Country of California, to have had guiding my office and shaping my decisions for many years now a truly exceptional individual, Rocky Deal.

Rocky is going to retire at the end of this month to take on a long list of pent-up retirement and family projects, and I will miss his assistance and advice greatly.

His 15 years of service leading my congressional office was actually the second chapter of his service to our country. His first chapter was 28 years of distinguished service in the United States Navy.

In those nearly three decades, he rose to the rank of captain, and for 2½ years commanded what Ronald Reagan called America's flagship, the aircraft carrier USS *Constellation*. This culminated an eventful career in the Navy and naval aviation, including command of the USS *Kalamazoo* and command of the legendary Jolly Rogers squadron of F-14 Tomcats off of the USS *Abraham Lincoln*.

During his command of the Jolly Rogers, the squadron earned the Battle E as the best fighter squadron in the Atlantic fleet. While he commanded the USS *Kalamazoo* in two Gulf deployments, it was rated the best logistical squadron in the Atlantic.

During his command of the USS *Constellation*, it won more Battle Es than any other Pacific fleet carrier during the Gulf and Indo-Pacific deployments. He concluded his career in the Navy as chief of staff to the commander of the Pacific Naval Air Forces responsible for 6 aircraft carriers, 2,000 aircraft, and 40,000 sailors.

After retiring from the Navy, Rocky returned to his hometown of Susanville, California, where he took over the family automobile dealership, first established there in 1929.

He served on the board of trustees of Lassen College, where he also taught history, and he served on the board of directors of Lassen Hospital. He also served in a wide range of civic organizations, including Rotary International, Boy Scouts of America, the chamber of commerce, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I first met Rocky campaigning for Congress in 2008 and was very fortunate to have him join my office the next year as district director and then chief of staff.

I, my staff, my constituents, and especially our country are all extremely fortunate to have had the benefit of his good judgment, calming influence, team-building leadership, and above all, an innate ability to soothe ruffled feathers, an art that is often in very high demand in my office. Despite my best efforts over the years, he has managed to maintain good relations with our local officials, district leaders, and a diverse range of constituents.

John Boehner once told me that a good chief of staff allows a Congressman to be a Congressman, and Rocky has been successful at that throughout this decade and a half.

The progress we have made on forest management in this district that spans the western slope of the Sierra is in large part due to his constant interaction with local and Federal officials and his total devotion to the businesses of our gateway communities around Yosemite.

He cares deeply about the health and safety of the people of these mountain communities, about the struggles of local businesses, the welfare of his fellow veterans, the governance of our great Nation, and the principles of liberty that he has served in the United States Navy and the United States Congress.

He has trained a first-rate team that will carry on as he leaves congressional service to enjoy time with his wife of 51 years, Gail, his three grown children, and his eight grandchildren.

Our entire team will miss him greatly and miss the wisdom as we bid him, as Lincoln put it, an affectionate farewell.

Mr. Speaker, on my behalf and that of a grateful constituency and a grateful Nation, I thank Rocky Deal.

#### HONORING CONGRESSMAN LOUIS STOKES

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

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Congressman Louis Stokes as we approach what would have been his 100th birthday.

Born on February 23, 1925, in Cleveland, Ohio, Louis Stokes rose from humble beginnings to become a giant in the fight for civil rights and a champion for the underserved. Along with his brother, Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes, he made history and made a difference for northeast Ohio.

His story is one of perseverance, service, and an unshakable belief in the promise of this Nation. A veteran of the United States Army and an attorney who argued landmark cases before the Supreme Court and a lifelong voice for the voiceless, Congressman Stokes' path was paved with courage and conviction, diligence, and determination, and a deep and abiding commitment to justice.

In 1968, he became the first Black Representative for Ohio, bringing much-needed representation to this Chamber. During his 15 terms in the House, Congressman Stokes advocated for the poor, fought for civil rights, and supported our servicemembers and ensured that communities, like my district in Cleveland, received the resources and representation they deserve.

As 1 of 13 founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus, he helped advance civil and human rights and promote economic empowerment. Today, the CBC has grown to a historic 62 members because of the work of Louis Stokes, Shirley Chisholm, and their generation.

His legacy lives on through the laws he championed and the institutions that bear his name, from the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and the Louis Stokes Health Sciences Library at Howard University, to the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation in STEM.

Yet, what resonates most with me, and with so many in our district, is his humanity. He never forgot where he came from, nor did he ever lose sight of who he served.

Throughout his life, he carried with him a deep sense of purpose and a steadfast belief in the power of government to do good.

I am humbled to serve in the district, Ohio's 11th Congressional District, that Congressman Stokes called home.

Mr. Speaker, I hope to honor his legacy by striving to be worthy of the standard he set. As we reflect on his life, let us commit ourselves to the ideals he held dear and the people he so passionately served.

Mr. Speaker, on his centennial, I thank Congressman Stokes. His life and contributions were a gift to our district, our State, and our Nation.

#### HONORING THE SIX TRIPLE EIGHT

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, during Black History Month and throughout the year, it is important that we honor the legacies of those that came before us.

Today, I rise to reflect on a remarkable story that hits close to home. I recently learned that a late resident of northeast Ohio, Alma Gladys Minter, served as a tech sergeant in the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion.

Ms. Minter was part of a legacy that demonstrated the strength, resilience, and determination of African-American women. The Six Triple Eight was the first and only all-Black Women's Army Corps unit to serve overseas during World War II.

In February 1945, nearly 850 women were assigned to a vital task: ensuring letters continued to flow between soldiers on the front lines and their families back home. Their assignment was daunting, clearing a backlog of over 17 million pieces of mail in Europe.

In less than 90 days, they completed this Herculean task in half the time expected by the Army. The women of the Six Triple Eight endured freezing warehouses, relentless schedules, and the twin enemies of racism and sexism. Their motto was: "No mail, low morale," which speaks to the importance of their work.

However, in a stark injustice, their hard work was not formally recognized after the war. They didn't join in the victory day parade, and their story was not told in mainstream accounts.

However, Ms. Minter's family in Ohio knew her story, as did the families of the communities that were home to the Six Triple Eight veterans in the decades that followed.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, I was deeply honored to vote for legislation awarding the Six Triple Eight the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor bestowed by this body. It was a long overdue recognition for their extraordinary contributions.

The Six Triple Eight Gold Medal has been minted. In the months to come, it will be formally presented, forever serving as a reminder of the heroes like Ms. Minter who stepped up when our country needed them most.

The story of Ms. Minter and the Six Triple Eight is one of service, resilience, and the pursuit of justice. Their story is part of not just Black history but American history. To Ms. Minter and all the women of the Six Triple Eight, we say a long overdue thank you. Their service will not be forgotten, and their legacy will continue to shine brightly for generations to come.

#### HONORING MARCH FOR LIFE

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

Mr. MCGUIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the March for Life. Life is a miracle, and it must be protected. I have this small camouflage backpack I have carried in the general assembly for 7 years and now in Congress with a small baby sock to remind us of our most vulnerable.

This week I was proud to cosponsor the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, legislation that continues House Republicans' theme of common-sense measures for the 119th Congress. This bill requires that healthcare providers treat babies born alive following an abortion or attempted abortion with compassion and dignity.

I encourage all of my colleagues across the aisle to vote for life in favor of this legislation. As thousands of people come to our Nation's Capital and rally to support the right for life, I would like everyone to take a moment and remember the millions of unborn feet this small sock could have warmed.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. MCGUIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize January as Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Human trafficking is modern-day slavery. It can happen anywhere, and it can impact anyone, regardless of race, religion, or creed.

During my time in the Virginia General Assembly, I have fought on the legislative front lines to stiffen felony penalties for human traffickers. Now as a Member of Congress, I am going to continue the fight, and I encourage everyone to help raise awareness so we can save lives.

Whether it is learning more about the telltale signs of human trafficking or reaching out to your local authorities to learn about their efforts, if you see something, say something. Do something.

I encourage everyone to do their homework. Learn more about human trafficking, and join the fight to protect the vulnerable.

#### LOWERING COSTS FOR AMERICANS

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, eggs in my district are \$9.19 or, as one resident said, it is ten bucks to buy eggs, RASHIDA.

I want everyone to think about this because the Federal minimum wage is \$7.25 right now. We know grocery prices are out of control, and our government is failing to lower costs for working families. This is why my residents don't call it the minimum wage. They call it the starvation wage. It has been 16 years since Congress has raised the Federal minimum wage.

Let's get to the core value here of understanding this. A mother in our country right now can work for an hour and not be able to afford eggs. It is really unacceptable. I heard the reasons, but they still don't add up. It is

unacceptable that billionaires and corporations are consolidating their power and price gouging the American people, our families.

This crisis should be our focus. I understand that there are many dynamics that they keep putting forward. Why aren't we doing anything about it? Fear and division keep us distracted from what is really going on. Those that are rich and wealthy in our country become richer under every single decision I have seen so far.

One glaring thing missing in the 200 executive orders that we have seen this week is any mention of lowering the grocery prices for our families, not one word. We know there have been promises made by this current administration that they are going to lower costs for Americans on day one. Three weeks into the new Congress, we haven't seen a single bill come to the floor on this issue.

In my district they are drowning in the high costs of healthcare. Don't get me started about auto insurance, which is now up 40 percent, many paying almost the cost of rent, the cost of their mortgage to have auto insurance which is required by law to have if a person owns a vehicle.

Instead, we are seeing threats of tariffs that will drive grocery prices higher. Instead, we see them getting rid of protections for discriminatory actions by companies, by actors that we know fully intended to benefit from racist policies.

I know that this doesn't matter to the current President and his billionaire friends. They don't worry about the cost of a carton of eggs or milk or groceries, especially when the three wealthiest men in America are sitting right behind the current President at his inauguration. Their combined worth, so that the American people understand, is \$911 billion.

It is clear that the billionaires now control our government, and this Chamber can't let that happen. We need legislative action to lower the cost of living for the American people. Trust me that this is a bipartisan issue. Every corner of our country is asking us to do something about this.

These are issues that, again, matter to many, many families. That is why my residents care about it so much. Stop with the fear-mongering and the hate. I know you are distracting us because you are helping your billionaire friends, but you are hurting so many American people who are drowning right now with the cost of living.

#### EMBRACING IMMIGRANTS

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, immigrants in our country are already under attack, especially our undocumented neighbors. These are hateful and divisive executive orders and a violent assault on our communities and our country. Our very identity, as we all know, is a nation of immigrants.

I wouldn't be here as a child of immigrants. My father, with only a fourth grade education, was able to work in

the auto plant line. My mother only had an eighth grade education. They were able to achieve the American Dream to see their daughter become a United States Congresswoman.

What are we doing instead of embracing that identity? We are punishing sanctuary cities that embrace our immigrant neighbors. We are dismantling asylums and humanitarian paroles. We are dehumanizing our immigrant neighbors. We are banning all refugees, even those who waited patiently for years, who followed the law, had flights booked, already cleared, and were denied entry.

We are already laying the groundwork. He is already doing it for the Muslim ban, many of our neighbors, myself, my family, all of us. Even though it is not directly targeted toward us, attacking a whole faith is un-American. Sending ICE to schools, hospitals, and churches is hateful and divisive.

He is even trying to override the 14th Amendment of the Constitution to end birthright citizenship. It is clear from my residents and folks around the country there is absolutely no doubt if you are born in the United States, you are a U.S. citizen. The President does not have the authority to change that, period.

We must fight back to prevent these policies rooted in racism and white nationalism. That means opposing plans for mass deportation. Our families must protect each other. It has nothing to do with public safety. They want us distracted so they can help their billionaire friends become richer.

That means opposing his plans for mass deportation. It means showing up to defend our friends, coworkers, and neighbors when they raid our communities.

It means my colleagues must stop voting to pass racist and authoritarian legislation that expands deportations and paints our immigrant neighbors as violent criminals.

Trump's executive orders call immigrants coming to our country seeking a better life an "invasion." The only invasion we face is ICE coming into our communities to sow chaos, racially profile our neighbors, and tear our families apart.

This has nothing to do with public safety, it is about stoking fear and hate because they want to distract us from what is really happening.

Making the wealthy class richer.

Corporations are already celebrating.

Meant to keep us silent as this administration goes after every single marginalized group in our country.

Now is the time to resist this fearmongering, to stand with our immigrant neighbors and make it clear that our communities are stronger than those that hate us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and Vice President.

#### ACCESSING MILK AS A VITAL PART OF SCHOOL NUTRITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a critical gap in school nutrition affecting students across this great Nation.

Today, I will introduce the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, a much-needed win for students, parents, schools, and dairy farmers across America.

This bipartisan legislation expands milk options in school milk programs to include whole and 2 percent milk. It addresses a critical gap in child nutrition. We all know that milk is an essential source of 13 vital nutrients, including several underconsumed nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, and potassium. These are foundational for building strong bones, maintaining healthy blood pressure, and supporting overall development.

However, in order for kids to benefit from these nutrients, they need to actually consume the milk. As we all know, kids deserve options and choice when it comes to choosing milk at lunchtime. Unfortunately, thanks to a flawed Federal policy based on outdated science, since 2012 schools have been prohibited from serving whole or reduced fat milk in school lunchrooms.

We all know whole milk tastes the best because it is the best. It is long overdue that kids in our Nation's schools have access to the most naturally nutritious beverage available to them. According to the dietary guidelines for Americans, nearly 90 percent of Americans including our children fail to meet their daily dairy intake recommendations.

Thanks to the Federal ban on whole milk, we have lost an entire generation of milk drinkers. Along with them, hardworking dairy farmers across this country have suffered. When students are presented with limited, unpopular milk options, they drink less milk and are more likely to turn to sugary, caffeinated alternatives that offer little nutritional value.

Research has repeatedly shown that whole and 2 percent milk are not only not responsible for childhood obesity, but several studies show that children who consume whole milk are less likely to experience obesity and have healthier levels of body fat. Since whole milk was banned from school lunches, body mass index scores, rates of obesity, and the prevalence of diabetes among young people have increased significantly. According to one case study, childhood obesity rates climbed 13 percentage points between 2008 and 2020.

Clearly, whole milk was not the problem when it came to childhood obesity. Emerging science supports what many parents already know. Whole milk is a nutritious and satisfying option for their children. Whole milk for healthy kids doesn't mandate schools to serve whole milk or for any student to drink milk but, rather, gives them the flexibility to meet the preferences and nutritional needs of their students.

Importantly, this bill aligns with parental choice, empowering schools to offer a wider range of milk options that mirror what kids enjoy at home. This is not just about nutrition, it is about practicality. Low-income children who rely on school meals for a majority of their daily dairy intake deserve access to nutritious and appealing options.

By reintroducing whole and reduced fat milk to school lunchrooms, we can combat food waste, support local dairy farmers, and ensure that our children are well-fed and ready to learn. This crucial legislation already has broad support from the farming community, school groups, Members across the aisle, and Senators across the Capitol.

I especially thank my partner on this legislation here in the House, Dr. KIM SCHRIER, as well as my Senate counterparts, ROGER MARSHALL, PETER WELCH, DAVID MCCORMICK, and JOHN FETTERMAN, for joining me in introducing this commonsense effort.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce this commonsense solution that provides essential nutrients to our Nation's youth and supports America's dairy farmers. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1045

#### HONORING RICH KOHNG

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

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor Rich Kohng, assistant vice president for civic engagement at Illinois Third's own North Park University, for his lifelong commitment to civic justice and civil rights.

Rich's parents, Roy and Susan, came to the United States as refugees of the Korean war and arrived in Chicago after immigration quotas were removed after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

Inspired by his family's commitment to their faith and service, Rich obtained his master's in divinity and began his career at North Park University by coordinating their urban ministry program. Nearly 15 years later, through his leadership at the Center for Civic Engagement, Rich exemplifies the transformative power of education to promote civic engagement and foster stronger, more connected communities.

Through initiatives like the Catalyst program, Rich has created opportunities for students to engage deeply in Chicago and with Chicago residents, learning directly from local leaders of color and working collaboratively to address pressing social issues.

Rich's work reminds us that when our universities invest in civic engagement, they not only shape the next generation of leaders, but they are strengthening the fabric of our very own communities.

On behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, I commend Rich Kohng

for his commitment to promoting civic engagement, his leadership at North Park University, and his dedication to live out his faith through public service.

#### HONORING LAURA AVILA-PETERSON

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated educator and my constituent from Bensenville, Illinois, Laura Avila-Peterson.

Laura's commitment to fostering civic engagement ensures that her students are prepared to be active, informed participants in our democracy.

Laura is an experienced high school educator specializing in bilingual social studies and supporting English language learners at Fenton High School. Over the past 5 years, she has taught grades 9 through 12, fostering inclusive environments that celebrate the diverse backgrounds of the students that she serves. Her dedication to supporting English language learners is evident in her tailored approach to teaching.

I recently had the privilege of meeting Laura and speaking with her bilingual civics class at Fenton High School. Together, we talked about how we build a multiracial democracy and the importance of uplifting students as they engage in civic life, particularly by creating multilingual spaces, regardless of their immigration status, for them to be able to talk about what they see in the news, how they experience it, and how they belong in this country.

On behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, I commend Laura Avila-Peterson for her dedication to education and her invaluable contributions to shaping the next generation of leaders.

#### HONORING JOSE "CHA CHA" JIMENEZ AND RAINBOW COALITION LEGACY

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the legacy of Jose "Cha Cha" Jimenez, a beloved community organizer and activist, founder of the Young Lords, and one of the architects behind Chicago's original Rainbow Coalition. To this day, the Rainbow Coalition is remembered as a powerful model of multiracial unity and solidarity that continues to inspire all of us.

Cha Cha was born in Puerto Rico and eventually moved with his family to Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood in the midst of the city's planned urban renewal. Today, we would call it gentrification. Cha Cha and his peers faced housing and educational discrimination and harassment at the hands of the police and were motivated to create the Young Lords street organization to protect themselves and their Puerto Rican neighbors.

Under Cha Cha's leadership, the Young Lords evolved into a political organization that hosted free breakfast programs for children, free community medical clinics, and other projects of survival. Through his work, he connected with other activists organizing in their own low-income communities across the city.

On April 4, 1969, Cha Cha co-lead an effort to form the Rainbow Coalition, an anti-racist, multiracial, working-class movement uniting the largely Puerto Rican Young Lords in Lincoln Park, the Black Panther Party on Chicago's South and West Sides, and the Young Patriots representing poor Appalachian Whites in the Uptown neighborhood. These organizations connected after beginning to understand the shared conditions they were facing had more commonality than division, particularly in their largely poor neighborhoods.

Cha Cha, Fred Hampton of the Black Panthers, and William "Preacherman" Fesperman of the Young Patriots helped their organizations overcome their differences and understand the potential in collaborating to organize their working-class communities.

Together, the Rainbow Coalition united these three organizations to cooperate on projects of survival and demonstrate solidarity at each other's protests and pickets across the city.

In memory of Cha Cha's passing and in honor of his contributions to uniting our community, I commend him and the leaders of the original Rainbow Coalition. May their legacy be a powerful reminder that we are, in fact, stronger together.

#### HONORING ROCKINGHAM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR STEPHEN KING

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Rockingham County Administrator Stephen King on his well-deserved retirement after a lifetime of public service to Virginia's Sixth District.

Stephen earned his degree in civil engineering from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington. He went on to work for the city of Buena Vista as a civil engineer and worked his way up to assistant city manager.

From there, he accepted an offer to become Rockingham County's director of public works. He began serving as deputy county administrator in 2004 and was finally appointed county administrator by the board of supervisors in 2016.

Stephen brought his levelheadedness and no-nonsense approach to oversee a period of some of the county's largest growth, helping to establish a positive reputation for Rockingham County as a great place to live and do business.

Stephen always took care to acknowledge county employees' hard work and had a great relationship with everyone he came in contact with.

I wish him, his wife, Mary, and his entire family the best as he begins this new chapter in his life. He is a shining example of the leadership that every local government hopes to have.

#### PROTECTING LIFE

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 21, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

The radical left's policies have led to an unacceptable reality: abortion on demand, even up to the point of birth in some States. This is a profound injustice to the most vulnerable among us, the innocent lives that cannot speak for themselves.

Every life is precious, Mr. Speaker, a divine gift from God. Every baby deserves the same opportunity for life. This vital legislation ensures that those who survive an attempted abortion are not abandoned but instead receive the full medical attention that they require.

The Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act mandates that doctors and medical personnel provide immediate lifesaving treatment and guarantee that these newborns are admitted to a hospital without delay.

This should not be a partisan issue. It is a basic acknowledgment of our shared humanity. We must protect the most defenseless among us and ensure that every baby has a fighting chance at life.

With the new administration, we have a tremendous opportunity to advance this critical legislation and make it a reality.

I will always stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. No child should be denied their fundamental right to life or the vital care they need to survive. Every life matters, and every baby's life is worth fighting for.

We must ensure that our laws reflect our commitment to protecting the most innocent among us.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

#### CELEBRATING CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

While most people don't equate national parks with metropolitan areas and sprawling suburbs, Ohio's 13th Congressional District is proud to be the home of the Nation's most beautiful landscape, which is the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

In 1974, Congress created the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, as some of the land was designated as parkland, but it was with the leadership of former Congressman Ralph Regula, who slipped a few words into an appropriations bill in the year 2000, that it was ultimately signed into law by President Bill Clinton. The few words that he slipped in said that they were going to redesignate the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

In the 50 years since the park was established, staff and volunteers in our community have worked hard to renew

this natural and cultural resource for generations to come.

The park is a vibrant landscape that is enjoyed by many all across the country each year. The park permanently preserves 33,000 acres of beautiful forests, portions of the Ohio & Erie Canal, and parts of the Cuyahoga River.

The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is one of Ohio's natural treasures, drawing 3 million visitors each year, making it the ninth-most visited park in America.

The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is unique. As I said before, it sits between the urban areas of Akron and Cleveland, but stepping into the park makes you feel like you are a world away from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The winding Cuyahoga River gives way to deep forests, rolling hills, and open farmland. Some of the park's trails also connect to the Buckeye Trail, which connects all four corners of our great State.

As the only national park in the State of Ohio, it offers residents and tourists alike an opportunity to reconnect with nature, boost their physical and mental health, and explore our region's rich natural history.

This anniversary would not have been possible without the dedicated community members, park staff, rangers, volunteers, and tourists who have protected, preserved, and visited this invaluable resource for over 50 years. Mr. Speaker, I thank them for all they do on behalf of Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

Once again, congratulations to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park community on its 50th anniversary, and I look forward to more anniversaries to come.

#### ENHANCE PENALTIES FOR ASSAULTS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the pardons this week of violent felons who attacked our Capitol, injuring 174 of our Capitol Police, were a sacrilege against our Republic and our Constitution. Their actions were an affront on decency and a violent attack on the rule of law.

Americans nationwide are outraged. Mr. Speaker, 140 law enforcement officers were assaulted and 174 sustained injuries. Officer Brian Sicknick died.

Those who engage in violence against law enforcement officers must be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

I will soon introduce the Brian Sicknick Heroic Law Enforcement Officers Protection Act. This bill aims to strengthen penalties for those who assault law enforcement officers on Federal property. It provides enhanced support for officers injured in the line of duty.

This legislation is named in honor of U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick. He tragically lost his life in the line of duty defending this Capitol on January 6, 2021. His selfless service and ultimate sacrifice will never be forgotten.

My legislation will include enhanced penalties for assaults on law enforcement officers for individuals who assault officers on Federal property, with potential sentences including life imprisonment.

It will include improved health benefits for officers. It will guarantee full health benefits throughout their service and retirement and for those injured in the line of duty, including the 140 officers assaulted and 174 injured on January 6, 2021.

As one Member who was held against her will in this Capitol on January 6, 2021, I can guarantee you this bill deserves swift passage.

Additionally, it will provide enhanced support for injured officers by providing eligible officers with access to necessary protective services.

The brave men and women of law enforcement put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities and our Nation. This legislation is a necessary step toward honoring their service. It will ensure that they have the support they deserve and that the United States of America reveres them and the rule of law to which they dedicate their lives.

#### 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 10 o'clock and 58 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STRONG) at noon.

#### PRAYER

Reverend Judy Malana, United States Navy, Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies Staff, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You are the creator and sustainer of all life, the God of new beginnings, and because of this, we humbly invoke Your presence among us here this afternoon inside the United States Capitol, the people's House.

Dear Lord, may those of the House of Representatives be faithful stewards of the higher purpose of their calling. Grant them discerning hearts of wisdom, as they work together in a spirit of unity, to carry out the promises of our Constitution and our enduring democracy.

Most merciful God, may Your grace fill the Chamber of this honorable assembly. Bring our lawmakers clarity of mind in the midst of the complexities of the issues they face. Strengthen them, their families, and their loved ones who support them.

O sovereign Lord, continue to hold our Nation in the very hollow of Your hands. May Your peace permeate and prevail in the hearts, minds, and souls of the American people.

For all of us, may we ever strive to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You in service to our Nation and each other with utmost compassion, gratitude, and love.

We ask these things in Your most holy and precious name.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

#### NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH

(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 January as National Blood Donor Month.

Since its inception in 1970, National Blood Donor Month has aimed to increase blood and platelet donations during one of the most challenging times of the year for collecting blood products; the winter months.

In my district, the Centre County Commissioners have officially proclaimed January as National Blood Donor Month in Centre County, joining the nationwide effort to honor and celebrate those who selflessly roll up their sleeves to help patients in need.

Since July 2024, the Central Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Red Cross has held 101 blood drives in Cen-

tre County, collecting over 3,000 units of blood. According to the Red Cross' Centre County operations, this is the highest count in the region.

Mr. Speaker, it is staggering to realize that someone in this country needs blood once every two seconds. By the time I finish this speech, nearly 30 people will require access to a blood transfusion.

Blood donations are critical because the supply relies entirely on the generosity of donors. It cannot be manufactured or stockpiled. To meet patients' needs, the Red Cross must collect 12,500 units of blood every single day.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone listening to visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and click on the "Donate Blood" tab to find a blood drive nearby.

#### HONORING JAMES SEARS

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the extraordinary life of James Sears, a truly remarkable eastern North Carolinian.

Mr. Sears was a dedicated advocate and a steadfast supporter of communities across our region. He served on the Gates County Board of Elections. He was an active member of the NAACP and his home church, New Hope Baptist Church in Gatesville. There are so many organizations, but the one that he loved and devoted over 30 years to was the Eastern North Carolina Civic Group.

He always prioritized the needs of others. His unwavering commitment to families across eastern North Carolina was evident in all that he did. We are incredibly grateful for his contributions and the positive impact he has made on so many lives.

His passing has left a void in our community that will be deeply felt. My heart goes out to his family, the Eastern North Carolina Civic Group, and to the Gates County community as we now remember and celebrate his legacy.

#### RECOGNIZING SHAVERS CREEK GRANGE NUMBER 353 SESQUICENTENNIAL

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, institution, which is celebrating a milestone anniversary.

This year, Shavers Creek Grange Number 353 will mark the 150th anniversary of its founding with a series of events, including a fellowship event that reflects the organization's mission to embrace community members from across generations.

Defined by its enduring commitment to family values and community standards, the Shavers Creek Grange represents the organization's motto, and that motto is: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

On behalf of everyone in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I congratulate the Shavers Creek Grange on this sesquicentennial milestone and thank its members for their continued work to strengthen the community fabric of Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania.

#### THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, very small instances—President Trump's excuse last night for freeing the violent January 6 criminals.

To the 140 dedicated police officers who were injured that day, to the officer who was crushed in a door and had to protect his eye from being gouged out, to the officer who was punched with a flagpole, this was hardly Trump's "day of love."

Now, he has released these criminals back to their communities. One boasted of buying guns. Another would: Turn up the heat in the spirit of vengeance—total disrespect for law enforcement, unleashing a heightened threat to the safety of families and communities across this country.

By freeing the leaders of the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers who were convicted of seditious conspiracy, Trump seems to be following the example of the authoritarian leaders he has admired in telling them to "stand back and standby"—his private militias, available to crush any opposition at the slightest dog whistle.

#### COUNTERING IRANIAN TERRORISTS IN IRAQ

(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, Iraq has been oppressed by kleptocrats who support Iranian terrorism. Sadly, Iran-backed militias, the Badr Organization, are part of the Iraqi Government, including the national security adviser. Badr was armed by terrorist Soleimani.

Iran-backed militias in Iraq should be designated as terrorists, as Congressman GREG STEUBE and the Republican Study Committee have proposed. There must be sanctions on kleptocrat politicians complicit with Iran, such as former Prime Minister al-Maliki.

Any aid to Iraq should be conditioned on not going to terrorists. Brett McGurk's policy of replacing ISIS with Iran has failed. President Donald Trump will reinstitute policies of maximum pressure on Iran, stopping Iraq's



purchase of Iranian electricity as he responds to the Tehran regime plot to assassinate him while they were shouting: "Death to Israel, death to America."

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Open borders for dictators puts all Americans at risk of more attacks as warned by the FBI. Trump is protecting American families.

Americans opposed rigged elections in Georgia and support the legitimate President Salome Zourabichvili of Georgia as protests build for free and fair elections in the nation of Georgia.

#### ABORTION CARE IS MEDICAL CARE

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today not just as a Member of Congress, but as a physician who has treated patients for 30 years. I express my strong opposition to the House Republican reproductive healthcare surveillance act.

Let me make one thing clear: Over my 30 years of practice, I have come to treat patients in the most difficult times of their lives, and I understand full well that no one but the doctor and the patient should be in that examination room.

Like any other issue, abortion care is medical care and needs to be treated by a physician trained to deal with that very difficult situation for women.

Unfortunately, the bill we are considering today undermines medical expertise and seeks to bully physicians into not providing the care that they have been trained to provide according to the best medical science.

This bill is just another attempt to strip women of their reproductive freedom by pushing misinformation that endangers not only the lives of women but the public health at large.

Like with any other medical issue, politicians are not equipped, generally not trained, to manage the healthcare of patients, but we hope they will address the important needs of public health.

Mr. Speaker, let the doctors and patients lead the way on healthcare, and let women make the decisions that are their right to make.

#### HONORING MAJOR GENERAL DALE LYLES

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

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional leader, dedicated public servant, and my dear friend, Major General Dale Lyles, adjutant general of the Indiana National Guard.

General Lyles' journey of service began when he enlisted in the Indiana Army National Guard in 1986. Over the

years, he has demonstrated dedication and leadership in every role.

His services included key positions, such as commander of the 219th Engineer Brigade and chief of staff for the Indiana National Guard where he oversaw operations and strategic initiatives.

In 2019, General Lyles was appointed adjutant general of the Indiana National Guard by our Governor, Eric Holcomb. Since then, he has led efforts to modernize the force, ensuring Indiana's National Guard is prepared to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Under his leadership, the Guard has excelled in responding to national disasters, deploying overseas in defense of our freedoms, and serving our communities in times of crisis. His unwavering commitment to the well-being of his soldiers and their families has had a lasting impact in Indiana and beyond.

As he retires from nearly 40 years of service to the United States, it is my honor to recognize Major General Dale Lyles for his outstanding service and dedication to a grateful State and Nation.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf Indiana's Ninth District and a grateful country, I thank General Lyles for his years of sacrifice and dedication to America.

□ 1215

#### SUPPORTING MILAGROS HEREDIA

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

Ms. ANSARI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the story of Milagros Heredia, a Dreamer, who calls my district home. Milagros was a baby when her mother carried her across the border for a better life. At 8 months old, Milagros was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Specialists gave her a 15 percent chance of survival, and she defied the odds.

Now 22, she is a student at Grand Canyon University, studying to become an oncologist. Like many Dreamers, she lives in constant fear of losing everything. Because of executive orders proposed by President Trump and the Laken Riley Act, Milagros and more than 20,000 Dreamers in Arizona live in fearful uncertainty.

Arizona is their home. This country is their home. They are American in every way that matters. It is past time for Congress to provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers and for Democrats to stand up to Trump's un-American policies.

#### HONORING JACK HOFFMAN

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

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of

one of our greatest Nebraskans, Jack Hoffman. For over a decade, Jack's story captured the hearts and minds of Americans and Nebraskans as he battled brain cancer. Through it all, the Cornhusker State cheered him on.

In 2013, Jack made national news when he ran for a 69-yard touchdown during the Huskers' spring game. In that moment, Jack became a symbol of perseverance and hope for kids and families grappling with pediatric brain cancer. To help others facing the same battle, his family founded the Team Jack Foundation to support research on pediatric brain cancer.

When Jack passed last week, our entire State mourned his loss. His legacy will be forever etched in the hearts of Nebraskans. He joins his father, who also died of brain cancer, a very good friend of mine and somebody that I know welcomed his son into heaven with open arms.

#### SUPPORTING HEALTHCARE AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

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

Ms. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we marked 52 years since the Supreme Court issued its landmark ruling in *Roe v. Wade*. We should be celebrating 52 years of reproductive freedom. Instead, nearly 3 years after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, we live in a very different America.

In North Carolina and across the country, women cannot access vital healthcare services, and doctors are being criminalized for simply doing their jobs.

We now have a President back in the White House who is bent on restricting access to women's healthcare even further. On President Trump's first day in office, his administration even removed a Federal web page that offered important reproductive health information.

While the next 4 years will bring immense challenges, we cannot give up the fight for a country where women can make decisions about our own bodies and our own healthcare.

#### CELEBRATING LUNAR NEW YEAR

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

Mrs. KIM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate Lunar New Year, Seollal, which it is called in Korean, and Tet Festival, in Vietnamese, as we ring in the Year of the Snake.

Snakes are mysterious, smart, alert, determined, and calm. We enter this new year with the same calmness, wisdom, and alertness, standing steady and ready to take on any challenges or opportunities that come our way.

I wish success, good health, and blessings for you and your family in

this new year. In Congress, I will embody the calm determination of the snake as I build on my record of effectiveness and deliver results for our southern California communities.

Let me wish everybody a “happy new year” in Korean, “*saehae bok mani badeuseyo*”; Mandarin, “*xinnian kuaile*”; Cantonese, “*gong hei fat choy*”; and Vietnamese, “*chuc mung nam moi*.” Happy new year.

#### HONORING BROTHER RONALD GALLAGHER

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brother Ronald Gallagher who passed away earlier this month after a distinguished life of service to Lasallian education.

Brother Ron was a son of California. He took his final vows in 1972 and went on to earn his Ph.D. in comparative literature. He began teaching at the high school level before joining the faculty at Saint Mary's College of California in the early 1980s.

After a successful teaching career, Brother Ron served as the college's president from 2005 until 2013. As president emeritus after his term as president, he oversaw academic and athletic facility improvements. Brother Ron was honored for his work during all of that time with the naming of the Brother Ron Gallagher Baseball Stadium at Saint Mary's.

Brother Ron will be remembered for his vocation, for his sense of humor, love of sports, and passion for literature. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brother Ronald Gallagher for a life of unwavering commitment to service, education, his faith, and his community.

#### PROTECTING THE VALUE OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP

(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, the Birthright Citizenship Act is a necessary step to restore integrity to our immigration system. The 14th Amendment was never intended to grant citizenship to children of individuals who enter or remain in the country illegally. The purpose of the 14th Amendment was to guarantee full rights to freed slaves, not to fuel illegal immigration or exploit U.S. citizenship through birth tourism.

Today, 1 in 10 births in the U.S. is to an illegal mother, and nearly 400,000 of these mothers come across the border illegally every year to give birth. The drafters of the 14th Amendment couldn't have imagined that is how it would be twisted to make that somehow legal.

The loophole also fuels a global birth tourism industry, further undermining

the integrity of our laws. Citizenship is one of America's most precious privileges. By closing these loopholes, this legislation prioritizes the rule of law and the interests of American citizens.

It is about fairness. It is not denying opportunity but ensuring our laws are respected and applied consistently. Let's take this vital step to protect the value of U.S. citizenship.

#### EVERGLADES COALITION HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE MARY BARLEY

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mary Barley of Florida to celebrate her much-deserved induction into the Everglades Coalition Hall of Fame.

Mary and her late husband, George, brought unmatched passion and commitment for decades to serving America's Everglades. For instance, this award-winning advocate was pivotal in helping pass the bipartisan Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan in 2000. This landmark legislation authorized the world's largest ecosystem restoration effort, one that continues to guide our renewal efforts today.

Mary is also a founding director of the Everglades Foundation, the leading scientific, advocacy, and educational group working to restore this ecological treasure.

Mr. Speaker, Mary Barley has been more than a leading bipartisan force in the historic quest to save the River of Grass. She has been a mentor, friend, and role model to generations of young environmentalists who were fortunate to learn from her passion and devotion to this cherished ecosystem. We are so fortunate to have a persuasive advocate to preserve and protect this unique and magnificent ecosystem. Mary's induction into the Everglades Coalition Hall of Fame is timely and well-deserved.

#### WELCOMING HOME ROMI GONEN, EMILY DAMARI, AND DORON STEINBRECHER

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

Ms. GILLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of everyone on Long Island to welcome Romi, Emily, and Doron home after more than 470 days in Hamas captivity. We will not rest until every hostage comes home. I thank the previous administration and President Trump for working together to get this deal across the finish line.

We will never forget October 7, the single deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Hamas terrorists brutally murdered 1,200 Israelis, including Omer Neutra of Long Island.

The terrorist attacks of October 7 must never happen again. We must always stand with our ally, Israel.

#### SUPPORTING HEALTHCARE AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

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

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Republican reproductive healthcare surveillance act. I am from Texas. The last thing any Texan wants is the government telling doctors or women what they can or cannot do with their bodies. That is exactly what this bill does.

I was in Texas in the State legislature when Texas Republicans wanted to pass this same bill. They wanted to use Big Government to reach into doctors' offices and make personal healthcare decisions on behalf of women in my State. These are complex medical issues, and no politician should interfere in the lives of women and their families.

Doctors have medical training. Politicians don't. We must protect the doctor-patient relationship. Simply put, Republicans should not have a seat at the table in a doctor's office. It amazes me that my colleagues in the so-called party of small government continue to put forth bills that seek to control women, families, and doctors.

I will always make sure women and families have the tools they need to make their own healthcare-related decisions. This misguided bill endangers the lives of women, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

#### FIX OUR FORESTS ACT

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 471.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTZ). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 53 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 471.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. STRONG) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1230

##### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 471) to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes, with Mr. STRONG in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 471, the Fix Our Forests Act, a bipartisan bill I am leading with my good friend from California (Mr. PETERS), along with 16 other Democrats and 37 additional Republican cosponsors.

Our prayers are with the people of California as they are enduring horrendous wildfires and experiencing loss of life and property. We have a unique opportunity today to put feet to those prayers and prevent those tragedies from happening again in the future.

There are two reasons why we can't afford to wait any longer to reform forest management policies in this country. Number one, the stakes are too high, and number two, what we are doing is not working.

First, let's talk about the stakes. The Los Angeles wildfires have caused unimaginable damage and will likely become the costliest in American history, with early estimates suggesting upward of \$250 billion in damages.

More than 16,000 structures—homes, schools, grocery stores, entire neighborhoods, and communities—have burned. Sadly, at least 28 people have tragically lost their lives.

We all know that such figures can tell only part of the story. No price tag can be placed on the loss of a beloved family member or friend. No property valuation can register the pain a family feels after losing a home where cherished memories were made. No bookkeeping accounts for the lost dreams of a small business owner whose lifework has gone up in smoke. These are the true costs, the human costs, of catastrophic wildfire.

Losing 16,000 structures is nearly unfathomable. Local officials reported that it looked like a bomb was dropped on these communities after the smoke had cleared.

What is truly startling is that there are 44 million homes in the wildland-urban interface nationwide. There are more than 70,000 communities just like Pacific Palisades at risk of being wiped out by catastrophic fire.

This brings me to my second point. What we have been doing is not working. This bill passed the House last September with a strong bipartisan vote. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to move it. In the interim, more than 1.5 million acres burned across the country.

The Fix Our Forests Act offers a broad set of commonsense solutions that must be enacted. This legislation creates a needed framework for prioritizing treatments in our highest risk areas. To identify these areas, FOFA utilizes state-of-the-art technology to determine the most vulnerable fireheds across the country. Then, it incentivizes the use of emergency actions to prevent wildfires.

Many of these actions, like clearing brush and creating fuel breaks, are exactly what local authorities hastily undertook as they scrambled to save threatened neighborhoods in Los Angeles. The key difference, however, is that this bill ensures that such measures take place well before the fires start, not in the heat of an approaching blaze.

Without these tools, completing a single forest management project takes an average of 3 to 5 years. Under FOFA, land managers can act immediately to protect communities.

FOFA also expands existing categorical exclusions up to 10,000 acres so that prevention measures can meet the scale of the crisis. Under the status quo, if land managers want to reduce hazardous fuels in an area roughly the size of the Palisades fire, they would need eight separate categorical exclusions. Under FOFA, they need only two.

This change is based on proven results, like the 10,000-acre CE in the Lake Tahoe Basin. That was a bipartisan effort by Representative MCCLINTOCK and the late Senator Dianne Feinstein. These efforts saved South Lake Tahoe from certain destruction during the Caldor fire.

FOFA also protects communities by creating a community wildfire risk reduction program and clearing hazardous trees from utility rights-of-way to prevent fires like the ones that destroyed Lahaina in Maui and Paradise in California.

FOFA supports wildland firefighters by creating a new casualty assistance program for firefighters killed or injured in the line of duty, ensuring access to the latest technology so they can detect and put out fires faster and standardizing repayment timelines with local fire departments so non-Federal partners aren't waiting years to get the money they are owed.

I have only briefly described some of the important bipartisan pieces in FOFA, but it involves much more to make forests more resilient, healthier, and safer, from sea to shining sea.

All of these tools available in this bill echo a similar theme: We must restore common sense to our approach to forest management. This comprehensive package is a result of years of hard work and bipartisan collaboration formulated through hearings, site visits, and Member feedback.

Fixing our forests should not be a partisan issue, and today, it is not.

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 471, the Fix Our Forests Act, sponsored by Chairman WESTERMAN.

While this bill is flawed, and we will be discussing those flaws here in a moment, I do appreciate that Chair WESTERMAN and Representative PETERS did come together to work on this issue in a bipartisan way that acknowledges our wildfire crisis. That is a good thing. Addressing that should be a bipartisan priority, and the Fix Our Forests Act includes some helpful provisions.

For starters, it has incorporated a number of key Democratic priorities that are in direct alignment with the recommendations of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission. That is what is referenced in this poster here behind me, 148 nonpartisan consensus recommendations for making us safer from the threat of wildfire.

If this bill simply moved those consensus recommendations forward and also did something that the commission told us we had to do, a critical priority, which is to fund them and make sure that the agencies responsible for overseeing these projects have staffing—if this bill were simply doing that, we wouldn't be here today because this bill would already be law, and many of these good things would already be keeping communities safer.

Mr. Chair, as you will hear in a moment, this bill goes off on some tangents that have nothing to do with fire safety.

Also, with respect to the good provisions it does include, it fails to fund them. That is why we are here. That is why the path of this bill has been more complicated. That is, unfortunately, a missed opportunity.

We were able, in this bill, to include reauthorization of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership sponsored by our newly reelected Subcommittee on Federal Lands ranking member, JOE NEGUSE.

The latest version of the bill also includes a revamped version of the Firehed Center, which aligns with several of the commission's consensus recommendations aimed at enhancing coordination, using predictive services, and unifying decisionmaking capabilities.

I am glad this bill has evolved to include these priorities my Democratic colleagues have championed. In fact, we have Democratic bills that do all of these good things and more because fire safety is a huge concern for all of us, but our Democratic bills do not pair these good provisions unnecessarily with harmful environmental rollbacks. That, unfortunately, is what the bill before us does do.

If you scratch beneath the surface of H.R. 471, you start seeing problems, starting with the fact that the beneficial provisions are totally unfunded.

There is simply no money, no resources, to help any of the good things actually happen.

There are also several poison pills that have the potential to undermine science-based management and public engagement.

On top of doing nothing to address the key driver of catastrophic wildfires, climate change, the so-called Fix Our Forests Act inappropriately co-opts emergency authorities under the National Environmental Policy Act, undercuts the Endangered Species Act, and even makes it more difficult for communities to engage and scrutinize or even know about projects that could directly impact them.

Wildfire is deadly serious. In a matter of minutes, iconic landscapes and entire neighborhoods can be reduced to ashes. I know because it has happened all too often in my district. It is not something politicians should use as a pretext to jam through unrelated industry favors or special interest agendas that undermine our foundational environmental protections.

Let me be clear. House Democrats agree that we need to increase the pace and scale of restoration in our national forests and on public and private land. That is why we worked to secure robust funding in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. This enabled the Biden-Harris administration to develop the Wildfire Crisis Strategy and other key restoration activities.

Thanks to the funding we provided, the Forest Service has been able to achieve record numbers for both hazardous fuels reduction and prescribed burning. They have even identified southern California as a priority landscape through this work. The only thing holding them back from doing even more beneficial work on the ground is lack of money.

However, as we are seeing with the Los Angeles fires, addressing the wildfire crisis is not all about work in the woods. Southern California is dominated by chaparral, where things like timber sales and clear-cutting simply do not provide a fire safety solution for these communities.

My Republican friends seem to think that logging is a panacea for fire safety. In fact, it will do little or nothing to reduce wildfire risk in many of the most vulnerable communities. The fuel in the Los Angeles fires was not trees. The fuel was homes, schools, and businesses.

We will learn many lessons from this tragedy, but one I hope we can take away right now is that we can't keep taking a siloed, myopic approach to wildfire management and prevention. Built environments, like Los Angeles, must be a priority.

We shouldn't have to fight lies and disinformation as our brave Federal firefighters, who are already underpaid, are out there still fighting fires. I would like to set the record straight on some of the misinformation and

disinformation swirling around this debate.

While Los Angeles has some of the strongest building codes and fire safety requirements in the Nation, there are still thousands and thousands of homes that require retrofitting to ensure that they are adequately protected. Clearly, we have a lot more work to do, and this bill misses the mark by failing to advance that work.

Keeping homes and property resilient also requires constant upkeep and maintenance. Our communities need guidance, and again, more than anything else, they need resources to ensure that this happens.

While the Fix Our Forests Act includes a community wildfire risk program, which is a good thing, it is not enough. We need to pass the Community Protection and Wildfire Resilience Act that I introduced earlier this week with my Republican colleague, Congressman OBERNOLTE. It provides actual resources to help local communities defend themselves from the growing danger of wildfires.

Our bill would empower communities to implement science-based methods for mitigating wildfire damage, and we provide funding to design and implement new community protection and wildfire resilience plans with community members, first responders, and relevant State agencies. It would designate a targeted, specific grant program for home hardening within FEMA and add home hardening as an allowable project under an existing Forest Service program.

The bill provides actual support with an adequate focus on the built environment, and that is why I filed it as an amendment to this bill. Unfortunately, the majority decided to move forward on this bill without allowing a vote on that and many other amendments.

I had been hopeful that the amendment process would be an opportunity to address some of the critical gaps in this bill, especially the absence of a pay raise for our Federal wildland firefighters. That, too, has been left out.

What happened in Los Angeles this month is a national tragedy. In moments like this, we should overcome all politics and find ways to work together on solutions that actually help the people we are here to serve.

With that in mind, I want to discourage any of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who might want to embrace this wrongheaded idea that relief and support for Los Angeles can somehow be a bargaining chip or used as leverage to advance other policy goals.

The majority is not going to turn California into a red State by hijacking critically needed disaster relief. In fact, a thought like that never would have crossed our minds when we had the backs of the people in Florida, North Carolina, and Louisiana. We have simply been fellow Americans helping each other in the face of these terrible tragedies. That is the way it has always worked in this Congress,

and I hope we are not going to set a terrible new precedent now.

Mr. Chair, I will be recommending a "no" vote on this bill today. I hope that we can continue to work together, however, to improve this bill and to address all the critical issues that have been left out. I also hope that when it comes to the broader critical need for Federal disaster relief, we can remember that we are all fellow Americans and that we need to have each other's backs in these moments.

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

□ 1245

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, if throwing money at a problem would fix it, then we wouldn't be having fires today. Over the past few years, our Federal land managers have been showered with \$12 billion to battle wildland fires and to make our forests more resilient. The result of that is that Forest Service estimates they are going to treat less acreage than they treated before.

It is not a money problem. It is a policy problem and Fix Our Forests will help solve that problem.

Mr. Chair, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, over the last 10 years, we have lost fully one-quarter of our Federal forests to catastrophic fire.

An untended forest is no different from an untended garden. It will grow and grow until it chokes itself to death, and then it will succumb to disease, pestilence, drought, and ultimately catastrophic fire. This is how nature gardens. She doesn't care that it takes a century or more for a forest to regrow. We mortals do.

Excess timber will come out of the forest in only two ways. Either we will carry it out, or nature will burn it out. That is why we created the Forest Service, to do our own gardening and remove excess timber before it can choke off the forest.

Every year, foresters would mark off surplus timber, and we would auction it off to logging companies who paid us to remove it. For a century, we enjoyed healthy, fire-resistant and resilient forests.

However, then we passed bureaucratic laws which have made the active management of our forests all but impossible. A simple forest management plan now takes an average of 5.3 years to complete, and it costs millions of dollars, more than the value of the timber to be harvested. Since these laws were passed, timber harvested from Federal lands in California has fallen 75 percent with a concomitant increase in acreage destroyed by fire.

My friend, Mr. HUFFMAN, is concerned about climate change and carbon dioxide. He should know that a UCLA study revealed that just the 2020 fires in California alone released twice as much carbon dioxide as had been

prevented by 17 years of the restrictions and regulations that California has imposed, costing its consumers and taxpayers billions of dollars.

Now, we were able to get a categorical exclusion from NEPA for forest thinning projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin in 2016. In the 9 years since its enactment, it has reduced the approval process for forest thinning projects at Tahoe from 5 years to less than 4 months. It has reduced the environmental reports from more than 800 pages down to a few dozen.

Timber harvested has increased from roughly 1 million board feet a year to 9 million board feet a year. The treated acreage has tripled, and the Tahoe forests are returning to fire resiliency. This is what saved the city of South Lake Tahoe from the Caldor fire 2 years ago. The town of Grizzly Flats, which was not protected by this law, was wiped out by the same fire.

I have been trying for years to expand these proven reforms to the rest of the National Forest System through the Proven Forest Management Act. That measure is now included in this legislation, and its enactment is long overdue.

This should not be a partisan issue. The choice is between policies that have proven to work and policies that have proven to fail. Let us return to the policies that work before we run out of forests to burn down.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, it is always refreshing to hear my colleagues across the aisle, who typically deny climate science forcefully, to suddenly get interested in things like CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. They have discovered, correctly, that forest fires actually cause CO<sub>2</sub> to go into the atmosphere. I guess that is progress.

I hope now they will begin to listen to the overwhelming majority of climate scientists who are saying that this fossil fuel energy bonanza of theirs is actually the primary driver of catastrophic climate change. It is the reason we have record-breaking disasters, one after another because of this fossil fuel bonanza. I hope that we can build on the progress, this awakening that we have begun to hear on at least some climate science.

Now, it was mentioned by the chairman, I believe erroneously, that forest treatments have gone down since the passage of the legislation that I mentioned two Congresses ago. In fact, we need to do a little bit of correcting there.

Since the passage of these two laws, the Forest Service has been treating a record number of acres, including a record number of prescribed fires in California and across the country. We also know that from 2002 to 2023, the Forest Service consistently increased the acres that it treated.

Nevertheless, let's pick up where the Trump Administration left off. Mr. Chair, 2.65 million acres were treated in 2020, and we know that the Biden ad-

ministration was able to treat 4.3 million acres, a lot more than the Trump administration, in 2023. The numbers, admittedly, leveled off over the last 2 years because of Republican budget cuts, but they have still topped 4 million acres a year, and so it is a very different trajectory than what has been suggested.

Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Fix Our Forests Act, and I rise to fight what could be the first successful attempt to undermine the Endangered Species Act.

I believe that the California people deserve our urgent support to recover and rebuild from the tragic wildfires, and I am disappointed that this was not a productive discussion and a bipartisan discussion to help address what they need.

There are many excellent pieces of legislation that we should be looking at for that support, including many that are bipartisan, like the Modernizing Wildfire Safety and Prevention Act.

Those bills provide much-needed funding, deliver desperately needed support to firefighters, and address the needs of frontline communities. This bill does not.

Instead, it regurgitates long-held logging industry priorities to reshape environmental laws on Forest Service land and allow profit, not science, to dictate forest management decisions.

As a co-chair of the Endangered Species Act Caucus, I am particularly troubled by this bill's rollback of Endangered Species Act enforcement by overturning the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' Cottonwood decision. This decision basically says that when new science emerges or develops on endangered species, it must be considered in the Endangered Species Act protections.

By the way, the science goes both ways. It can both identify new dangers, but it can also identify successes and reduce stresses to threatened species.

The industry has long tried to include the so-called Cottonwood fix in several pieces of must-pass legislation, most recently in the farm bill. They now see in their response to the California wildfires their newest opportunity to undermine Cottonwood.

This industry wish list item would exempt Federal land management agencies from reconsultation under the Endangered Species Act. That process ensures that Federal agencies' land management plans incorporate the best available science as it becomes available. It is absolutely essential, but this is also a rare occurrence. It doesn't happen very often. When it does, it is important to consider it.

As any student of history and science knows, our shared knowledge is continuously evolving through new inquiry and discovery. If we didn't incorporate new knowledge, then we would still be stuck with the geocentric

model of the galaxy, placing the Earth at the center of the universe. Then think about the modern medical system. The modern medical community is built off the 19th century germ theory, which has saved hundreds of millions of lives.

Incorporating new scientific knowledge is the bedrock of our modern society. It makes no sense when new science emerges to close our eyes, put our hands over our ears, and deny what the best science tells us. This antiscience ESA poison pill is dropped in, unconnected to wildlife management.

Yes, we need good-faith forest management efforts to prevent wildfires, but not environmental rollbacks that allow for logging and other ecologically damaging activities that would worsen, not reduce, the risk of destructive wildfires. We need to take real action to mitigate risks and effects, and I am ready to work with all my colleagues to make that happen.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for his hard work for a long time on this to create a bipartisan bill that is intended to succeed.

The area that I represent in far northern California is one that has seen so much fire and so much destruction over the years. The Fix Our Forests Act is an important step and a meaningful step in having this not occur anymore. So I am really pleased that the effort can be bipartisan, and Chairman WESTERMAN is able to advance this cause.

Indeed, this is what one of my cities looked like, Paradise, California. It has already been 6 years, 85 lives lost, 300 towns affected in my district, 2 of them almost completely gone, Greenville, Canyondam, and a third one called Doyle. The fire burned right through that as well.

We are getting tired of this. We are getting really tired of it.

Now, with the tragedy in southern California, I guess that underlines it since it is getting a lot more national press. That is unfortunate.

What I appreciate in this bill is that it is common sense, and it will help with these disasters and keep our power grid more reliable. With the legislation we will have more clearing around the power lines, a bill I was able to pass a while back that we are adding to this bill.

Also, I am pleased to have a provision in here that advances more grazing. Of course, grazing is a very cost-effective way of keeping the fuels down around fire zones, and you can actually get paid for it by those doing the grazing.

So, Mr. Chair, when you see what success looks like, this is a managed forest here. It is thinned out, and it offers a much better opportunity to put fire out and stop fire or at least have it

burn through slowly and much cooler. When you don't manage the lands such—as so much U.S. Forest Service land looks this way—this is a tinderbox. It will burn completely down. We may not see any growth for 50 years after that.

Let's go with success. What Mr. McCLINTOCK was talking about in the Tahoe area, and even in a small town near Paradise called Magalia, where a private concern had done some of the work, and one-half of Magalia did not burn because of the work that was done adjacent to it.

We know these processes work. Why can't we advance them?

Why do we have to continue to have the destruction of the environment, waterways, and everything?

Let's pass this bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, the picture my friend from northern California just showed is instructive because both the right and the left side of that picture are areas that were clear-cut. You can tell that, Mr. Chair, because all the trees were exactly the same height. It is what we call a plantation forest. It is unhealthy. It is absolutely vulnerable to wildfire.

I am glad that they did some thinning on the left side of that picture, but the unhealthy forest on the right side is also a vestige of clear-cutting, which does not make anyone safer. It actually makes communities a lot more vulnerable to wildfire, and it is exactly the kind of project that would go through the huge loophole created in this legislation.

More clear-cutting is not going to make us any safer from wildfire risk.

Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from San Diego in southern California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, the wildfire crisis is not just a product of inaction, but decades of wrongheaded land management that let our forests, wildlands, and hills turn into tinderboxes. We have suppressed all natural fire, all the time, and let invasive, fire-prone vegetation grow unabated.

The work of clearing dead trees and dry vegetation that fuel fires requires long environmental reviews often followed by years of litigation. While we wait for analysis, forests burn down, habitats are lost, air pollution worsens, and our communities are threatened by catastrophic fire.

The wildfire crisis is also climate change. California wildfires in 2020 contributed more greenhouse gases than the State's entire power sector. It was said before that the fires in that 1 year undid the State's entire progress on emissions reduction from 2003 to 2019.

The Fix Our Forests Act will simplify and expedite the most critical forest management projects while maintaining strong environmental standards. It will reduce the threat of litigation and add new ways for communities to provide input early, something that does

not exist today and is one of the reasons why the National Congress of American Indians supports this bill. The Tribes support this bill.

This bill will also protect communities on the front lines of wildfire crises like Los Angeles and my hometown of San Diego. It helps localities craft modern, fire-resistant building codes. It also promotes public-private partnerships to clear flammable materials where nature meets our homes.

We crafted this bill with input from groups like The Nature Conservancy and the Environmental Defense Fund and others who have their priorities reflected in the text.

While we don't have the firefighting pay increase, which we need and we must get, the grassland firefighters and Western fire chiefs support this bill as is because they know it will help relieve the strain on their already stretched thin resources.

There is more we need to do, and along with Chairman WESTERMAN, we support providing aid for all those hurting in Los Angeles without conditions. No legislation is perfect, but this is a good bill that takes on a problem that is serious throughout the West and the entire country. For once we are not just making speeches. We are passing a bill that can become law and solve problems, and we don't have more time.

I implore my colleagues to join me and vote for this bill and bring some relief to constituents scared that their towns will be next.

□ 1300

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, as a forester, I can say that the only clear-cuts that are happening on Federal lands right now are wildfires. That is nature's way of clear-cutting.

When we see these devastating wildfires that burn everything off of the landscape, that is a clear-cut. What Mr. LAMALFA was talking about was uneven-age forest management and thinning, which we know works.

Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Chair, I thank Chair WESTERMAN for yielding me time and for his tireless efforts as an engineer and a forester to help save our forests.

Mr. Chair, I am from Oregon. My State has some 15 million acres of Federal forests. H.R. 471 addresses many issues, but the fix of the infamous Cottonwood decision applicable to all 15 million of those Federal acres is one of the most important.

Section 122 of this bill clearly states that no additional consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA will be required under certain circumstances set forth in the bill.

This part of H.R. 471 is one of the key provisions that constitutes the long-awaited fix for the 2015 Cottonwood decision. This reform limits unnecessary litigation, enabling forest management projects to proceed without undue delay, and ensures that critical res-

toration and fire prevention efforts can actually occur.

With this legislation, the Forest Service and BLM will no longer have to delay dozens of wildfire prevention projects anytime a new species is listed, critical habitat is designated, or other information is brought forward. This legislation will fix this wrongfully decided case.

Mr. Chair, I am in full support of this bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from central California (Mr. PANETTA).

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Chairman, in the past few weeks and in the past few years, communities all across America have witnessed the devastation, destruction, and death from wildfires. Much of this calamity and crisis is due to the many communities being in high-risk areas, known as the wildland urban interface. Over 99 million people live in these danger zones, not just in Los Angeles or California, but throughout the entire United States.

In my district in central California, numerous towns are located right next to national forests. Don't get me wrong. It is nice to have national forests as your backyard, but national forests have been neglected and mismanaged, and the risk of wildfires is much worse due to extreme weather and climate change.

Some say that we shouldn't do anything and just let forests manage themselves. Unfortunately, we all bear witness to what can happen when we do nothing.

Fortunately, the Fix Our Forests Act would do something by restoring the health to forests, bolstering the resiliency, and reducing the threat of wildfires. As wildfire seasons have turned to wildfire years, we must be proactive when it comes to our forests.

That is why, rather than just suppress fires, the Fix Our Forests Act would prevent fires, and that is how we protect our communities.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 471, the Fix Our Forests Act, which I am proud to cosponsor. As you can see, it will pass with bipartisan support.

Over recent weeks, Americans have seen the devastating consequences of poor forest management in southern California. Unfortunately, for those of us who hail from rural America, this risk isn't out of the blue for us. It is a risk we face far too often, and that is largely because we are not doing enough to prevent it. Our hands are regularly tied because of the mess of bureaucracy and red tape that is preventing us from acting.

Does the Speaker know what doesn't require a NEPA analysis or doesn't face a threat of years of litigation? It is a wildfire. Until we fix our broken regulatory system that is putting American lives and our pristine national environment at risk, we are going to continue to lose this battle.

The good, bipartisan legislation that will pass before us today will help address this by bringing some sanity back to our forest management practices.

Mr. Chair, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this good legislation.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Chair, I thank the ranking member and the chair for this effort on the legislation.

Over the last 2 weeks, we have seen the devastation that the Los Angeles fires have caused: the lives, the housing, and the commercial structures that have been lost that in some cases will never be replaced.

More than 40,000 acres have burned, the equivalent to over half of Washington, D.C. Lives are at stake, and that is why we need to pass the Fix Our Forests Act.

We know that climate change is having its effect. This bill will better help us maintain our forests by prioritizing the treatment of hazardous fuels in fire-prone areas and expanding wildfire resilience. We also need to recognize that fire management requires different strategies for different geographies.

I am also pleased that my bill, the Headwaters Protection Act, is a part of this package. The bill will strengthen public and private partnerships in forestry and watershed management. Mr. Chair, we will have to find bipartisan additional funding sources.

Our Nation's forests are critically overgrown. We need to have better management. That is clear. The commonsense changes are necessary to prevent wildfires for generations to come, but let's be clear. Much more needs to be done.

We salute the brave firefighters and first responders who are acting today on a 24/7 basis.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. CRANK).

Mr. CRANK. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this important wildfire prevention bill. We need these provisions in FOFA to protect our communities and maintain the health of our forests. My own community has seen its share of wildfires. The Hayman fire in 2002 burned 138,000 acres in Pike National Forest and killed five firefighters.

Colorado Springs lies west of Pike National Forest, which contains over 1 million acres of forest. I was evacuated from my own home several years back from a forest fire. Portions of the Pike National Forest are included in the wildfire crisis landscape, and four of the five largest fires in recorded Colorado history have occurred there.

This is a real threat in my backyard, but the pace we are doing fire management is unacceptable, and it has deadly

consequences. The scale and severity of wildfires can be managed and contained. This bill gives us the tools to do that, but we have to be proactive.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this critical bill.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY).

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in respectful opposition to H.R. 471 and to also express my concern and my condolences to all who are suffering in California from the devastating wildfires. Like California, communities in New Mexico that were similarly devastated by a wildfire last summer are still picking up the pieces today.

It is very clear that our climate is in crisis, and I rise in opposition to this bill because of the dangerous precedent that this legislation sets for climate and environmental policy as we face a new administration.

There is so much that I like about this bill, but I am extremely concerned about provisions in the bill that undermine NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, judicial remedies that are available to communities and to the environmental community, and that it tries to micromanage instead of putting in place comprehensive solutions to address the climate crisis and forestry practices.

Mr. Chairman, I greatly respect the chair for his forestry expertise. As I said, there is much in this bill that I like, but I am highly concerned especially about the undermining of NEPA and these other environmental bedrock provisions, especially in the wake of 2 days after Donald Trump has taken office and signed a slew of executive orders undermining the fundamental environmental climate and clean energy legislation that we put in place over the last several years.

In these executive orders, he took us out of the Paris climate agreement, opened public lands and offshore for drilling, stopped progress on clean energy projects, revoked spending for the Inflation Reduction Act and the infrastructure bill, and is clearly trying to undermine the bedrock environmental provisions of NEPA with an executive order that would stop the modernization of that bill.

It is in this context that passing new legislation that would give the opportunity for the administration to exploit loopholes in NEPA, as well as the Endangered Species Act and judicial processes, is untenable.

It is not true that our country is facing an energy emergency, as was declared by the President. It is, in fact, facing a climate crisis. The hottest year in human history was 2024. The wildfires in California and New Mexico were not started by bureaucracy. They were the result of the climate crisis.

We must be clear that if we are going to address the catastrophic and increasing wildfires that are happening across the West, we have to stay the

course in our commitment to addressing the climate crisis. We can't stand here and pretend that this bill is actually the result of the deadly wildfires in California. In fact, it is a bill that has been presented in several Congresses, and many of the provisions in it have nothing to do with these wildfires whatsoever.

I ask my friends across the aisle to please join us in actually putting forward comprehensive solutions that will address the climate crisis, that will increase pay and benefits for firefighters, and that will address the resilience needs of our communities and help them rebuild.

Mr. Chair, I respectfully ask my colleagues to vote against this bill because we must address the climate crisis, and we must protect our bedrock environmental laws.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to report that Republicans have an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior that has firefighter pay increases in that appropriations bill, and I hope that we can all work to pass that as we move forward.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Chairman, the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act is a critical piece of legislation that will restore forest health and increase our resiliency to catastrophic wildfires.

The fires burning across southern California devastated entire communities and will have lasting impacts on our State for years.

Beyond the terrible loss of life and property, wildfires cause hazardous air conditions that lead to significant health concerns. Smoke and particulate matter from these fires can travel hundreds of miles, and geographic conditions trap these air pollutants in the Central Valley, which creates dangerous conditions for our families, farmworkers, crops, and those already battling respiratory diseases.

In 2023, over 1 million acres burned across California. While fires are inevitable, decades of forest mismanagement have directly contributed to the severity of the wildfires that we are witnessing. While there needs to be serious conversation at the State level about the management of California's natural resources, the Fix Our Forests Act will help address the root causes by providing Federal agencies with the tools necessary to help States practice proactive forest management and mitigate risk.

Mr. Chair, I thank the House Natural Resources Committee chair, BRUCE WESTERMAN, for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MIN).

Mr. MIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in respectful opposition to H.R. 471, the so-called Fix Our Forests Act.

Right now, as we all have seen, tens of thousands of families are without

homes. Our knowledge right now is that 28 people have died. The scale of the devastation in Los Angeles is just unthinkable.

Mr. Chair, I represent a district just to the south of this catastrophe. Thankfully, we have not been affected, but we are subject to the same dynamics year after year.

In recent years, we had the Santiago Canyon fire, the Laguna fire, the Canyon fire, and a number of others. When you compile 80- to 100-mile-an-hour winds, made worse because of climate change and the annual Santa Ana winds, with dry conditions, that combination is basically creating tinder conditions. That is why we are having this fire.

I just want to note that this particular bill has done nothing to prevent the Los Angeles fires and would do nothing to prevent similar wildfires going forward.

Mr. Chair, firefighters will say that when you have 80- to 100-mile-an-hour winds, little embers can turn into massive fires, and there is nothing that we can do to stop that. Firefighters cannot be deployed and water or other resources cannot be deployed until the wind dies down.

Unfortunately, there has been a lot of misinformation about these L.A. fires, that there is not enough water or that somehow our water systems are inadequate. Many have described these fires as blowtorches, trying to fight a fire that is like a blowtorch.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues who are believing these conspiracy theories to talk to actual firefighters about how they might fight fires like this because I have talked to firefighters, and they have told me that measures like this would not have prevented the L.A. fires.

This particular bill has some important provisions that I support. Some of these have been mentioned in opposition by people on my side of the aisle, but I would note that it lacks the funding mechanisms to actually make these implementable.

It also fails to include any permanent pay increase for Federal wildland firefighters who continue to be underpaid and overworked.

This bill is, at best, a messaging bill, an unfunded mandate. I note that it is wrapped up in this inextricable question of: Will Californians get the aid that our families so desperately need? Unfortunately, that seems to be a question that increasingly looks like the answer is going to be: Only with grossly political conditions.

□ 1315

I note that I introduced an amendment to make clear that Federal disaster assistance to the Los Angeles fire victims needs to be prioritized and must come with no political strings attached. This is something we have done for every other disaster out there in America. When we have had hurricanes in the Southeast, when we have had

flooding in parts of the country, California has stepped up. We get 60 cents back for every dollar we pay in tax funding.

I am disappointed that we are politicizing aid to California now that we need it. I was disappointed that my amendment was blocked from even basic consideration. I am disheartened to know that House and Senate Republicans continue to threaten conditions on the basic aid that Californians need right now.

This is un-American and inconsistent with every other Federal disaster response.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I had the opportunity just last October to visit Orange County and to fly over the Airport fire with Representative KIM and also to attend the local townhall meeting where I saw residents who were traumatized by these fires, but also residents who had concerns because they either couldn't find homeowners insurance to buy or they couldn't afford it if they could find it.

These fires are devastating. What we are doing is not working. There are provisions in the Fix our Forests Act that will allow us to create these defensible zones around communities in the wildland urban interface.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

Mrs. KIM. Mr. Chair, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 471, the Fix Our Forests Act.

At this very moment, multiple fires are burning throughout southern California. My heart goes out to the communities affected and to our first responders, especially as my constituents and I know the devastation of wildfires firsthand.

Just months ago as the chairman mentioned, the Airport fire started in my district and burned over 24,000 acres in Orange and Riverside Counties. Including the surrounding fires that burned at that time, we had over 100,000 acres that burned. That is why the chairman came out to our community and met with my Trabuco Canyon community leadership and saw firsthand the devastation and what we would do. We had our conversation regarding the Fix Our Forests Act. We talked about the innovative technologies that we need to respond to the threat of wildfires.

The Fix Our Forests Act includes the Wildfire Technology Demonstration, Evaluation, Modernization, and Optimization, or DEMO Act, which I introduced to create a public-private partnership to test and deploy emerging wildfire mitigation technologies.

I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and Representative PETERS for making it bipartisan and for including my legislation in this critical bill to protect our forests.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 471.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY).

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Chair, today, we will pass this vital legislation to fix our forests, and we will do so with bipartisan support.

This bill has a number of very important provisions. It simplifies and expedites environmental reviews. It ends frivolous legislation and endless agency consultation. It strengthens the Good Neighbor Authority. It creates a new categorical exclusion to increase vegetation management for utility rights-of-way. It prioritizes hazardous fuel reduction in high-risk fireheds. It protects communities in wildland urban interfaces, and it incorporates technology in a smart way.

I am particularly grateful for those in the California congressional delegation on both sides of the aisle who have spoken in support of this legislation. The contrast could not be clearer to what is going on in Sacramento at the State capital right now where just in the last hour, the runaway supermajority rejected legislation by Assembly Republican Leader James Gallagher to add \$1 billion to the fire prevention budget, the very budget that the current Governor has slashed time and time again. He was even caught by NPR exaggerating the amount of fire mitigation work done by a staggering 690 percent.

Today, we will pass this very much-needed legislation at the Federal level, and it will make a big difference. It will reduce the risk of wildfire, but until California's political leadership gets its act together, our citizens will remain at risk.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FONG).

Mr. FONG. Mr. Chair, I rise today as a cosponsor in support of the critically needed Fix Our Forests Act. As wildfires continue to threaten communities in southern California, including now a new fire near Castaic that borders my district, it is even more urgent that our Nation prioritizes preventing these catastrophic tragedies through proactive forest management.

In the past 5 years, my district has seen over 600,000 acres burned by wildfires. I have seen the devastation that it leaves behind. Our State has seen millions of acres burned and with preventive forest maintenance, these fires could have been extinguished much sooner and saved countless lives, homes, and businesses.

These out-of-control mega-fires need to be greatly mitigated before reaching the point of complete destruction. Expediting environmental reviews and prioritizing active management of our Nation's forested wildlands will be critical and essential to saving lives and communities.



Mr. Chair, I am grateful for the leadership from Chairman WESTERMAN, who has traveled and visited the forests in my district. I am grateful to the Natural Resources Committee and the House by immediately enacting this bill into law.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FONG. Time is of the essence to prevent the next catastrophic wildfire.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD 102 supporting organizations. These stakeholders include Tribal and local governments, grazing and forest management organizations, and a diverse coalition of hunters, conservationists, natural resource managers, outdoor recreationists, educators, and scientists.

Mr. Chair, 47 of those organizations also provided support letters. Each letter expresses strong urgency for passing H.R. 471 to ensure improved forest management on Federal land.

The groups that wrote support letters included: American Sportfishing Association, Boone and Crockett Club, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Federal Forest Resource Coalition, Public Lands Council, American Sheep Industry Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Forest Resource Council, Association of California Water Agencies, California Farm Bureau Federation, Family Farm Alliance, National Association of Counties, San Bernardino County, and many others.

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE FIX OUR FORESTS ACT

Agricultural Retailers Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Forest and Paper Association, American Forest Foundation, American Forest Resource Council, American Forests, American Loggers Council, American Property and Casualty Insurance Association, American Seed Trade Association, American Sheep Industry Association, American Sportfishing Association, American Wood Council, American Woodcock Society, Archery Trade Association, Arkansas Forestry Association, Associated Oregon Loggers, Association of California Water Agencies, Association of Firetech Innovation, Bipartisan Policy Center Action, Boone and Crockett Club, California State Association of Counties, Camp Fire Club of America, Catch A Dream Foundation, Citizens For Responsible Energy Solutions, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club, Delta Waterfowl, Edison Electric Institute, Evangelical Environmental Network, Family Farm Alliance, Family Water Alliance, Federal Forest Resource Coalition, Federation of American Scientists, Forest Landowners Association, Forest Resources Association, Grassroots Wildland Firefighters, Hardwood Federation, Houston Safari Club, Idaho Forest Group, Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, Inc, Intermountain Forest Association, International Inbound Travel Association, Inter-Tribal Timber Council, Kittitas Reclamation

District, Masters of Foxhounds Association, Metzler Forest Products, Minnesota Timber Producers Association, Mississippi River Trust, Mule Deer Foundation, National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Association of Conservation Districts, National Association of Counties, National Association of Forest Service Retirees, National Association of Home Builders, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, National Association of State Foresters, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Congress of American Indians, National Deer Association, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Special Districts Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, North American Falconers Association, North American Grouse Partnership, Orion: The Hunter's Institute, PG&E, Pheasants Forever, Placer County Water Agency, Pope and Young Club, PotlatchDeltic, Professional Outfitters and Guides of America, Property and Environment Research Center, Public Lands Council, Public Lands Foundation, Quail Forever, Reinsurance Association of America, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ruffed Grouse Society, Safari Club International, Salt River Project, San Bernardino County, San Bernardino County Professional Firefighters Local 935, Sierra Pacific Industries, Sportsmen's Alliance, The Wildlife Society, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, U.S. Biochar Coalition, Utah Farm Bureau Federation, Western Fire Chiefs Association, Weyerhaeuser Company, White Oak Initiative, Whitetails Unlimited, Wild Sheep Foundation, Wildlife Forever, Wildlife Management Institute, Xcel Energy, and XR Association.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I think we can all agree that wildfire is a complex, traumatic, and challenging issue. It is serious stuff. The devastation it can wreak on entire communities and destruction can happen in a matter of minutes.

Addressing our wildfire crisis is a national priority that should never be politicized. House Democrats are committed to supporting a robust all-of-government response, and to doing that in a way that acknowledges critical realities.

Starting with the climate crisis and the role of human-caused climate change, especially the burning of fossil fuels, and these worsening conditions are exacerbating not just wildfires but many other natural disasters.

Second, the reality that solutions, including many of the ones in this bill, actually require resources in order to mean something.

We hope to continue working with our Republican colleagues to address our outstanding concerns about this bill, and we hope that the majority will work with us on additional legislation to address critical issues, like adequate pay for Federal firefighters, that were left out of this bill. They need the resources to do their work. Communities devastated by wildfires also need the resources to rebuild.

There is plenty of work that we still have ahead of us. I hope we can do that together.

It is unfortunate that this bill came up so quickly. In fact, Republicans refused most Democratic amendments. At a time of crisis, we should be trying to find ways to work together.

Democrats have a lot of good ideas. I really think this bill could have benefited from an open and transparent amendment process and, unfortunately, we were denied that.

Forests are critical carbon reserves. They are majestic destinations for outdoor recreation, a habitat for a range of wildlife enjoyed by millions of Americans. Short-circuiting environmental review and not allowing the public to participate in decisionmaking actually has negative consequences. It could put all of these values at risk.

We have to also be able to talk about the climate. Like the recent fires in southern California or the ones that tear through my northern California district all too often and throughout the West all too often, some of the most destructive and devastating fires that we have seen in the past 5 years on non-Federal land started as grass fires, exacerbated by the climate crisis.

In the winter of 2021, the Marshall fire broke out in Boulder, Colorado. At that time, it was the most destructive fire in Colorado history, with over 1,000 homes lost. At the time, Boulder County was experiencing hurricane-force winds just like Los Angeles. The fire blazed across open spaces that had been desiccated by months of extreme drought conditions.

Everything about the Marshall fire was unusual: the level of high winds, the condition of the landscape from an unstable climate, and the proximity to an urban interface. What was once considered unusual is rapidly becoming the norm. We need to acknowledge that reality.

Like the Marshall fire, the fires in Maui started on non-Federal grassland. They were fueled by hurricane-force winds and significant drought. This is a climate disaster.

Fix Our Forests would not have stopped either of these fires. Communities like the ones in southern California; Boulder, Colorado; and Lahaina, Hawaii need resources so they can prepare and respond and be more resilient.

Unfortunately, even the sections of this bill that purport to help in these situations completely lack funding. They need to be refined. They need to be backed up by dedicated funding in order to mean more than just thoughts and prayers.

Rushing bills like this to the floor to capitalize on a crisis does not always lead to the best outcome. We should know that by now.

Let's hope this is not a model for the entire 119th Congress.

Mr. Chair, I close by urging my colleagues to oppose this bill and by urging my Republican colleagues to do a better job of working with Democrats. We should be tackling these issues together.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I will state again that Republicans have a firefighter funding fix in the appropriations bill that, when it came to the floor, was not supported by my friends across the aisle. We want to provide more funding to our firefighters. This is an authorization bill. It is not an appropriation bill.

It is regrettable that we are having to bring this bill up again already because we passed it last year with large bipartisan support. We had 55 of our friends across the aisle vote with every Republican to pass this bill, but unfortunately, it went nowhere in the Senate.

We are bringing it back again because this is bipartisan legislation. I hope this is an example of how this Congress will go because I don't know that I have worked on a more bipartisan piece of legislation during my time in Congress.

I thank my colleague, Representative PETERS, for all of his time and effort in bringing this bill to the floor once again.

I will say that the time to fix our forests is now.

Actually, now is not the real time to fix our forests. The time to have fixed our forests was yesterday. It was last year. It was 10 years ago. It was 30 years ago.

The condition our forests are in now is as a result of bad management decisions over a long period of time. It is like the saying about planting a tree. The best time to have done it was when you were a child. The next best time is today. If not today, we need to do it tomorrow.

□ 1330

Regardless of where and when catastrophic wildfires occur, they offer a grim lesson: The costs of thoughtful prevention would have been far less than those inflicted by merciless flames. The old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is never more true than when it comes to managing our forests.

We spend billions of dollars fighting fires every year. Our forests should be an income stream to our Federal Government, not a cost. People manage forests all over the country, and they actually produce great products that go into homes and sustainable buildings and that become a carbon sink because wood is 50 percent by weight carbon. This table was atmospheric carbon that was stored in this wood at some point in history. It is still in this wood.

Instead of burning these forests up and spewing more carbon into our atmosphere, we should be looking at innovative ways to use our forests, to keep them healthy and resilient. Forests provide clean air, clean water, and wildlife habitat, but they don't do that when they are burned to the ground.

These fires oftentimes are so hot that they burn the organic material out of the soil, so it is hard to get trees to

grow back. We have seen this in the Angora fire. I visited it several years ago, 12 years after the fire. It had been replanted six times, and the trees still wouldn't grow on it because the soil had been so damaged by these intense wildfires.

The argument has been made that these fires are the result of climate change. If that is the case, the question still remains, what are we going to do about it?

We have unhealthy forests. They are way overstocked with way more trees per acre than we have ever seen. Small trees are competing with other trees for light, water, and nutrients. They get weakened and die. Insects and disease come in. This isn't just in California. It is all across our country.

We know what to do. The question is, will we do it? The Fix Our Forests Act will give us the opportunity to do what we know needs to be done.

I have talked to many of our Federal land managers across the country. They wanted to commit their life to working in an area to make a difference, and it is disheartening to them to have gone to forestry school or whatever educational experience they had and then to see these resources they are charged with taking care of going up in flames. Instead of being land managers and forest managers, they are firefighters. That is really what most of the budget for our Federal agencies goes to anymore, to fight fires. It doesn't have to be that way.

This is something that should be bipartisan. It is going to be bipartisan today. It is something the Senate should take up in a bipartisan manner and get to President Trump's desk as soon as possible.

Again, I encourage everyone to support the Fix Our Forests Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, the bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act is desperately needed to better manage our forests in California and across the country.

Wildfires are an unfortunate part of our lives. We were just reminded of this horrific reality in the greater LA area. In the wake of these fires, there's been a lot of discussion about state policies that need to be examined to better protect our residents and I wholeheartedly support reform at the state level. There are also several federal policies that must be reformed, which is why we're here today.

On average, the Forest Service spends four years on paperwork before a fuel management project, like clearing dead or overgrown brush, can even start. That length of time increases by more than three years when a NEPA lawsuit is filed. Those delays can be deadly.

The bipartisan Fix Our Forests Act would simplify and expedite environmental reviews for forest management projects as well as enact other reforms to help prevent wildfires. As the recent California fires make clear, we can no longer neglect our duties to manage our forests in a responsible but expeditious way. The American people demand and deserve competence at every level of govern-

ment. This bill is an important step in re-establishing faith that Congress will lead from the front and do what is necessary to mitigate the devastating impacts of wildfires.

I urge my colleagues to support this important bipartisan bill and protect Americans from wildfires.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Chair, after the House considered the Fix Our Forests Act last fall, I led a multi-member letter to Senate leadership urging them to pass comprehensive wildfire legislation and adopt the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission's consensus recommendations. Today's version of the Fix Our Forests Act addresses more of the Commission's recommendations by expanding on the purpose and role of the inter-agency fire center. It also includes a new provision to ensure that local fire departments receive timely wildfire reimbursements from the federal government.

I applaud House Natural Resources Committee Chairman BRUCE WESTERMAN and Congressman SCOTT PETERS' work on this bill, but this Congress must do more—more to ensure that federal wildland firefighters are paid fairly, more to prioritize the stewardship of our public lands, and more to ensure our communities get the help they need after disaster strikes.

Federal wildland firefighters deserve pay and benefits that reflect their service and sacrifice. I've supported every effort, including joining as a cosponsor of Tim's Act, to permanently increase firefighter pay. I will do everything in my power to get this done.

Additionally, the wildfire crisis cannot be solved without funding the stewardship of our public lands. I have co-lead efforts to secure full funding for Forest Service staffing and tribal forestry programs, and I will continue to do so. I also plan to re-introduce my bill, the Wildfire Resilient Communities Act, which would provide consistent funding for hazardous fuels reduction.

Following the ongoing wildfires that are devastating the Los Angeles area, I am gravely concerned by the new administration's threats to withhold disaster aid from Americans who've lost everything just because of who they elected. I believe that Oregon could be in a similar situation if disaster strikes. Proactive forest management is our best chance to stop these disasters and avoid that kind of political cruelty. We must also continue our longstanding commitment to all American communities and provide federal aid after a disaster strikes.

While imperfect, the Fix Our Forests Act takes meaningful steps to protect our forests, our communities, and my constituents, and that's why I will vote yes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 471, the Fix Our Forests Act.

Many forests across the Nation continue to be undermanaged and face significant forest health challenges. This includes forests such as the Allegheny, located in my district, which has its own difficulties with invasives among other issues.

The devastating fires in Los Angeles and throughout southern California are the latest reminder of what can happen when we fail to properly manage our forests and the risk of catastrophic fire in fire prone areas.

Unfortunately, these fires show that much work remains to help mitigate or prevent such catastrophes from occurring in the first place.

Even with the additional treatments the Forest Service has been performing, tens of millions of acres of national forest and adjacent lands throughout the west are still at risk of wildfire and are in need of treatments. Many of these acres are tinderboxes ready to ignite due to decades of mismanagement, which has led to declining forest health and dangerous levels of overgrowth.

We have continued to witness some of the most destructive wildfires on record in just the past decade, leading to significant property loss, recovery costs, and most sadly, the loss of human life. This truly is an urgent crisis that must be immediately addressed, and Congress must do more to better support the Forest Service and firefighters.

As Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, I am proud of the forestry title we included in last year's farm bill to expand the Forest Service's tools and authorities. Such reforms will enable the agency to improve forest health; reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire; increase the pace and scale of restoration; and ultimately protect communities, property and lives.

Similar to the farm bill, the Fix Our Forests Act will provide the Forest Service with such tools to proactively address invasive species, forest health, and wildfire conditions which threaten many rural communities across the national forest system.

With that, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation and encourage a YES vote on final passage.

In conclusion, I thank the firefighters and first responders for their work these past weeks and many sacrifices they have made. And we keep the those affected by these devastating wildfires in our thoughts and prayers as they endure this difficult time.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

The bill shall be considered as read.  
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 471

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

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Fix Our Forests Act”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.

**TITLE I—LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION**

**Subtitle A—Addressing Emergency Wildfire Risks in High Priority Firesheds**

- Sec. 101. Designation of fireshed management areas.
- Sec. 102. Fireshed center.
- Sec. 103. Fireshed registry.
- Sec. 104. Shared stewardship.
- Sec. 105. Fireshed assessments.
- Sec. 106. Emergency fireshed management.
- Sec. 107. Sunset.

**Subtitle B—Expanding Collaborative Tools to Reduce Wildfire Risk and Improve Forest Health**

- Sec. 111. Modification of the treatment of certain revenue and payments under good neighbor agreements.
- Sec. 112. Fixing stewardship end result contracting.

- Sec. 113. Intra-agency strike teams.
- Sec. 114. Locally-led restoration.
- Sec. 115. Joint Chiefs landscape restoration partnership program.
- Sec. 116. Collaborative forest landscape restoration program.
- Sec. 117. Utilizing grazing for wildfire risk reduction.
- Sec. 118. Water source protection program.
- Sec. 119. Watershed condition framework technical corrections.

**Subtitle C—Litigation Reform**

- Sec. 121. Commonsense litigation reform.
- Sec. 122. Consultation on forest plans.

**TITLE II—PROTECTING COMMUNITIES IN THE WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE**

- Sec. 201. Community wildfire risk reduction program.
- Sec. 202. Community wildfire defense research program.
- Sec. 203. Vegetation management, facility inspection, and operation and maintenance relating to electric transmission and distribution facility rights-of-way.
- Sec. 204. Categorical exclusion for electric utility lines rights-of-way.
- Sec. 205. Seeds of success.
- Sec. 206. Program to support priority reforestation and restoration projects of Department of the Interior.
- Sec. 207. Fire department repayment.

**TITLE III—TRANSPARENCY, TECHNOLOGY, AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Subtitle A—Transparency and Technology**

- Sec. 301. Biochar innovations and opportunities for conservation, health, and advancements in research.
- Sec. 302. Accurate hazardous fuels reduction reports.
- Sec. 303. Public-private wildfire technology deployment and demonstration partnership.
- Sec. 304. GAO study on Forest Service policies.
- Sec. 305. Forest Service Western headquarters study.
- Sec. 306. Keeping forest plans current and monitored.
- Sec. 307. Container Aerial Firefighting System (CAFFS).
- Sec. 308. Study on pine beetle infestation.

**Subtitle B—White Oak Resilience**

- Sec. 311. White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition.
- Sec. 312. Forest Service pilot program.
- Sec. 313. Department of the Interior white oak review and restoration.
- Sec. 314. White oak regeneration and upland oak habitat.
- Sec. 315. Tree nursery shortages.
- Sec. 316. White oak research.
- Sec. 317. USDA formal initiative.
- Sec. 318. Authorities.

**TITLE IV—ENSURING CASUALTY ASSISTANCE FOR OUR FIREFIGHTERS**

- Sec. 401. Wildland Fire Management Casualty Assistance Program.

**SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

- (1) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the Fireshed Center appointed under section 102.
- (2) **FIRESHED.**—The term “fireshed” means a landscape-scale area that faces similar wildfire threat where a response strategy could influence the wildfire outcome.
- (3) **FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECT.**—The term “fireshed management project” means a project under section 106.
- (4) **FIRESHED REGISTRY.**—The term “Fireshed Registry” means the fireshed registry established under section 103.
- (5) **FOREST PLAN.**—The term “forest plan” means—

(A) a land use plan prepared by the Bureau of Land Management for public lands pursuant to section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712);

(B) a land and resource management plan prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the National Forest System pursuant to section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604); or

(C) a forest management plan (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forests Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3104)) with respect to Indian forest land or rangeland.

(6) **GOVERNOR.**—The term “Governor” means the Governor or any other appropriate executive official of an affected State or Indian Tribe or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(7) **HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.**—The term “hazardous fuels management activities” means any vegetation management activities (or combination thereof) that reduce the risk of wildfire, including mechanical thinning, mastication, prescribed burning, cultural burning (as determined by the applicable Indian Tribe), timber harvest, and grazing.

(8) **HFRA TERMS.**—The terms “at-risk community”, “community wildfire protection plan”, and “wildland-urban interface” have the meanings given such terms, respectively, in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

(9) **INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.**—The term “Indian forest land or rangeland” means land that—

(A) is held in trust by, or with a restriction against alienation by, the United States for an Indian Tribe or a member of an Indian Tribe; and

(B)(i)(I) is Indian forest land (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103)); or

(II) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

(ii) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration.

(10) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(11) **NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS.**—The term “National Forest System lands” has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609).

(12) **PUBLIC LANDS.**—The term “public lands” has the meaning given that term in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702), except that the term includes Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands and Oregon and California Railroad Grant lands.

(13) **RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “relevant Congressional Committees” means—

(A) the Committees on Natural Resources and Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committees on Energy and Natural Resources and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(14) **RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL.**—The term “responsible official” means an employee of the Department of the Interior or Forest Service who has the authority to make and implement a decision on a proposed action.

(15) **SECRETARIES.**—The term “Secretaries” means each of—

- (A) the Secretary of the Interior; and
- (B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

(16) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(17) **SECRETARY CONCERNED.**—The term “Secretary concerned” means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System lands; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to public lands.

(18) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term “special district” means a political subdivision of a State that—

(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

(B) was created by or pursuant to the laws of the State for the purpose of performing a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function; and

(C) is distinct from any other local government unit within the State.

(19) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, and each territory of the United States.

## TITLE I—LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION

### Subtitle A—Addressing Emergency Wildfire Risks in High Priority Firesheds

#### SEC. 101. DESIGNATION OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.

(a) DESIGNATION OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.—

(1) INITIAL DESIGNATIONS.—For the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, there are designated fireshed management areas, which—

(A) shall be comprised of individual landscape-scale firesheds identified as being a high risk fireshed in the “Wildfire Crisis Strategy” published by the Forest Service in January 2022;

(B) shall be comprised of individual landscape-scale firesheds identified by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, as being in the top 20 percent of the 7,688 firesheds published by the Rocky Mountain Research Station of the Forest Service in 2019 for wildfire exposure based on the following criteria—

(i) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life and structures;

(ii) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including tribal water supplies and systems; and

(iii) risk of forest conversion due to wildfire;

(C) shall not overlap with any other fireshed management areas;

(D) may contain Federal and non-Federal land, including Indian forest lands or rangelands; and

(E) where the Secretary concerned shall carry out fireshed management projects.

(2) FURTHER FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—On the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall submit to the relevant Congressional Committees an updated map of firesheds based on the Fireshed Registry maintained under section 103.

(B) DESIGNATION.—Not later than 60 days after submitting an updated fireshed map under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall, based on such map, designate additional fireshed management areas that are identified as being in the top 20 percent of firesheds at risk of wildfire exposure based on the criteria specified in subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E) of paragraph (1).

(b) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—The designation of fireshed management areas under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

#### SEC. 102. FIRESHED CENTER.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, and

the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, shall jointly establish an interagency center, to be known as the Fireshed Center (hereinafter referred to as the “Center”) to carry out the purposes in subsection (b).

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) DIVISIONS.—The Center shall be comprised of the following divisions:

(i) Technology and Engineering.

(ii) Data Services.

(iii) Analysis and Prediction.

(iv) Education and Consultation.

(B) REPRESENTATIVES.—The Center shall be comprised of at least one career representative from each of the following:

(i) The Forest Service.

(ii) The Bureau of Land Management.

(iii) The National Park Service.

(iv) The Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(v) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

(vi) The U.S. Geological Survey.

(vii) The Department of Defense.

(viii) The Department of Homeland Security.

(ix) The Department of Energy.

(x) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(xi) The National Science Foundation.

(xii) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(xiii) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(xiv) The National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(xv) The United States Fire Administration.

(c) APPOINTMENTS.—Each representative of a Department, Agency, or other entity specified in subparagraph (B) shall be appointed by the head of that Department, Agency, or other entity, as applicable.

(3) DIRECTOR.—The representatives appointed under paragraph (2) shall, by majority vote, appoint a Director of the Center, who—

(A) shall be an employee of the U.S. Geological Survey or the Forest Service;

(B) shall serve an initial term of not more than 7 years;

(C) may serve one additional term of not more than 7 years after the initial term described in subparagraph (B); and

(D) shall be responsible for the management and operation of the Center.

(4) ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS.—In consultation with the representatives appointed under paragraph (2), the Director may appoint such Associate Directors as the Director determines necessary.

(5) ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, and the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, may jointly appoint additional representatives of Federal agencies, States, Indian Tribes, or local governments to the Center, as the Secretaries determine necessary.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Center are to—

(1) comprehensively assess and predict, using data tools (including artificial intelligence) and other decision support products, fire and smoke in the wildland and built environment interface across jurisdictions to inform—

(A) land and fuels management;

(B) community (including at-risk communities identified in fireshed assessments conducted under section 105) and built environment risk reduction, including the support and development of community wildfire protection plans and evacuation decisions; and

(C) public health risk reduction related to wildland fire and smoke, including air quality monitoring and forecasting and smoke prediction models;

(D) fire response and management, including the pre-positioning of wildfire suppression personnel and assets based on real-time risk; and

(E) post-fire recovery activities, including activities related to vegetation recovery, debris flows and flooding, watershed recovery and protection, and ecosystem health;

(2) provide data aggregation, real-time land and fuels management services, and science-based decision support services to inform the purposes specified in subparagraph (A) through (E) of paragraph (1);

(3) reduce fragmentation and duplication across Federal land management agencies with respect to predictive service and decision support functions related to wildland fire and smoke, including through the provision of data aggregation described in paragraph (2);

(4) promote coordination and sharing of data regarding wildland fire and smoke decision making (including through the provision of data aggregation described in paragraph (2)) to each of the entities specified in subparagraphs (A) through (F) of paragraph (8);

(5) streamline procurement processes for technologies (including technologies identified under the pilot program established under section 303) and cybersecurity systems related to addressing wildland fire and smoke for the purposes of scaling such technologies and systems across Federal agencies;

(6) amplify and distribute existing, and develop as necessary, publicly accessible data, models, technologies (including mapping technologies), assessments, and National Weather Service fire weather forecasts to support short- and long-term planning regarding wildland fire and smoke risk reduction and post-fire recovery while avoiding duplicative efforts, as determined by the Director;

(7) maintain the Fireshed Registry established under section 103; and

(8) disseminate data tools (including artificial intelligence) and other decision support products, for use in manners consistent with the purposes described paragraphs (1) through (7), to the following:

(A) Federal agencies.

(B) Indian Tribes.

(C) State and local governments.

(D) Academic or research institutions.

(E) Wildland firefighting entities, including applicable incident management teams and geographic coordination centers.

(F) Other entities, including public, private, and nonprofit entities, with expertise in land management, air quality, water management, or public health, as determined appropriate by the Director.

(c) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Center may enter into memoranda of understanding, contracts, or other agreements with State governments, Indian Tribes, local governments, academic or research institutions, and private entities to improve the information and operations of the Center.

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—

(1) USGS SUPPORT.—The Secretary of the Interior shall make personnel of the U.S. Geological Survey available to the Center for such administrative support, technical services, and development and dissemination of data as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this section.

(2) USFS SUPPORT.—The Secretary shall make personnel of the Forest Service available to the Center for such administrative support, technical services, and the development and dissemination of information related to fireshed management and the Fireshed Registry as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this section.

(3) FUNDING.—Notwithstanding section 708 of title VII of division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328), the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary may enter into agreements to share the management and operational costs of the Center.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the ownership of any data sources.

#### SEC. 103. FIRESHED REGISTRY.

(a) FIRESHED REGISTRY.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Fireshed Center appointed under section 102, shall maintain a Fireshed Registry on a publicly accessible website that provides interactive geospatial data on individual firesheds, including information on—

(1) wildfire exposure delineated by ownership, including rights-of-way for utilities and other public or private purposes;

(2) any hazardous fuels management activities that have occurred within an individual fireshed in the past 10 years;

(3) wildfire exposure with respect to such fireshed delineated by—

(A) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life and structures;

(B) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including tribal water supplies and systems; and

(C) risk of forest conversion due to wildfire;

(4) the percentage of the fireshed that has burned in wildfires in the past 10 years, including, to the extent practicable, delineations of acres that have burned at a high severity;

(5) spatial patterns of wildfire exposure, including plausible extreme fire events; and

(6) any hazardous fuels management activities planned for the fireshed, including fireshed management projects.

(b) COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS.—The Director shall make data from the Fireshed Registry available to local communities developing or updating community wildfire protection plans.

(c) REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN.—As part of the website containing the Fireshed Registry, the Director shall—

(1) publish fireshed assessments created under section 105; and

(2) maintain a searchable database to track—

(A) the status of Federal environmental reviews, permits, and authorizations for fireshed management projects, including—

(i) a comprehensive permitting timetable;

(ii) the status of the compliance of each lead agency, cooperating agency, and participating agency with the permitting timetable with respect to such fireshed management projects;

(iii) any modifications of the permitting timetable required under clause (i), including an explanation as to why the permitting timetable was modified; and

(iv) information about project-related public meetings, public hearings, and public comment periods, which shall be presented in English and the predominant language of the community or communities most affected by the project, as that information becomes available;

(B) the projected cost of such fireshed management projects; and

(C) in the case of completed fireshed management projects, the effectiveness of such projects in reducing the wildfire exposure within an applicable fireshed, including wildfire exposure described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of subsection (a)(3).

(d) RELIANCE ON EXISTING ASSESSMENTS.—In carrying out this section, the Director may rely on assessments completed or data

gather through existing partnerships, to the extent practicable.

#### SEC. 104. SHARED STEWARDSHIP.

(a) JOINT AGREEMENTS.—Not later than 90 days after receiving a written request from a Governor of a State or an Indian Tribe, the Secretary concerned shall enter into a shared stewardship agreement (or similar agreement) with such Governor or Indian Tribe to jointly—

(1) promote the reduction of wildfire exposure, based on the criteria in section 101(a)(1)(B), in fireshed management areas across jurisdictional boundaries; and

(2) conduct fireshed assessments under section 105.

(b) ADDITIONAL FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.—With respect to a shared stewardship agreement (or similar agreement) with a Governor of a State or an Indian Tribe entered into under subsection (a), the Secretary concerned, if requested by such Governor or Indian Tribe, may—

(1) designate additional fireshed management areas under such agreement; and

(2) update such agreement to address new wildfire threats.

#### SEC. 105. FIRESHED ASSESSMENTS.

(a) FIRESHED ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary concerned enters into an agreement with a Governor of a State or an Indian Tribe under section 104, the Secretary concerned and such Governor or Indian Tribe shall, with respect to the fireshed management areas designated in such State, jointly conduct a fireshed assessment that—

(A) identifies—

(i) using the best available science, wildfire exposure risks within each such fireshed management area, including scenario planning and wildfire hazard mapping and models; and

(ii) each at-risk community within each fireshed management area;

(B) identifies potential fireshed management projects to be carried out in such fireshed management areas, giving priority—

(i) primarily, to projects with the purpose of reducing—

(I) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life and structures;

(II) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including tribal water supplies and systems;

(III) risk of forest conversion due to wildfire; or

(IV) any combination of purposes described in subclauses (I) through (III); and

(ii) secondarily, to projects with the purpose of protecting—

(I) critical infrastructure, including utility infrastructure;

(II) wildlife habitats, including habitat for species listed under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(III) the built environment, including residential and commercial buildings;

(IV) resources of an Indian Tribe, as defined by the Indian Tribe; or

(V) any combination of purposes described in subclauses (I) through (IV);

(C) includes—

(i) a strategy for reducing the threat of wildfire to at-risk communities in the wildland-urban interface on both Federal and non-Federal land;

(ii) a timeline for the implementation of fireshed management projects;

(iii) long-term benchmark goals for the completion of fireshed management projects in the highest wildfire exposure areas so that such projects contribute to the development and maintenance of healthy and resilient landscapes;

(iv) policies to ensure fireshed management projects comply with applicable forest plans and incorporate the best available science; and

(v) a strategy for reducing the threat of wildfire to improve the effectiveness of wildland firefighting, particularly the effectiveness of fuels treatments that would improve wildland firefighter safety during wildfires;

(D) shall be regularly updated based on the best available science, as determined by the Secretary concerned; and

(E) shall be publicly available on a website maintained by the Secretary concerned.

(2) LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION.—Upon the written request of a local government, the Secretary concerned and the Governor of the State in which the local government is located may allow such local government to participate in producing the fireshed assessment under paragraph (1) for such State.

(3) INFORMATION IMPROVEMENT.—

(A) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—In carrying out a fireshed assessment under this subsection, the Secretary concerned may enter into memoranda of understanding with other Federal agencies or departments (including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), States, Indian Tribes, private entities, or research or educational institutions to improve, with respect to such assessment, the use and integration of—

(i) advanced remote sensing and geospatial technologies;

(ii) statistical modeling and analysis; or

(iii) any other technology or combination of technologies and analyses that the Secretary concerned determines will benefit the quality of information of such an assessment.

(B) BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE.—In using the best available science for the fireshed assessments completed under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary concerned and Governor shall, to the maximum extent practicable, incorporate—

(i) traditional ecological knowledge from Indian Tribes;

(ii) data from State forest action plans and State wildfire risk assessments;

(iii) data from the Fireshed Registry maintained under section 103; and

(iv) data from other Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments or agencies.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—Fireshed assessments conducted under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

#### SEC. 106. EMERGENCY FIRESHED MANAGEMENT.

(a) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned, acting through a responsible official, shall carry out fireshed management projects in fireshed management areas designated under section 101 in accordance with this section.

(2) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—The responsible official shall carry out the following forest and vegetation management activities as fireshed management projects under this section:

(A) Conducting hazardous fuels management activities.

(B) Creating fuel breaks and fire breaks.

(C) Removing hazard trees, dead trees, dying trees, or trees at risk of dying, as determined by the responsible official.

(D) Developing, approving, or conducting routine maintenance under a vegetation management, facility inspection, and operation and maintenance plan submitted under section 512(c)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(1)).

(E) Removing trees to address overstocking or crowding in a forest stand, consistent with the appropriate basal area of the forest stand as determined by the responsible official.

(F) Using chemical or re-seeding and planting treatments to address insects and disease and control vegetation competition or invasive species.

(G) Any activities recommended by an applicable firehshed assessment carried out under section 105.

(H) Any activities recommended by an applicable community wildfire protection plan.

(I) Any combination of activities described in this paragraph.

**(3) EMERGENCY FIRESHED MANAGEMENT.—**

(A) IN GENERAL.—For any firehshed management area designated under section 101, the following shall have the force and effect of law:

(i) Section 220.4(b) of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), with respect to lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(ii) Section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), with respect to lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.

(iii) Section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(iv) Section 800.12 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(B) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING STREAMLINED AUTHORITIES IN FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Firehshed management projects carried out under this section shall be considered authorized projects under the following categorical exclusions:

(I) Section 603(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(a)).

(II) Section 605(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d(a)).

(III) Section 606(b) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e(b)).

(IV) Section 40806(b) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(b)).

(V) Section 4(c)(4) of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (Public Law 106-506; 114 Stat. 2353).

(ii) ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ACTIONS.—Subsection (d) of section 40807 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592c) shall apply to firehshed management projects under this section in the same manner as such subsection applies to authorized emergency actions (as defined in subsection (a) of such section 40807) under such section 40807.

(iii) USE OF EXPEDITED AUTHORITIES.—In carrying out a firehshed management project, the Secretary shall apply a categorical exclusion under clause (i)—

(I) in a manner consistent with the statute establishing such categorical exclusion; and

(II) in any area—

(aa) designated as suitable for timber production within the applicable forest plan; or

(bb) where timber harvest activities are not prohibited.

(iv) FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary concerned shall ensure compliance with the amendments made to the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) by the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (Public Law 118-5).

(v) USE OF OTHER AUTHORITIES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary concerned shall use the authorities provided under this section in combination with other authorities to carry out firehshed management projects, including—

(I) good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) (as amended by this Act);

(II) stewardship contracting projects entered into under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) (as amended by this Act);

(III) self-determination contracts and self-governance compact agreements entered into under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.); and

(IV) agreements entered into under the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a et seq.).

(b) EXPANSION.—

(1) HFRA AMENDMENTS.—The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 is amended—

(A) in section 3 (16 U.S.C. 6502), by inserting at the end the following:

“(3) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘local government’ means a county, municipality, or special district.

“(4) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term ‘special district’ means a political subdivision of a State that—

“(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

“(B) was created by or pursuant to the laws of the State for the purpose of performing a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function; and

“(C) is distinct from any other local government unit within the State.”.

(B) in section 603(c)(1) (16 U.S.C. 6591b(c)(1)), by striking “3000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”;

(C) in section 603(c)(2)(B) (16 U.S.C. 6591b(c)(2)(B)), by striking “Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III” and inserting “Fire Regime I, Fire Regime II, Fire Regime III, Fire Regime IV, or Fire Regime V”;

(D) in section 605(c)(1) (16 U.S.C. 6591d(c)(1)), by striking “3000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”;

(E) in section 606(g) (16 U.S.C. 6591e(g)), by striking “4,500 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”.

(2) INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT AMENDMENT.—Section 40806(d)(1) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(d)(1)), by striking “3,000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”.

(3) LAKE TAHOE RESTORATION ACT AMENDMENTS.—Section 4(c)(4)(C) of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (Public Law 106-506; 114 Stat. 2353) is amended—

(A) by striking “Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit”; and

(B) by inserting “applicable to the area” before the period at the end.

**SEC. 107. SUNSET.**

The authority under this subtitle shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**Subtitle B—Expanding Collaborative Tools to Reduce Wildfire Risk and Improve Forest Health**

**SEC. 111. MODIFICATION OF THE TREATMENT OF CERTAIN REVENUE AND PAYMENTS UNDER GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENTS.**

(a) GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.—Section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(6), by striking “or Indian tribe”;

(2) in subsection (a), by inserting the following:

“(11) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term ‘special district’ means a political subdivision of a State that—

“(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

“(B) was created by or pursuant to the laws of the State for the purpose of per-

forming a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function; and

“(C) is distinct from any other local government unit within the State.”.

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “, Indian Tribe, special district,” after “Governor”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(C)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) by inserting “special district,” after “Indian Tribe,” each place it appears;

(II) in subclause (I)—

(aa) by striking “on”; and

(bb) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(III) in subclause (II)(bb), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

“(III) to construct new permanent roads on Federal lands that are—

“(aa) necessary to implement authorized restoration activities; and

“(bb) approved by the Federal agency through an environmental analysis or categorical exclusion decision;

“(IV) to complete new permanent road construction to replace and decommission an existing permanent road that is adversely impacting forest, rangeland, or watershed health; and

“(V) if there are funds remaining after carrying out subclauses (I) through (IV), to carry out authorized restoration services under other good neighbor agreements and for the administration of a good neighbor authority program by a Governor, Indian tribe, special district, or county.”; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking “2028” and inserting “2030”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by inserting “, Indian Tribe, special district,” after “Governor”; and

(D) by striking paragraph (4).

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 8206(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “, Indian Tribe, special district,” after “Governor”; and

(2) in paragraph (5), by inserting “, Indian Tribe, special district,” after “Governor”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section apply to any project initiated pursuant to a good neighbor agreement (as defined in section 8206(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(a)))—

(1) before the date of enactment of this Act, if the project was initiated after the date of enactment of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-334; 132 Stat. 4490); or

(2) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 112. FIXING STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING.**

Section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting “, including retaining and expanding existing forest products infrastructure” before the period at the end;

(2) in subsection (d)(3)(B), by striking “10 years” and inserting “20 years”; and

(3) in subsection (h), by adding at the end the following:

“(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A long-term agreement or contract entered into with an entity under subsection (b) by the Chief or the Director shall provide that in the case of the cancellation or termination by the Chief or the Director of such long-term agreement or

contract, the Chief or the Director, as applicable, shall provide 10 percent of the agreement or contract amount to such entity as cancellation or termination costs.

“(B) DEFINITION OF LONG-TERM AGREEMENT OR CONTRACT.—In this paragraph, the term ‘long-term agreement or contract’ means an agreement or contract under subsection (b)—  
“(i) with a term of more than 5 years; and  
“(ii) entered into on or after the date of the enactment of this paragraph.”.

**SEC. 113. INTRA-AGENCY STRIKE TEAMS.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary concerned shall establish intra-agency strike teams to assist the Secretary concerned with—

(1) any reviews, including analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), consultations under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), and consultations under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), with the intent to accelerate and streamline interagency consultation processes;

(2) the implementation of any necessary site preparation work in advance of or as part of a firehatched management project;

(3) the implementation of firehatched management projects under such section; and

(4) any combination of purposes under paragraphs (1) through (3).

(b) MEMBERS.—The Secretary concerned may appoint not more than 10 individuals to serve on an intra-agency strike team comprised of—

(1) employees of the Department under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned;

(2) employees of a different Federal agency, with the consent of that agency’s Secretary;

(3) private contractors from any nonprofit organization, State government, Indian Tribe, local government, quasi-governmental agency, academic institution, or private organization; and

(4) volunteers from any nonprofit organization, State government, Indian Tribe, local government, quasi-governmental agency, academic institution, or private organization.

(c) SUNSET.—The authority provided under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 114. LOCALLY-LED RESTORATION.**

(a) THRESHOLD ADJUSTMENT.—Section 14(d) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(d)) is amended by—

(1) striking “\$10,000” and inserting “\$55,000”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “Beginning on January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the amount in the first sentence of this subsection shall be adjusted by the Secretary for changes in the Consumer Price Index of All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.”.

(b) FIREHATCHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—Beginning on the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall solicit bids under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(d)) for firehatched management projects under section 106.

**SEC. 115. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.**

Section 40808 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or” 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) to recover from wildfires; or

“(E) to enhance soil, water, and related natural resources.”;

(2) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and post-wildfire impacts” after “wildfire risk”; and

(B) in subparagraph (F), by inserting “, as identified in the corresponding State forest action plan or similar priority plan (such as a State wildlife or water plan)” before the semicolon;

(3) in subsection (g)(2), by inserting “and at least once every 2 fiscal years thereafter” after “and 2023”; and

(4) in subsection (h)(1), by striking “and 2023” and inserting “through 2030”.

**SEC. 116. COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROGRAM.**

Section 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “species;” and inserting “species or pathogens;”;

(B) in subparagraph (G), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (H), by adding “and” after the semicolon at the end; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(I) address standardized monitoring questions and indicators;”;

(2) in subsection (c)(3)(A)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (ii), by adding “and” at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) include a plan to provide support to collaborative processes established pursuant to subsection (b)(2);”;

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(G) proposals that seek to use innovative implementation mechanisms, including good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a);

“(H) proposals that seek to remove or treat insects or diseases, including the removal of trees killed by, or infested with, bark beetles in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming;

“(I) proposals that seek to facilitate the sale of firewood and Christmas trees on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary or the Secretary of the Interior;

“(J) proposals that seek to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire or increase ecological restoration activities—

“(i) within areas across land ownerships, including State, Tribal, and private land; and

“(ii) within the wildland-urban interface (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511)); and

“(K) proposals that seek to enhance watershed health and drinking water sources.”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) 4 proposals in any 1 region of the National Forest System to be funded during any fiscal year; and”;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B); and

(4) in subsection (f)(6), by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2025 through 2030”.

**SEC. 117. UTILIZING GRAZING FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION.**

The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, in coordination with holders of permits to graze livestock on Federal land, shall develop a strategy to increase opportunities to utilize livestock grazing as a wildfire risk reduction strategy, including—

(1) completion of reviews (as required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)) to allow permitted grazing on vacant grazing allotments during instances of drought, wildfire, or other natural disasters that disrupt grazing on allotments already permitted;

(2) use of targeted grazing;

(3) increased use of temporary permits to promote targeted fuels reduction and reduction of invasive annual grasses;

(4) increased use of grazing as a postfire recovery and restoration strategy, where appropriate; and

(5) use of all applicable authorities under the law.

**SEC. 118. WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM.**

Section 303 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6542(g)(4)(B)) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (7) as paragraphs (2) through (8), respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

“(1) ADJACENT LAND.—The term ‘adjacent land’ means non-Federal land, including State, local, and private land, that is adjacent to, and within the same watershed as, National Forest System land on which a watershed protection and restoration project is carried out under this section.”; and

(C) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (G) and (H) as subparagraphs (K) and (L), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

“(G) an acequia association;

“(H) a local, regional, or other public entity that manages stormwater or wastewater resources or other related water infrastructure;

“(I) a land-grant merced;

“(J) a local, regional, or other private entity that has water delivery authority;”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “The Secretary shall” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A watershed protection and restoration project under the Program shall be designed to—

“(A) protect and restore watershed health, water supply and quality, a municipal or agricultural water supply system, and water-related infrastructure;

“(B) protect and restore forest health from insect infestation and disease or wildfire; or

“(C) advance any combination of the purposes described in subparagraphs (A) and (B).”

“(3) PRIORITIES.—In selecting watershed protection and restoration projects under the Program, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that would—

“(A) provide risk management benefits associated with: drought; wildfire; post-wildfire conditions; extreme weather; flooding; resilience to climate change; and watershed and fire resilience, including minimizing risks to watershed health, water supply and

quality, and water-related infrastructure, including municipal and agricultural water supply systems;

“(B) support aquatic restoration and conservation efforts that complement existing or planned forest restoration or wildfire risk reduction efforts; or

“(C) provide quantifiable benefits to water supply or quality and include the use of nature-based solutions, such as restoring wetland and riparian ecosystems.

“(4) CONDITIONS FOR PROJECTS ON ADJACENT LAND.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—No project or activity may be carried out under this section on adjacent land unless the owner of the adjacent land agrees in writing that the owner is a willing and engaged partner in carrying out that project or activity.

“(B) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any change in—

“(i) the ownership of adjacent land on which a project or activity is carried out under this section; or

“(ii) the management of adjacent land on which a project or activity is carried out under this section, except during the carrying out of that project or activity.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “with end water users” and inserting “with end water users to protect and restore the condition of National Forest watersheds and adjacent land that provide water—

“(A) to the end water users subject to the agreement; or

“(B) for the benefit of another end water user.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) a good neighbor agreement entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a); or”;

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) COOPERATION WITH NON-FEDERAL PARTNERS.—The Secretary shall cooperate with non-Federal partners in carrying out assessments, planning, project design, and project implementation under this section.”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) REQUIREMENT.—A water source management plan shall be—

“(A) designed to protect and restore ecological integrity (as defined in section 219.19 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this subparagraph));

“(B) based on the best available scientific information; and

“(C) conducted in a manner consistent with the forest plan applicable to the National Forest System land on which the watershed protection and restoration project is carried out.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) REDUCING REDUNDANCY.—An existing watershed plan, such as a watershed protection and restoration action plan developed under section 304(a)(3), or other applicable watershed planning documents as approved by the Secretary may be used as the basis for a water source management plan under this subsection.”; and

(5) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “primary purpose of” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “primary purpose of advancing any of the purposes described in subsection (b)(2).”.

#### SEC. 119. WATERSHED CONDITION FRAMEWORK TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 304(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6543(a)) is amended in paragraphs (3) and (5) by striking “protection and”.

#### Subtitle C—Litigation Reform

#### SEC. 121. COMMONSENSE LITIGATION REFORM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A court shall not enjoin a covered agency action if the court determines that the plaintiff is unable to demonstrate that the claim of the plaintiff is likely to succeed on the merits.

(b) BALANCING SHORT- AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF COVERED AGENCY ACTION IN CONSIDERING INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.—As part of its weighing the equities while considering any request for an injunction that applies to a covered agency action, the court reviewing such action shall balance the impact to the ecosystem likely affected by such action of—

(1) the short- and long-term effects of undertaking such action; against

(2) the short- and long-term effects of not undertaking such action.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (except this section), in the case of a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action—

(A) a court shall not hold unlawful, set aside, or otherwise limit, delay, stay, vacate, or enjoin such agency action unless the court determines that—

(i) such action poses or will pose a risk of a proximate and substantial environmental harm; and

(ii) there is no other equitable remedy available as a matter of law; and

(B) if a court determines that subparagraph (A) does not apply to the covered agency action the only remedy the court may order with regard to such agency action is to remand the matter to the agency with instructions to, during the 180-day period beginning on the date of the order, take such additional actions as may be necessary to redress any legal wrong suffered by, or adverse effect on, the plaintiff, except such additional actions may not include the preparation of a new agency document unless the court finds the agency was required and failed to prepare such agency document.

(2) EFFECT OF REMAND.—In the case of a covered agency action to which paragraph (1)(B) applies, the agency may—

(A) continue to carry out such agency action to the extent the action does not impact the additional actions required pursuant to such paragraph; and

(B) if the agency action relates to an agency document, use any format to correct such document (including a supplemental environmental document, memorandum, or errata sheet).

(d) LIMITATIONS ON CLAIMS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law (except this section), a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action shall be barred unless—

(1) with respect to an agency document or the application of a categorical exclusion noticed in the Federal Register, such claim is filed not later than 120 days after the date of publication of a notice in the Federal Register of agency intent to carry out the firehatched management project relating to such agency document or application, unless a shorter period is specified in such Federal law;

(2) in the case of an agency document or the application of a categorical exclusion not described in paragraph (1), such claim is filed not later than 120 days after the date that is the earlier of—

(A) the date on which such agency document or application is published; and

(B) the date on which such agency document or application is noticed; and

(3) in the case of a covered agency action for which there was a public comment period, such claim—

(A) is filed by a party that—

(i) participated in the administrative proceedings regarding the firehatched management project relating to such action; and

(ii) submitted a comment during such public comment period and such comment was sufficiently detailed to put the applicable agency on notice of the issue upon which the party seeks judicial review; and

(B) is related to such comment.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGENCY DOCUMENT.—The term “agency document” means, with respect to a firehatched management project, a record of decision, environmental document, or programmatic environmental document.

(2) COVERED AGENCY ACTION.—The term “covered agency action” means—

(A) the establishment of a firehatched management project by an agency;

(B) the application of a categorical exclusion to a firehatched management project;

(C) the preparation of any agency document for a firehatched management project; or

(D) any other agency action as part of a firehatched management project.

(3) NEPA TERMS.—The terms “categorical exclusion”, “environmental document”, and “programmatic environmental document” have the meanings given such terms, respectively, in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

#### SEC. 122. CONSULTATION ON FOREST PLANS.

(a) FOREST SERVICE PLANS.—Section 6(d)(2) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(d)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be required to reinstate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), on a land management plan approved, amended, or revised under this section when—

“(A) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

“(B) new information reveals effects of the land management plan that may affect a species listed or critical habitat designated under that Act in a manner or to an extent not previously considered.”.

(b) BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS.—Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be required to reinstate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), on a land use plan approved, amended, or revised under this section when—

“(1) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

“(2) new information reveals effects of the land use plan that may affect a species listed or critical habitat designated under that Act in a manner or to an extent not previously considered.”.



**TITLE II—PROTECTING COMMUNITIES IN THE WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE**

**SEC. 201. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall jointly establish an interagency program to be known as the “Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program” that shall consist of at least one representative from each of the following:

- (1) The Office of Wildland Fire of the Department of the Interior.
- (2) The National Park Service.
- (3) The Bureau of Land Management.
- (4) The United States Fish and Wildlife Service.
- (5) The Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- (6) The Forest Service.
- (7) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- (8) The United States Fire Administration.
- (9) The National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- (10) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the program established under subsection (a) is to support interagency coordination in reducing the risk of, and the damages resulting from, wildfires in communities (including tribal communities) in the wildland-urban interface through—

- (1) advancing research and science in wildfire resilience and land management, including support for non-Federal research partnerships;
- (2) supporting adoption by Indian Tribes and local governmental entities of fire-resistant building methods, codes, and standards;
- (3) supporting efforts by Indian Tribes or local governmental entities to address the effects of wildland fire on such communities, including property damages, air quality, and water quality;
- (4) encouraging public-private partnerships to conduct hazardous fuels management activities in the wildland-urban interface;
- (5) providing technical and financial assistance targeted towards communities, including tribal communities, through streamlined and unified technical assistance and grant management mechanisms, including the portal and grant application established under subsection (c), to—

(A) encourage critical risk reduction measures on private property with high wildfire risk exposure in such communities; and

(B) mitigate costs for and improve capacity among such communities.

(c) **PORTAL AND UNIFORM GRANT APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—As part of the program established under subsection (a), the Secretaries and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall establish a portal through which a person may submit a single, uniform application for any of the following:

(A) A community wildfire defense grant under section 40803(f) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592(f)).

(B) An emergency management performance grant under section 662 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 761).

(C) A grant under section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229).

(D) A grant under section 34 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229a).

(E) Financial or technical assistance or a grant under sections 203, 205, 404, 406, or 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133, 5135, 5170c, 5172, 5187).

(2) **SIMPLIFICATION OF APPLICATION.**—In establishing the portal and application under paragraph (1), the Secretaries and the Administrator shall seek to reduce the complexity and length of the application process for the grants described in paragraph (1).

(3) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretaries shall provide technical assistance to communities or persons seeking to apply for financial assistance through the portal using the application established under paragraph (1).

(d) **SUNSET.**—The program established under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 202. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE RESEARCH PROGRAM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretaries shall, acting jointly, expand the Joint Fire Science Program to include a performance-driven research and development program known as the “Community Wildfire Defense Research Program” for the purpose of testing and advancing innovative designs to create or improve the wildfire-resistance of structures and communities.

(b) **PROGRAM PRIORITIES.**—In carrying out the program established under subsection (a), the Secretaries shall evaluate opportunities to create wildfire-resistant structures and communities through—

- (1) different affordable building materials, including mass timber;
- (2) home hardening, including policies to incentivize and incorporate defensible space;
- (3) subdivision design and other land use planning and design;
- (4) landscape architecture; and
- (5) other wildfire-resistant designs, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) **COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE INNOVATION PRIZE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the program established under subsection (a), the Secretaries shall carry out a competition through which a person may submit to the Secretaries innovative designs for the creation or improvement of an ignition-resistant structure or fire-adapted communities.

(2) **PRIZE.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose, the Secretaries may award a prize under the competition described in paragraph (1), based on criteria established by the Secretaries and in accordance with paragraph (3).

(3) **SCALE.**—In awarding a prize under paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall prioritize for an award designs with the most potential to scale to existing infrastructure.

(d) **COLLABORATION AND NONDUPLICATION.**—In carrying out the program established under subsection (a), the Secretaries shall ensure collaboration and nonduplication of activities with the Building Technologies Office of the Department of Energy.

(e) **SUNSET.**—The program established under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 203. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, FACILITY INSPECTION, AND OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE RELATING TO ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITY RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**

(a) **HAZARD TREES WITHIN 150 FEET OF ELECTRIC POWER LINE.**—Section 512(a)(1)(B)(ii) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(a)(1)(B)(ii)) is amended by striking “10” and inserting “150”.

(b) **CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.**—Section 512(c)(3)(E) of such Act (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(3)(E)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) consulting with a private landowner with respect to any hazard trees identified for removal from land owned by the private landowner.”.

(c) **REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS.**—Section 512(c)(4)(A)(iv) of such Act (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(4)(A)(iv)) is amended to read as follows:

“(iv) ensures that—

“(I) a plan submitted without a modification under clause (iii) shall be automatically approved 120 days after being submitted; and

“(II) with respect to a plan submitted with a modification under clause (iii), if not approved within 120 days after being submitted, the Secretary concerned shall develop and submit a letter to the owner and operator describing—

“(aa) a detailed timeline (to conclude within 165 days after the submission of the plan) for completing review of the plan;

“(bb) any identified deficiencies with the plan and specific opportunities for the owner and operator to address such deficiencies; and

“(cc) any other relevant information, as determined by the Secretary concerned.”.

**SEC. 204. CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR ELECTRIC UTILITY LINES RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**

(a) **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ESTABLISHED.**—Forest management activities described in subsection (b) are a category of activities hereby designated as being categorically excluded from the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement under section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332).

(b) **FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES DESIGNATED FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.**—The forest management activities designated under subsection (a) for a categorical exclusion are—

(1) the development and approval of a vegetation management, facility inspection, and operation and maintenance plan submitted under section 512(c)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(1)) by the Secretary concerned; and

(2) the implementation of routine activities conducted under the plan referred to in paragraph (1).

(c) **AVAILABILITY OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.**—On and after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned may use the categorical exclusion established under subsection (a) in accordance with this section.

(d) **EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN AREAS FROM CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.**—The categorical exclusion established under subsection (a) shall not apply to any forest management activity conducted—

(1) in a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System; or

(2) on National Forest System lands on which the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited by an Act of Congress.

(e) **PERMANENT ROADS.**—

(1) **PROHIBITION ON ESTABLISHMENT.**—A forest management activity designated under subsection (b) shall not include the establishment of a permanent road.

(2) **EXISTING ROADS.**—The Secretary concerned may carry out necessary maintenance and repair on an existing permanent road for the purposes of conducting a forest management activity designated under subsection (b).

(3) **TEMPORARY ROADS.**—The Secretary concerned shall decommission any temporary road constructed for carrying out a forest management activity designated under subsection (b) not later than the date that is 3 years after the date on which the forest management activity is completed.

(f) APPLICABLE LAWS.—Clauses (iii) and (iv) of section 106(a)(3) shall apply to forest management activities designated under subsection (b).

**SEC. 205. SEEDS OF SUCCESS.**

(a) STRATEGY ESTABLISHED.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly develop and implement a strategy, to be known as the “Seeds of Success strategy”, to enhance the domestic supply chain of seeds.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include a plan for each of the following:

(1) Facilitating sustained interagency coordination in, and a comprehensive approach to, native plant materials development and restoration.

(2) Promoting the re-seeding of native or fire-resistant vegetation post-wildfire, particularly in the wildland-urban interface.

(3) Creating and consolidating information on native or fire-resistant vegetation and sharing such information with State governments, Indian Tribes, and local governments.

(4) Building regional programs and partnerships to promote the development of materials made from plants native to the United States and restore such plants to their respective, native habitats within the United States, giving priority to the building of such programs and partnerships in regions of the Bureau of Land Management where such partnerships and programs do not already exist as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(5) Expanding seed storage and seed-cleaning infrastructure.

(6) Expanding the Warehouse System of the Bureau of Land Management, particularly the cold storage capacity of the Warehouse System.

(7) Shortening the timeline for the approval of permits to collect seeds on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

(c) REPORT.—The Secretaries and the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the relevant Congressional Committees the strategy developed under paragraph (1).

**SEC. 206. PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PRIORITY REFORESTATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the heads of covered Federal agencies, shall establish a program to provide support for priority projects identified under subsection (c)(2), in accordance with this section.

(b) SUPPORT.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary may provide support through—

(1) cooperative agreements entered into in accordance with processes established by the Secretary; and

(2) contracts, including contracts established pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.).

(c) ANNUAL IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROJECTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the heads of covered Federal agencies, shall—

(1) identify lands of the United States administered by, or under the jurisdiction of, the Secretary of the Interior that require reforestation and restoration due to unplanned disturbances and that are unlikely to experience natural regeneration without assistance; and

(2) establish a list of priority projects for reforestation and restoration for the upcoming

year, which may include activities to ensure adequate and appropriate seed and seedling availability to further the objectives of other priority projects.

(d) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a) and the requirements under subsection (c), the Secretary shall consult or collaborate with, as appropriate, and inform the following:

(1) State and local governments.

(2) Indian Tribes.

(3) Covered institutions of higher education.

(4) Federal agencies that administer lands of the United States that adjoin or are proximal to lands that are the subject of priority projects and potential priority projects.

(5) Other stakeholders, as determined by the Secretary.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the relevant Congressional Committees a report that includes the following:

(1) An accounting of all lands identified under subsection (c)(1) for the period covered by the report.

(2) A list of priority projects identified under subsection (c)(2) for the period covered by the report and, with respect to each such priority project, any support issued under the program under subsection (a) and any progress made towards reforestation and restoration.

(3) An accounting of each contract and cooperative agreement established under the program under subsection (a).

(4) A description of the actions taken in accordance with subsection (d).

(5) Assessments with respect to—

(A) gaps in—

(i) the implementation of the program under subsection (a); and

(ii) the progress made under the program with respect to priority projects; and

(B) opportunities to procure funding necessary to address any such gaps.

(f) NONDUPLICATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall collaborate with the Secretary and the Secretary of Defense to ensure the non duplication of activities carried out under section 205.

(g) SUNSET.—The authority provided under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “covered Federal agency” means the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, or the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(2) COVERED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “covered institution of higher education” has the meaning given the term “eligible institution” in section 301(e)(3).

(3) NATURAL REGENERATION; REFORESTATION.—The terms “natural regeneration” and “reforestation” have the meanings given such terms in section 3(e)(4)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601(3)(4)(A)).

(4) RESTORATION.—The term “restoration” means activities that facilitate the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed, including the reestablishment of appropriate plant species composition and community structure.

(5) UNPLANNED ECOSYSTEM DISTURBANCE.—The term “unplanned ecosystem disturbance” means any unplanned disturbance that disrupts the structure or composition of an ecosystem, including a wildfire, an infestation of insects or disease, and a weather event.

**SEC. 207. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPAYMENT.**

(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.

**TITLE III—TRANSPARENCY, TECHNOLOGY, AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Subtitle A—Transparency and Technology**

**SEC. 301. BIOCHAR INNOVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSERVATION, HEALTH, AND ADVANCEMENTS IN RESEARCH.**

(a) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the covered Secretaries shall establish a program to enter into partnerships with eligible entities to carry out demonstration projects to support the development and commercialization of biochar in accordance with this subsection.

(B) LOCATION OF DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—In carrying out the program established under subparagraph (A), the covered Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, enter into partnerships with eligible entities such that not fewer than one demonstration project is carried out in each region of the Forest Service and each region of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to enter into a partnership to carry out a biochar demonstration project under paragraph (1)(A), an eligible entity shall submit to the covered Secretaries a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the covered Secretaries may require.

(3) PRIORITY.—In selecting proposals under paragraph (2), the covered Secretaries shall give priority to entering into partnerships with eligible entities that submit proposals to carry out biochar demonstration projects that—

(A) have the most carbon sequestration potential;

(B) have the most potential to create new jobs and contribute to local economies, particularly in rural areas;

(C) have the most potential to demonstrate—

(i) new and innovative uses of biochar;

(ii) market viability for cost effective biochar-based products;

(iii) the ecosystem services created or supported by the use of biochar;

(iv) the restorative benefits of biochar with respect to forest health and resiliency, including forest soils and watersheds; or

(v) any combination of purposes specified in clauses (i) through (iv);

(D) are located in areas that have a high need for biochar production, as determined by the covered Secretaries, due to—

(i) nearby lands identified as having high or very high or extreme risk of wildfire;

(ii) availability of sufficient quantities of feedstocks; or

(iii) a high level of demand for biochar or other commercial byproducts of biochar; or

(E) satisfy any combination of purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (1)(A), the covered Secretaries may enter into partnerships and provide funding to such partnerships to carry out demonstration projects to—

(A) acquire and test various feedstocks and their efficacy;

(B) develop and optimize commercially and technologically viable biochar production units, including mobile and permanent units;

(C) demonstrate—

(i) the production of biochar from forest residue; and

(ii) the use of biochar to restore forest health and resiliency;

(D) build, expand, or establish biochar facilities;

(E) conduct research on new and innovative uses of biochar;

(F) demonstrate cost-effective market opportunities for biochar and biochar-based products;

(G) carry out any other activities the covered Secretaries determine appropriate; or

(H) any combination of the purposes specified in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

(5) FEEDSTOCK REQUIREMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, an eligible entity that carries out a biochar demonstration project under this subsection shall, with respect to the feedstock used under such project, derive at least 50 percent of such feedstock from forest thinning and management activities, including mill residues, conducted on National Forest System lands or public lands.

(6) REVIEW OF BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The covered Secretaries shall conduct regionally-specific research, including economic analyses and life-cycle assessments, on any biochar produced from a demonstration project carried out under the program established in paragraph (1)(A), including—

(i) the effects of such biochar on—

(I) forest health and resiliency;

(II) carbon capture and sequestration, including increasing soil carbon in the short-term and long-term;

(III) productivity, reduced input costs, and water retention in agricultural practices;

(IV) the health of soil and grasslands used for grazing activities, including grazing activities on National Forest System land and public land;

(V) environmental remediation activities, including abandoned mine land remediation; and

(VI) other ecosystem services created or supported by the use of biochar;

(ii) the effectiveness of biochar as a co-product of biofuels or in biochemicals; and

(iii) the effectiveness of other potential uses of biochar to determine if any such use is technologically and commercially viable.

(B) COORDINATION.—The covered Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, provide data, analyses, and other relevant information collected under subparagraph (A) with recipients of a grant under subsection (b).

(7) LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR ESTABLISHING BIOCHAR FACILITIES.—If the covered Secretaries provide to an eligible entity that enters into a partnership with the covered Secretaries under paragraph (1)(A) funding for establishing a biochar facility, such funding may not exceed 35 percent of the total capital cost of establishing such biochar facility.

(b) BIOCHAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall establish or expand an existing applied biochar research and development grant program to make competitive grants to eligible institutions to carry out the activities described in paragraph (3).

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible institution shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the grant funds to conduct applied research on—

(A) the effect of biochar on forest health and resiliency, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(B) the effect of biochar on soil health and water retention, accounting for variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(C) the long-term carbon sequestration potential of biochar;

(D) the best management practices with respect to biochar and biochar-based products that maximize—

(i) carbon sequestration benefits; and

(ii) the commercial viability and application of such products in forestry, agriculture, environmental remediation, water quality improvement, and any other similar uses, as determined by the Secretary;

(E) the regional uses of biochar to increase productivity and profitability, including—

(i) uses in agriculture and environmental remediation; and

(ii) use as a co-product in fuel production;

(F) new and innovative uses for biochar by-products; and

(G) opportunities to expand markets for biochar and create related jobs, particularly in rural areas.

(c) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the covered Secretaries shall submit to Congress a report that—

(A) includes policy and program recommendations to improve the widespread use of biochar;

(B) identifies any area of research needed to advance biochar commercialization; and

(C) identifies barriers to further biochar commercialization, including permitting and siting considerations.

(2) MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET.—Beginning with the second fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter until the date described in subsection (d), the covered Secretaries shall include in the materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's budget pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States

Code, a report describing, for the fiscal year covered by the report, the status of each demonstration project carried out under subsection (a) and each research and development grant carried out under subsection (b).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BIOCHAR.—The term “biochar” means carbonized biomass produced by converting feedstock through reductive thermal processing for non-fuel uses.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a State, local, special district, or Tribal government;

(B) an eligible institution;

(C) a private, non-private, or cooperative entity or organization;

(D) a National Laboratory (as such term is defined in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)); or

(E) a partnership or consortium of two or more entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligible institution” means land-grant colleges and universities, including institutions eligible for funding under the—

(A) Act of July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. 503, chapter 130; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.);

(B) Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 417, chapter 841; 7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), including Tuskegee University;

(C) Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the “McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962”); or

(D) Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382).

(4) FEEDSTOCK.—The term “feedstock” means excess biomass in the form of plant matter or materials that serves as the raw material for the production of biochar.

(5) COVERED SECRETARIES.—The term “covered Secretaries” means—

(A) the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service;

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(C) the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Director of the Office of Science.

### SEC. 302. ACCURATE HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION REPORTS.

(a) INCLUSION OF HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION REPORT IN MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning with the first fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary concerned shall include in the materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's budget pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, a report on the number of acres of Federal land on which the Secretary concerned carried out hazardous fuels reduction activities during the preceding fiscal year.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of the report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall—

(A) in determining the number of acres of Federal land on which the Secretary concerned carried out hazardous fuels reduction activities during the period covered by the report—

(i) record acres of Federal land on which hazardous fuels reduction activities were completed during such period; and

(ii) record each acre described in clause (i) once in the report, regardless of whether multiple hazardous fuels reduction activities were carried out on such acre during such period; and

(B) with respect to the acres of Federal land recorded in the report, include information on—

(i) which such acres are located in the wildland-urban interface;

(ii) the level of wildfire risk (high, moderate, or low) on the first and last day of the period covered by the report;

(iii) the types of hazardous fuels activities completed for such acres, delineating between whether such activities were conducted—

(I) in a wildfire managed for resource benefits; or

(II) through a planned project;

(iv) the cost per acre of hazardous fuels activities carried out during the period covered by the report;

(v) the region or system unit in which the acres are located; and

(vi) the effectiveness of the hazardous fuels reduction activities on reducing the risk of wildfire.

(3) **TRANSPARENCY.**—The Secretary concerned shall make each report submitted under paragraph (1) publicly available on the websites of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, as applicable.

(b) **ACCURATE DATA COLLECTION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned shall implement standardized procedures for tracking data related to hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out by the Secretary concerned.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The standardized procedures required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) regular, standardized data reviews of the accuracy and timely input of data used to track hazardous fuels reduction activities;

(B) verification methods that validate whether such data accurately correlates to the hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out by the Secretary concerned;

(C) an analysis of the short- and long-term effectiveness of the hazardous fuels reduction activities on reducing the risk of wildfire; and

(D) for hazardous fuels reduction activities that occur partially within the wildland-urban interface, methods to distinguish which acres are located within the wildland-urban interface and which acres are located outside the wildland-urban interface.

(3) **REPORT.**—Not later than 2 weeks after implementing the standardized procedures required under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress a report that describes—

(A) such standardized procedures; and

(B) program and policy recommendations to Congress to address any limitations in tracking data related to hazardous fuels reduction activities under this subsection.

(c) **GAO STUDY.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study on the implementation of this section, including any limitations with respect to—

(A) reporting hazardous fuels reduction activities under subsection (a); or

(B) tracking data related to hazardous fuels reduction activities under subsection (b); and

(2) submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study under paragraph (1).

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION ACTIVITY.**—The term “hazardous fuels reduction activity”—

(A) means any vegetation management activity to reduce the risk of wildfire, includ-

ing mechanical treatments, grazing, and prescribed burning; and

(B) does not include the awarding of contracts to conduct hazardous fuels reduction activities.

(2) **FEDERAL LANDS.**—The term “Federal lands” means lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary.

(e) **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.

**SEC. 303. PUBLIC-PRIVATE WILDFIRE TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT AND DEMONSTRATION PARTNERSHIP.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COVERED AGENCY.**—The term “covered agency” means—

(A) each Federal land management agency (as such term is defined in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801));

(B) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(C) the United States Fire Administration;

(D) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(E) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(F) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(G) the Department of Defense;

(H) a State, Tribal, county, or municipal fire department or district operating through the United States Fire Administration or pursuant to an agreement with a Federal agency; and

(I) any other Federal agency involved in wildfire response.

(2) **COVERED ENTITY.**—The term “covered entity” means—

(A) a private entity;

(B) a nonprofit organization; or

(C) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in coordination with the heads of the covered agencies, shall establish a deployment and demonstration pilot program (in this section referred to as “Pilot Program”) for new and innovative wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and mitigation technologies.

(c) **FUNCTIONS.**—In carrying out the Pilot Program, the Secretaries shall—

(1) incorporate the Pilot Program into the National Wildfire Coordinating Group;

(2) in consultation with the heads of covered agencies, identify and advance the demonstration and deployment of key technology priority areas with respect to wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and mitigation technologies, including—

(A) hazardous fuels reduction treatments or activities;

(B) dispatch communications;

(C) remote sensing, detection, and tracking;

(D) safety equipment;

(E) common operating pictures or operational dashboards; and

(F) interoperable commercial data; and

(3) connect each covered entity selected to participate in the Pilot Program with the appropriate covered agency to coordinate real-time and on-the-ground testing of technology during wildland fire mitigation activities and training.

(d) **APPLICATIONS.**—To be eligible to be selected to participate in the Pilot Program, a covered entity shall submit to the Secretaries an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretaries may require, including a pro-

posal to demonstrate technologies specific to the key technology priority areas identified pursuant to subsection (c)(2).

(e) **PRIORITIZATION OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.**—In selecting covered entities to participate in the Pilot Program, the Secretaries shall give priority to covered entities—

(1) that have participated in the Fire Weather Testbed of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; or

(2) developing and applying emerging technologies for wildfire mitigation, including artificial intelligence, quantum sensing, computing and quantum-hybrid applications, thermal mid-wave infrared equipped low earth orbit satellites, augmented reality, 5G private networks, and device-to-device communications supporting nomadic mesh networks and detection.

(f) **OUTREACH.**—The Secretaries, in coordination with the heads of covered agencies, shall make public the key technology priority areas identified pursuant to subsection (c)(2) and invite covered entities to apply under subsection (d) to deploy and demonstrate their technologies to address such priority areas.

(g) **REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the duration of the Pilot Program, the Secretaries shall submit to the relevant Congressional Committees, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes, with respect to the Pilot Program, the following:

(1) A list of participating covered entities.

(2) A brief description of the technologies deployed and demonstrated by each such covered entity.

(3) An estimate of the cost of acquiring each such technology and applying the technology at scale.

(4) Outreach efforts by Federal agencies to covered entities developing wildfire technologies.

(5) Assessments of, and recommendations relating to, new technologies with potential adoption and application at-scale in Federal land management agencies’ wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and mitigation efforts.

(6) A description of the relationship and coordination between the Pilot Program and the activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including the Fire Weather Testbed.

(h) **SUNSET.**—The authority to carry out this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 304. GAO STUDY ON FOREST SERVICE POLICIES.**

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study evaluating—

(A) the effectiveness of Forest Service wildland firefighting operations;

(B) transparency and accountability measures in the Forest Service’s budget and accounting process; and

(C) the suitability and feasibility of establishing a new Federal agency with the responsibility of responding and suppressing wildland fires on Federal lands; and

(2) submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study required under paragraph (1).

**SEC. 305. FOREST SERVICE WESTERN HEADQUARTERS STUDY.**

Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Chief of the Forest Service shall—

(1) conduct a study evaluating—

(A) potential locations for a Western headquarters for the Forest Service, including potential locations in at least 3 different States located west of the Mississippi river; and

(B) the potential benefits of creating a Western headquarters for the Forest Service, including expected—

(i) improvements to customer service;

(ii) improvements to employee recruitment and retention; and

(iii) operational efficiencies and cost savings; and

(2) submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study required under paragraph (1).

**SEC. 306. KEEPING FOREST PLANS CURRENT AND MONITORED.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary—

(1) to the greatest extent practicable and subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose—

(A) ensure forest plans comply with the requirements of section 6(f)(5)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(5)(A)); and

(B) prioritize revising any forest plan not in compliance with such section 6(f)(5)(A);

(2) not be considered to be in violation of section 6(f)(5)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(5)(A)) solely because more than 15 years have passed without revision of the plan for a unit of the National Forest System;

(3) not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to the relevant Congressional Committees the date on which each forest plan required by such section 6 was most recently revised, amended, or modified;

(4) seek to publish a new, complete version of a forest plan that the Secretary has been directed to amend, revise, or modify by a court order within 60 days of such amendment, revision, or modification, subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose; and

(5) maintain a central, publicly accessible website with links to—

(A) the most recently available forest plan adopted, amended, or modified by a court order as a single document; and

(B) the most recently published forest plan monitoring report for each unit of the National Forest System.

(b) GOOD FAITH UPDATES.—If the Secretary is not acting expeditiously and in good faith, within the funding available to revise, amend, or modify a plan for a unit of the National Forest System as required by law or a court order, subsection (a) shall be void with respect to such plan and a court of proper jurisdiction may order completion of the plan on an accelerated basis.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the relevant Congressional Committees summarizing the implementation of this section.

**SEC. 307. CONTAINER AERIAL FIREFIGHTING SYSTEM (CAFFS).**

(a) EVALUATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the National Interagency Aviation Committee and the Interagency Airtanker Board, shall jointly conduct an evaluation of the container aerial firefighting system to assess the use of such system to mitigate and suppress wildfires.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the National Interagency Aviation Committee and the Inter-

agency Airtanker Board, shall jointly submit to the relevant Congressional Committees a report that includes the results of the evaluation required under subsection (a).

**SEC. 308. STUDY ON PINE BEETLE INFESTATION.**

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) carry out a study on the causes and effects of, and solutions for, the infestation of pine beetles in the Northeastern region of the United States; and

(2) submit to the relevant Congressional Committees a report that includes the results of the study required under paragraph (1).

**Subtitle B—White Oak Resilience**

**SEC. 311. WHITE OAK RESTORATION INITIATIVE COALITION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition shall be established—

(1) as a voluntary collaborative group of Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private and non-governmental organizations to carry out the duties described in subsection (b); and

(2) in accordance with the charter titled “White Oak Initiative Coalition Charter” adopted by the White Oak Initiative Board of Directors on March 21, 2023 (or a successor charter).

(b) DUTIES.—In addition to the duties specified in the charter described in subsection (a)(2), the duties of the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition are—

(1) to coordinate Federal, State, Tribal, local, private, and non-governmental restoration of white oak in the United States; and

(2) to make program and policy recommendations, consistent with applicable forest management plans, with respect to—

(A) changes necessary to address Federal and State policies that impede activities to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak;

(B) adopting or modifying Federal and State policies to increase the pace and scale of white oak regeneration and resiliency of white oak;

(C) options to enhance communication, coordination, and collaboration between forest land owners, particularly for cross-boundary projects, to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak;

(D) research gaps that should be addressed to improve the best available science on white oak;

(E) outreach to forest landowners with white oak or white oak regeneration potential; and

(F) options and policies necessary to improve the quality and quantity of white oak in tree nurseries.

(c) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND STAFF SUPPORT.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary shall make such personnel available to the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition for administrative support, technical services, and development and dissemination of educational materials as the Secretaries determine necessary to carry out this section.

(d) PRIVATE FUNDING OF WHITE OAK RESTORATION PROJECTS.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose, the Secretary may make funds available to the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition to carry out this section from the account established pursuant to section 1241(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841(f)).

**SEC. 312. FOREST SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service,

shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects in national forests to restore white oak in such forests through white oak restoration and natural regeneration practices that are consistent with applicable forest management plans.

(b) NATIONAL FORESTS RESERVED OR WITHDRAWN FROM THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.—At least 3 pilot projects required under subsection (a) shall be carried out on national forests reserved or withdrawn from the public domain.

(c) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects required under subsection (a).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 313. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WHITE OAK REVIEW AND RESTORATION.**

(a) ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall carry out an assessment of land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, including fish and wildlife refuges and abandoned mine land, to evaluate—

(A) whether white oak is present on such land; and

(B) the potential to restore white oak forests on such land.

(2) USE OF INFORMATION.—In carrying out the assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary may use information from sources other than the Department of the Interior, including from the White Oak Initiative and the Forest Service.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available on the website of the Department of the Interior, a report regarding the results of the assessment carried out under this subsection.

(b) PILOT PROJECTS.—After the date on which the report required under subsection (a)(3) is submitted, the Secretary shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects in different areas of land described in subsection (a)(1) to restore and naturally regenerate white oak.

(c) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of the Interior may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects required under subsection (b).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 314. WHITE OAK REGENERATION AND UPLAND OAK HABITAT.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a non-regulatory program to be known as the “White Oak and Upland Oak Habitat Regeneration Program” (in this section referred to as the “Program”).

(b) DUTIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

(1) draw upon the best available science and management plans for species of white oak to identify, prioritize, and implement restoration and conservation activities that will improve the growth of white oak within the United States;

(2) collaborate and coordinate with the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition to prioritize white oak restoration initiatives;

(3) adopt a white oak restoration strategy that—

(A) supports the implementation of a shared set of science-based restoration and conservation activities developed in accordance with paragraph (1);

(B) targets cost effective projects with measurable results; and

(C) maximizes restoration outcomes with no net gain of Federal full-time equivalent employees; and

(4) establish the voluntary grant and technical assistance programs in accordance with subsection (e).

(c) **COORDINATION.**—In establishing the Program the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall consult with—

(1) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

(A) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(B) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(2) the Governor of each State in which restoration efforts will be carried out pursuant to the Program.

(d) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of the Program include—

(1) coordinating restoration and conservation activities among Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities and conservation partners to address white oak restoration priorities;

(2) improving and regenerating white oak and upland oak forests and the wildlife habitat such forests provide;

(3) carrying out coordinated restoration and conservation activities that lead to the increased growth of species of white oak in native white oak regions on Federal, State, Tribal, and private land;

(4) facilitating strategic planning to maximize the resilience of white oak systems and habitats under changing climate conditions;

(5) engaging the public through outreach, education, and citizen involvement to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and conservation activities for species of white oak; and

(6) increasing scientific capacity to support the planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out such coordinated restoration and conservation activities.

(e) **GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—To the extent that funds are available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall establish a voluntary grant and technical assistance program (in this section referred to as the “grant program”) to achieve the purposes of the Program described in subsection (d).

(2) **ADMINISTRATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (in this subsection referred to as the “Foundation”) to manage and administer the grant program.

(B) **FUNDING.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for such purpose, after the Secretary enters into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation under subparagraph (A), the Foundation shall for each fiscal year, receive amounts to carry out this subsection in an advance payment of the entire amount on October 1, or as soon as practicable thereafter, of that fiscal year.

(3) **APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.**—Amounts received by the Foundation to carry out the grant program shall be subject to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.), excluding section 10(a) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3709(a)).

(f) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 315. TREE NURSERY SHORTAGES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) develop and implement a national strategy to increase the capacity of Federal, State, Tribal, and private tree nurseries to address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings; and

(2) coordinate such strategy with—

(A) the national reforestation strategy of the Forest Service; and

(B) each regional implementation plan for National Forests.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional seedling shortages of bareroot and container tree seedlings;

(B) regional reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill such opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance seedling diversity and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity.

#### SEC. 316. WHITE OAK RESEARCH.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may enter into a memorandum of understanding with an Indian Tribe or institution, including a covered land grant college, to collaboratively conduct research on—

(1) white oak genes with resistance or tolerance to stress;

(2) white oak trees that exhibit vigor for the purpose of increasing survival and growth;

(3) establishing a genetically diverse white oak seeds bank capable of responding to stressors;

(4) providing a sustainable supply of white oak seedlings and genetic resources;

(5) improved methods for aligning seed sources with the future climate at planting sites;

(6) reforestation of white oak through natural and artificial regeneration;

(7) improved methods for retaining and increasing white oak trees in forests;

(8) improved methods for reforesting abandoned mine land sites; and

(9) economic and social aspects of white oak forest management across land ownerships.

(b) **CONSULT.**—In carrying out the research under subsection (a), the Indian Tribe or institution, including a covered land grant college, that enters into the memorandum of understanding under such subsection may consult with such States, nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, and other scientific bodies, as the entity subject to such memorandum determines appropriate.

(c) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **COVERED LAND GRANT COLLEGE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “covered land grant college” means an 1862 Institution, an 1890 Institution, or a 1994 Institution (as such terms are defined, respectively, in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601)).

#### SEC. 317. USDA FORMAL INITIATIVE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and in coordination with the Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish a formal initiative on white oak to—

(1) re-establish white oak forests where appropriate;

(2) improve management of existing white oak forests to foster natural regeneration of white oak;

(3) provide technical assistance to private landowners to re-establish, improve management of, and naturally regenerate white oak;

(4) improve and expand white oak nursery stock; and

(5) adapt and improve white oak seedlings.

(b) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 318. AUTHORITIES.

To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary shall use the authorities provided under this title in combination with other authorities to carry out projects, including—

(1) good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113) (as amended by this Act); and

(2) stewardship contracting projects entered into under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591) (as amended by this Act).

### TITLE IV—ENSURING CASUALTY ASSISTANCE FOR OUR FIREFIGHTERS

#### SEC. 401. WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT CASUALTY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) **DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall develop a Wildland Fire Management Casualty Assistance Program (referred to in this section as the “Program”) to provide assistance to the next-of-kin of—

(1) firefighters who, while in the line of duty, suffer illness or are critically injured or killed; and

(2) wildland fire support personnel critically injured or killed in the line of duty.

(b) **ASPECTS OF PROGRAM.**—The Program shall address the following:

(1) The initial and any subsequent notifications to the next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel who—

(A) are killed in the line of duty; or

(B) require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a line-of-duty injury or illness.

(2) The reimbursement of next-of-kin for expenses associated with travel to visit firefighters or wildland fire support personnel who—

(A) are killed in the line of duty; or

(B) require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a line-of-duty injury or illness.

(3) The qualifications, assignment, training, duties, supervision, and accountability for the performance of casualty assistance responsibilities.

(4) The relief or transfer of casualty assistance officers, including notification to survivors of critical injury or illness in the line of duty and next-of-kin of the reassignment of such officers to other duties.

(5) Centralized, short-term and long-term case management procedures for casualty assistance, including rapid access by survivors of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel and casualty assistance officers to expert case managers and counselors.

(6) The provision, through a computer accessible website and other means and at no cost to survivors and next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel, of personalized, integrated information on the benefits and financial assistance available to such survivors from the Federal Government.

(7) The provision of information to survivors and next-of-kin of firefighters or

wildland fire support personnel on mechanisms for registering complaints about, or requests for, additional assistance related to casualty assistance.

(8) Liaison with the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, and the Social Security Administration to ensure prompt and accurate resolution of issues relating to benefits administered by those agencies for survivors of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel.

(9) Data collection, in consultation with the United States Fire Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, regarding the incidence and quality of casualty assistance provided to survivors of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel.

(c) LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH BENEFITS.—The Program shall not affect existing authorities for Line-of-Duty Death benefits for Federal firefighters and wildland fire support personnel.

(d) NEXT-OF-KIN DEFINED.—In this section, the term “next-of-kin” means a person or persons in the highest category of priority as determined by the following list (categories appear in descending order of priority):

(1) Surviving legal spouse.

(2) Children (whether by current or prior marriage) age 18 years or older in descending order of precedence by age.

(3) Father or mother, unless custody has been vested, by court order, in another (adoptive parent takes precedence over natural parent).

(4) Siblings (whole or half) age 18 years or older in descending order of precedence by age.

(5) Grandfather or grandmother.

(6) Any other relative (order of precedence to be determined in accordance with the civil law of descent of the deceased former member’s State of domicile at time of death).

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in House Report 119-1.

Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by the Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 119-1.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 78, strike lines 15 through 16.

Page 79, strike lines 1 through 2.

Page 79, line 7, strike “through (iv)” and insert “through (iii)”.

Page 79, line 20, strike “through (D)” and insert “through (C)”.

Page 81, line 24, strike the semicolon and insert “; and”.

Page 82, line 3, strike “and”.

Page 82, strike lines 4 through 6.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 53, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend, the chairman of the committee, for his hard work to try to save one of our country’s greatest assets that we see burning to the ground on an annual basis.

We are always shocked, like we are surprised that it happens. It seems like my good friend, the chairman, continues to work on this issue. I don’t know if my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would be included in this statement, but certainly, some in the State and local governments don’t seem to get that policies produce these outcomes. Now, we have a great chairman who is prioritizing the solutions here and managing the risks so that we do better.

This amendment, which I think the chairman agrees with, strikes the prioritization of carbon sequestration and ecosystem services in the biochar demonstration projects in this bill.

It is by prioritizing projects based on their impact on carbon sequestration and the impact on ecosystems rather than the impact on forest health and forest fire reduction that we risk throwing more money at the problem while failing to improve the situation on the ground.

Mr. Chairman, I think that is what we all want to focus on today. That is our priority. The chairman’s priority is focusing on finding a solution to the problems that we see today occurring in our country.

As the most recent wildfires in California have demonstrated, the continued prioritization of other things at the expense of risk reduction—that is what we are talking about here is risk reduction, not only to property but to lives that are lost—creates deadly disasters that kill Americans and destroy their property over and over again.

The underlying bill makes important changes to improve how our forests are managed to the maximum extent possible. It is not like Mr. WESTERMAN is just some guy here who is trying to do the right thing because he believes it is the right thing. He is the guy in Congress who actually knows how to do this stuff, so it is great that he is the chairman and that he is leading this effort.

This amendment furthers this intent by making sure we are focused on demonstration projects which maximize forest health and resiliency.

Let’s remember, Mr. Chairman, we are \$36 trillion in debt. Every 100 days, another trillion dollars go by. We have to really make sure that the resources we are spending get to fixing the problem. We would like to do other things. We would sure like to do a lot of other things, but there are needs and there are wants. The chairman is focused on the needs, and so am I.

Moreover, this amendment ensures that these projects are not hijacked by those who would use them to implement the U.N.’s natural capital ac-

counting to block the actual productive use of land and undermine one of the fundamental values of America, which is personal property rights.

Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate Chairman WESTERMAN’s support for this commonsense amendment to improve this bill, and I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of Representative PERRY’s amendment, which would remove certain references from section 301 of the bill.

I wholeheartedly support section 301 of the bill, which provides an opportunity to have a new market for this overgrown material that needs to come off of the land and into biochar.

Biochar can be thought of as a soil amendment that improves soil fertility. It allows more water and nutrients to be stored in the soil. It almost seems like the perfect thing to have in these Western forests where we have water issues and overgrown forests. We can actually make a product that is very beneficial to the whole system out there.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman’s support, and I support his amendment.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, we were under the impression that this was essentially a closed rule. Many of our beneficial amendments were rejected out of hand or ruled out of order, but apparently, there is always room for an amendment that will make the bill worse. We have a great example of that right now.

CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration benefits and potential ecosystem benefits of biochar are a couple of the most attractive possibilities for this program. I know Chairman WESTERMAN believes that because we have talked about biochar. He has talked about the possibilities of this. The truth is that the science on biochar is not settled.

We have more work to do by way of studies, so establishing a program to carry out demonstration programs for the development and commercialization of biochar could be a good opportunity to better understand its role in a healthy forest and explore some of these interesting potential benefits.

Now, with this amendment, we have to do it with ideological blinders on because apparently merely mentioning words like CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration and ecosystem benefits are triggering, so we are going to end that part of the study. We are going to put the ideological blinders on. We are going to fire the scientists. We are going to burn the books and rename the Gulf of Mexico.

This is just remarkably wrong-headed. I am so surprised and disappointed. The chairman actually put a good provision into his bill.

Let me make it very clear: Democrats like that part of this bill, and we are about to lose the beneficial aspects of it because of this absurd ideological obsession where you have to deny all climate science and not talk about the environment. It is just deeply disappointing.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, let's not mislead anybody here. We have amendments. This is one, and I think there is another one coming very shortly from the other side of the aisle, which is awesome. We want to have these debates.

This is not ideological. Maybe it is great. Maybe the biochar demonstration needs to happen. The question really is, does the Federal Government need to pay for it? If it is so valuable, then the private sector, private industry, should do this work. Private industry should make this investment because we are out of money.

The American people, this government, is out of money. I don't know how many times we have to tell everybody here.

Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, if the excuse for this amendment is that we don't have the money, then you do an amendment to strike the whole program. You don't simply single out the parts of it that are environmental or that have to do with climate solutions. That is what is happening with this amendment. It is just the same old ideological blinders.

Mr. Chair, again, I am greatly disappointed that the chairman is allowing a flawed bill to become even worse with this wrongheaded ideological amendment. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CARBAJAL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 119-1.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title III add the following:

**SEC. 309. FIRE SAFE ELECTRICAL CORRIDORS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—In any special use permit or easement on National Forest System land provided to an electrical utility, the Secretary may provide permission to cut and remove trees or other vegetation from within the vicinity of distribution lines or transmission lines without requiring a separate timber sale, if that cutting and removal is consistent with—

(1) the applicable land and resource management plan; and

(2) other applicable environmental laws (including regulations).

(b) USE OF PROCEEDS.—A special use permit or easement that includes permission for cutting and removal described in subsection (a) shall include a requirement that, if the applicable electrical utility sells any portion of the material removed under the permit or easement, the electrical utility shall provide to the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, any proceeds received from the sale, less any transportation costs incurred in the sale.

(c) EFFECT.—Nothing in subsection (b) shall require the sale of any material removed under a permit or easement that includes permission for cutting and removal described in subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 53, the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment to H.R. 471 simply allows the U.S. Forest Service to approve the removal of hazardous trees or vegetation near power poles or power lines on Federal land without the need for a timber sale.

Unfortunately, catastrophic wildfires continue to ravage California and the Western United States. We do need some commonsense solutions that balance sustainable forest management practices with reducing wildfire risks. My amendment strives to find this balance.

I firmly believe that if we can take action to prevent wildfires, we should. We know it pays to be prepared. We also know there are solutions that can help mitigate the impacts of wildfires, but apart from this, I also know that we need to act to address the underlying intensity of these extreme weather events fueled by the climate crisis.

Apart from supporting my amendment, I also urge my colleagues to continue to work to find commonsense solutions to act on this crisis impacting so many American families.

My thoughts continue to be with the people who have lost loved ones and their homes in these horrific fires.

I also thank the brave first responders and firefighters who have been battling these fires.

Mr. Chairman, again, I urge passage of my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by Representative CARBAJAL, which would enable the Forest Service to approve the removal of hazardous trees near power lines on Federal land without being required to do a formal timber sale.

This would help address a very serious wildfire threat. Downed hazard trees within utility rights-of-way remain one of the biggest ignition threats and have sparked some of the most significant and deadly fires in the country's history.

For example, the largest single wildfire in California's State history, the Dixie fire, ignited when a hazard tree fell onto electric lines. Similarly, the Camp fire, the deadliest wildfire in California's history, was caused by a faulty electrical transmission line. The Camp fire killed 85 people and destroyed the communities of Paradise and Concow.

In recent years, catastrophic fires in Maui and Texas have also been linked to downed utility lines, and early reports suggest this may have been the cause of the Eaton fire near Pasadena and Altadena, California.

To mitigate these threats, utility companies try to maintain clear rights-of-way by removing hazard trees within their utility corridors. This is done under a special use permit.

However, to dispose of the felled timber, utility companies are required to go through a lengthy timber sale process. This frequently leads to wood waste stacking up in piles, which further increases wildfire risk.

It is an unnecessary burden that is preventing active management in some of the highest risk areas in our national forests. This amendment will allow the Forest Service to permit utility companies to fully remove hazard trees and other vegetation within the vicinity of distribution or transmission lines without going through a separate timber sale.

If utilities eventually sell the material, this amendment requires the proceeds to be returned to the Forest Service. This amendment was a bipartisan effort during the 118th Congress and a similar stand-alone bill was passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

This is a good amendment. It is a commonsense amendment that will empower expedited wildfire mitigation efforts near at-risk communities, and it is a great example of why we need to take action to change bureaucratic policies that have gotten in the way of commonsense forest management.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the amount of time remaining on both sides.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, we still have concerns, obviously, with the underlying bill, but we do support Congressman CARBAJAL's good amendment. I thank him for his leadership in working on this issue.

Vegetation management around utility lines is a very important priority.



That is why the Forest Service and BLM require operating plans and agreements for maintenance and vegetation of these lines through our public land.

This amendment aims to improve the process and make it easier for utility companies to complete that work, especially when hazardous conditions exist. That is a good thing, and we should all support it.

I should mention that it doesn't fix the underlying problem with section 203 of the bill, which includes some language that will have unintended consequences on this issue.

Utility line operators are already responsible and liable for hazard tree mitigation around their lines, but the Forest Service has told us that the current language in this bill could potentially increase liability for utilities by a factor of 15 making it even more challenging for them to get the insurance that they need to operate.

Utility lines often spark fires. We need to make sure they are operated more safely and efficiently, but it is also critical that whatever relief we seek is carefully drafted and thoughtfully drafted.

Mr. Chair, unfortunately, there is still a lot of work to do on the underlying parts of this bill. Hopefully, that work will take place in the Senate.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chairman, I think my amendment provides a glimmer of hope in this bill that certainly could use some improvements. I am happy that my amendment is being considered.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. FISCHBACH) having assumed the chair, Mr. GIMENEZ, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 471) to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 53, he reported the bill, as amended by that resolution, back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The question is on the amendments.

The amendments were agreed to.

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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam 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.

#### BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 5, I call up the bill (H.R. 21) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FULCHER). Pursuant to House Resolution 5, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H. R. 21

*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 "Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act".

##### SEC. 2. FINDINGS; CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds as follows:

(1) If an abortion results in the live birth of an infant, the infant is a legal person for all purposes under the laws of the United States, and entitled to all the protections of such laws.

(2) Any infant born alive after an abortion or within a hospital, clinic, or other facility has the same claim to the protection of the law that would arise for any newborn, or for any person who comes to a hospital, clinic, or other facility for screening and treatment or otherwise becomes a patient within its care.

(b) CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.—In accordance with the above findings, Congress enacts the following pursuant to Congress' power under—

(1) section 5 of the 14th Amendment, including the power to enforce the prohibition on government action denying equal protection of the laws; and

(2) section 8 of article I to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers vested by the Constitution of the United States, including the power to regulate commerce under clause 3 of such section.

##### SEC. 3. BORN-ALIVE INFANTS PROTECTION.

(a) REQUIREMENTS PERTAINING TO BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS.—Chapter 74 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1531 the following:

##### "§ 1532. Requirements pertaining to born-alive abortion survivors

"(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS.—In the case of an abortion

or attempted abortion that results in a child born alive (as defined in section 8 of title 1, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Born-Alive Infants Protection Act')):

"(1) DEGREE OF CARE REQUIRED; IMMEDIATE ADMISSION TO A HOSPITAL.—Any health care practitioner present at the time the child is born alive shall—

"(A) exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious health care practitioner would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age; and

"(B) following the exercise of skill, care, and diligence required under subparagraph (A), ensure that the child born alive is immediately transported and admitted to a hospital.

"(2) MANDATORY REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS.—A health care practitioner or any employee of a hospital, a physician's office, or an abortion clinic who has knowledge of a failure to comply with the requirements of paragraph (1) shall immediately report the failure to an appropriate State or Federal law enforcement agency, or to both.

"(b) PENALTIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Whoever violates subsection (a) shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

"(2) INTENTIONAL KILLING OF CHILD BORN ALIVE.—Whoever intentionally performs or attempts to perform an overt act that kills a child born alive described under subsection (a), shall be punished as under section 1111 of this title for intentionally killing or attempting to kill a human being.

"(c) BAR TO PROSECUTION.—The mother of a child born alive described under subsection (a) may not be prosecuted under this section, for conspiracy to violate this section, or for an offense under section 3 or 4 of this title based on such a violation.

"(d) CIVIL REMEDIES.—

"(1) CIVIL ACTION BY A WOMAN ON WHOM AN ABORTION IS PERFORMED.—If a child is born alive and there is a violation of subsection (a), the woman upon whom the abortion was performed or attempted may, in a civil action against any person who committed the violation, obtain appropriate relief.

"(2) APPROPRIATE RELIEF.—Appropriate relief in a civil action under this subsection includes—

"(A) objectively verifiable money damage for all injuries, psychological and physical, occasioned by the violation of subsection (a);

"(B) statutory damages equal to 3 times the cost of the abortion or attempted abortion; and

"(C) punitive damages.

"(3) ATTORNEY'S FEE FOR PLAINTIFF.—The court shall award a reasonable attorney's fee to a prevailing plaintiff in a civil action under this subsection.

"(4) ATTORNEY'S FEE FOR DEFENDANT.—If a defendant in a civil action under this subsection prevails and the court finds that the plaintiff's suit was frivolous, the court shall award a reasonable attorney's fee in favor of the defendant against the plaintiff.

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section the following definitions apply:

"(1) ABORTION.—The term 'abortion' means the use or prescription of any instrument, medicine, drug, or any other substance or device—

"(A) to intentionally kill the unborn child of a woman known to be pregnant; or

"(B) to intentionally terminate the pregnancy of a woman known to be pregnant, with an intention other than—

"(i) after viability, to produce a live birth and preserve the life and health of the child born alive; or

"(ii) to remove a dead unborn child.

“(2) ATTEMPT.—The term ‘attempt’, with respect to an abortion, means conduct that, under the circumstances as the actor believes them to be, constitutes a substantial step in a course of conduct planned to culminate in performing an abortion.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 74 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item pertaining to section 1531 the following:

“1532. Requirements pertaining to born-alive abortion survivors.”.

(c) CHAPTER HEADING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CHAPTER HEADING IN CHAPTER.—The chapter heading for chapter 74 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “**Partial-Birth Abortions**” and inserting “**Abortions**”.

(2) TABLE OF CHAPTERS FOR PART I.—The item relating to chapter 74 in the table of chapters at the beginning of part I of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “**Partial-Birth Abortions**” and inserting “**Abortions**”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 21.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act protects one of our most vulnerable populations; innocent children.

I am proud that at the beginning of the 119th Congress, we are taking this step toward protecting life and the fundamental rights of our most vulnerable American citizens.

We are all too familiar with the horrors of abortion and the unchecked power of the abortion industry. We know it is simply common sense to provide lifesaving care to those babies who survive an abortion.

In 2013, Jill Stanek testified before the House Committee on the Judiciary about the horrific realities of being a nurse and seeing children being aborted alive and left to die alone in a dirty utility closet.

I can hardly believe that those words are coming out of my mouth standing here on the floor of the House of Representatives, in this, the beacon of hope for people around the world.

She said: I was traumatized and changed forever by my experience of holding a little abortion survivor for 45 minutes until he died, a 21- or 22-week-old baby who had been aborted because he had Down syndrome. That is hard to believe.

One of my guests for the inauguration, one of my dear friends from Austin, Texas, a somewhat well-renowned musician and songwriter, brought his son who has Down syndrome and is such a blessing to this world.

That child, as well as this child that was left to die alone in a dirty utility closet, was and is a fellow human being, a fellow American whose right to life should have been protected by the law. Congress cannot stand by and allow this type of suffering. We have both a moral and a constitutional duty here.

This legislation is simple: The Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act requires that infants born alive under an attempted abortion receive the same protection under the law and degree of care of any newborn, combined with, by the way, the penalties associated with those who would ignore their duty under the law.

Mr. Speaker, it is a commonsense measure. Unfortunately, as evidenced by comments from many of my Democrat colleagues, not everyone believes that a child born alive should be protected.

In 2019, then-Virginia Governor Northam stated: “The infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that is what the mother and the family desired, and then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother,” said the Democrat Governor of Virginia.

This blatant disregard for human life has no place in the medical profession in our country.

Last Congress, unfortunately, only one Democrat voted in favor of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act and another voted “present.”

My Democrat colleagues send a clear message to the American people that these innocent lives are not worthy of protection and those who intentionally let infants die after birth should not be held accountable.

If a baby American, a fellow American, is lying on a table dying and we cannot, as Congress, as the leaders of this country and the leaders of the free world, cannot say that under the language of the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution, under the language of the Declaration of Independence that animates our Constitution, and under the privileges of immunities—the roots of which are found in English common law that create the bedrock of our entire justice system—then we need to make sure that that child is protected even and especially because of its defenseless nature.

Mr. Speaker, that is our duty. That is why I rise in support of this legislation. That is why I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1400

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

Mr. Speaker, while their leader boasts of pardoning hundreds of con-

victed violent felons who attacked and brutalized 140 police officers in this building, the party formerly of Abraham Lincoln in Congress today is working to create a new crime and to perfect three great GOP legislative arts visible this week: Number one, complete legislative redundancy; two, interfering in other families’ private lives to prey on their tragedies and medical catastrophes; and, three, threatening to send American doctors to jail.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the very distinguished Congresswoman from the Third District of Minnesota (Ms. MORRISON) who is a mother of three, an OB/GYN, and a former State legislator serving in her first term. This is her first speech on the House floor.

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise not only as the Congresswoman from Minnesota’s Third District but as an OB/GYN who has had the honor and privilege of caring for patients for more than 20 years.

As I have said many times throughout those years, being an obstetrician is the greatest job in the world. Being present and helping people during one of the most joyful moments of their lives is an incredible privilege. It is also a serious responsibility.

On most days it is the best job in the world, but sometimes it can be absolutely tragic and heartbreaking. Sometimes medical complications can prevent a patient’s dreams of building her family from coming true. The moment when a patient and her family learn about a lethal fetal medical condition that is incompatible with life is devastating. The pain and the grief in that moment is unfathomable. You can never unhear the mother’s cries of despair.

Meeting each patient where they are and making a care plan that meets their needs is essential. Knowing that their baby will not survive, some want to plan a delivery that enables them to meet and hold and care for their baby for the precious little time they have together, the time and the space to say good-bye.

This shameful legislation would insert the government into this tragic situation and deny families the care they want for their baby. Instead of allowing parents to hold their dying baby, this bill would require doctors to forcibly take the dying baby from their parents and, even though there is no chance of survival, place the baby directly on a medical table under bright lights and perform interventions that will not work.

Sometimes it is chest compressions, intubation, when a breathing tube is placed in the baby’s trachea, and IV lines. If those measures were not taken, the doctor could be charged with murder.

This bill is cruel. It singles out patients who are facing the worst days of their lives. This bill does not solve a

problem. Doctors are already both honored and obligated to provide appropriate care for their patients. It is illegal to kill a newborn infant in all 50 States.

This bill is designed to confuse, to frighten, and to misinform people and criminalize medical providers. It would inflict further and unnecessary tragedy and trauma on patients and their families. We should do everything we can to support pregnant women, mothers, families, and their care providers, not attack them.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you as an obstetrician on behalf of patients and providers across the country, who should never be subjected to this cruel and harmful mandate. I implore my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I would note another abortion survivor, Melissa Ohden, testified before the House Judiciary Committee in 2015.

“You wouldn’t know it by looking at me today, but in August of 1977, I survived a failed saline infusion abortion. . . . I know where children like me were left to die at St. Luke’s hospital—a utility closet.”

Mr. Speaker, I now recognize the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH) for 2 minutes.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. Democrats are trying to distort this issue and this bill. They are trying to mislead the public, claiming that this is an attack on abortion rights and privacy and all kinds of things. What it is, is nothing like the situation that my colleague from Minnesota spoke about.

We only need to look at the actual language of this bill: “To prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.” These are the same words the clerk read when we began this debate.

I am absolutely appalled that we have to dictate in law that a newborn baby is a patient and not medical waste. The fact is Democrat lawmakers all over the country are pushing legislation to give abortion providers an out from providing care to babies born after failed abortions.

Babies born after a botched abortion are living human beings with blood in their veins and a beat in their hearts just like us. They deserve the same standard of care that any baby at the same age would receive.

Is providing medical care too much to ask? This bill is not about abortion. It is about medical care for babies. I will repeat this. This bill is not about abortion. It is about medical care for babies.

Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful that Representative ANN WAGNER is leading the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. I am honored to be a co-sponsor. I urge everyone to support this bill and support medical care for babies. I urge a “yes” vote.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK), the minority whip.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have one goal today, and that is a march toward a national abortion ban. They want it so desperately that now through this bill they are treating doctors like criminals, demonizing heartbroken women, and accusing mothers of killing their newborn healthy infants.

I will mention what happened to me. It is a story that can be told by so many women in this country. I learned during a routine sonogram that the doctors could no longer pick up a heartbeat. I was devastated by this news. My doctor said that I would need abortion care to prevent infection.

I asked for more time so I could go home and somehow hope that this could all be reversed. When the time came and I needed to have this procedure to protect my own health and be the mother I wanted to be for my children, I asked one more time to please check that that heartbeat was there before they did this procedure.

These are horrible, painful situations that women, families, and expectant parents find themselves in. When politics are introduced into these moments of grief, they have real consequences for people. When Republicans continue to threaten doctors with prison, what have they achieved? They have gutted reproductive healthcare in this country.

OB/GYNs are fleeing States with abortion bans and leaving the field all together. Today, one-third of all counties in our country have no obstetric care. There are no doctors to help women deliver babies safely. For example, under Georgia’s abortion ban, currently half of the counties don’t have a single obstetrician.

Mr. Speaker, if Republicans truly care about the lives of women and children, they will vote “no” on this bill.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the lead author of this legislation.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROY, my friend from Texas, for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of H.R. 21, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, legislation that I have been blessed and honored to lead since 2019.

Today, thanks to the Herculean efforts of the pro-life movement, the American people have finally regained the power back from the courts to decide how to protect the most vulnerable among us.

However, Congress has a clear role to play when it comes to protecting newborn infants, babies who have been delivered alive and are experiencing their first moments in the world. All children should be welcomed with joy and wonder, no matter the circumstances of their birth. Yet, too many of these

little ones are denied the medical care that they need to survive and thrive simply because they are unwanted.

This commonsense legislation will require healthcare providers to administer the same level of care to babies who survive abortions that they would to any other child born at the same gestational age. That is it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that life is a miracle and children are a blessing. As a proud grandmother of four with a fifth coming any day now—hang in there, Julia—I have watched my own children grow into wonderful, loving parents. I have had the joy of experiencing the world through their eyes, the eyes of my grandchildren.

It breaks my heart to think of the infants who were denied the opportunity to share their light with us and were instead deemed unwanted and left to die. We must remember today that children are not the only victims of born-alive abortions. Mothers, fathers, families, and whole communities all suffer deeply from the loss of a child.

Mr. Speaker, we must act with compassion to protect each little one and give women a strong support system as they navigate the miracles and challenges of motherhood. This bill will save real lives, and it will give survivors a precious chance to build a future.

This is a historic time with a pro-life House, a pro-life Senate, and a pro-life administration. I am so proud that one of our first acts in the House this Congress will be ensuring that every single baby born in the United States receives lifesaving medical care at their most vulnerable moment.

I express my gratitude to the co-leads of this bill, Representative CAMMACK and Majority Leader SCALISE, to the leadership of this Congress, and especially to the multitude of champions for life across the country, for their tireless work in support of the unborn.

Finally, I implore my Democratic colleagues to put aside politics and stand in support of lifesaving care for these innocent newborns as they did when it passed the House in 2015, in 2018, and, yet again, in 2022.

Mr. Speaker, I urge every Member of the House to vote “yes” on H.R. 21, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the 26th District of New York (Mr. KENNEDY), a father of three and the still-bereaved father of Brigid Nicole.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to oppose H.R. 21, an assault on women’s healthcare and fundamental rights. On October 19, 2007, my wife Katie gave birth to our beautiful baby girl, Brigid Nicole Kennedy. My wife and I had lost some pregnancies. We were so excited when we got the news she was expecting. It was a girl, and we named her Brigid. She was kicking and doing all the things a

parent would expect during a pregnancy.

Six weeks before my wife gave birth, we went for an ultrasound and received the worst news imaginable. Brigid was diagnosed with hydrops fetalis, compressing her lungs with fluid, putting her and my wife's life in danger. We were devastated. The only answer was to terminate the pregnancy in order to save the life of my wife whose health was becoming more and more threatened.

It was a choice we did not want to make. It was a choice we had to make. We wanted our baby more than anything. We saw doctors, specialists, and neonatologists. We traveled where we were promised we would receive the best care. If there was something we could do to bring her safely into this world, we did it.

□ 1415

We embraced each other as a family and prayed.

Then, with the guidance of our doctors, knowing that we were losing our child, knowing that she would be born and we would have only a very short period of time with her, we chose palliative care to keep our daughter comfortable and to love her during her time on Earth.

Baby Brigid, who was already loved, would not live the beautiful life we had dreamed for her.

We had to schedule what we knew would be a devastating delivery for the sake of my wife's health. We held her, baptized her, and sent her on to the Lord. She was with us for only 4 minutes. We watched our baby girl become our baby angel, and our lives were transformed forever.

As we faced one of our darkest days as a family, the last thing we needed was legislation that served to stand between the health of my wife, unborn child, and the future of our family.

If this bill had been law, doctors would have been required to whisk Brigid away from us, inhumanely poke and prod our baby girl with tubes, needles, and IVs, causing her needless pain, suffering, and torture.

My wife and I would have been robbed of those precious minutes with our baby Brigid. It would have eviscerated the one moment my wife and I cling to as baby Brigid's parents.

It would have only added to our pain, hurt, and helplessness—that is, if they would have performed the procedure at all, for fear of breaking the law and going to jail or losing their license in order to save my wife.

I thank my wife, Katie, for allowing me to share our story, and I share it because it is not ours alone.

Countless women and families with dreams for their children and their future face difficult decisions and unthinkable circumstances every day. Our government has no business intruding on a family's deeply personal medical decisions, yet the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision has opened the

floodgate for States to rob women and families of the ability to make healthcare choices with their doctors, including the very difficult choice to access safe, legal, and oftentimes medically necessary abortions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MALOY). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 20 seconds to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Madam Speaker, they are now using this bill, built on a despicable lie rooted in neither medicine nor science, to restrict access to abortion nationwide. It would levy criminal charges against healthcare practitioners and providers, jeopardizing their ability to deliver proper medical care to women. It impacts people all over this country.

Madam Speaker, today, I will vote "no" on H.R. 21, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. Vote "no" to criminalizing healthcare and "no" to imposing more hurt on families facing very difficult days.

The morning after we said good-bye to Brigid, I woke up in the hospital and a rainbow appeared. It was a sign from above that our baby girl, Brigid Nicole, was home in Heaven.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MORRISON, and Ms. CLARK for their poignant, riveting personal testimonies. I hope our colleagues are listening to our colleagues over here.

This bill is all about demonizing women, threatening doctors, exploiting other people's tragedies, and dividing the country.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, our heart goes out to our colleagues who have suffered personal tragedies. Unfortunately, none of the things that were just ascribed to this bill are true. The bill does none of those things.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my friend and co-chair of the Pro-Life Caucus.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding, and I thank ANN WAGNER for her tremendous leadership and courage in authoring this important bill.

Madam Speaker, in a Florida abortion clinic, Sycloria Williams delivered a perfectly healthy, live baby girl at 23 weeks.

The clinic owner took the baby, who was gasping for air, cut her umbilical cord, threw her into a biohazard bag, and put the bag into the trash like so much garbage.

Heartbroken, Ms. WILLIAMS later had a funeral for her baby girl she named Shanice.

Madam Speaker, why are these live births so little known? We are talking about, in most cases, perfectly healthy babies who are killed but they survive.

The Philadelphia Inquirer did a cover story years ago called "The Dreaded

Complication." In it, the abortionists were complaining that so many children were surviving late-term abortions and they didn't know what to do. The partial-birth abortion ban, where the baby's brains are sucked out—we did the ban, but the actual procedure—was, in part, in response to that. They wanted to ensure that the baby was dead.

In that article, Dr. Willard Cates, former head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's abortion surveillance unit, said: Live births are little known because organized medicine, from fear of public clamor and legal action, treats them more as an embarrassment to be hushed up than a problem to be solved. It is like turning yourself in to the IRS for an audit. What is there to gain? The tendency is not to report because there are only negative incentives.

Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell, one of the few who got caught, was convicted of murder for killing so many children and women in his abortion clinic in Philadelphia. The grand jury described it this way: Gosnell had a simple solution for unwanted babies: He delivered them. He killed them. He didn't call it that. He called it ensuring fetal demise. The way he ensured fetal demise was by sticking scissors into the back of the baby's neck and cutting the spinal cord. He called that snipping.

These children are not junk. They cannot be treated as so much garbage. This legislation tries to say we need to protect them once they are born after the abortion.

The Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act seeks to end or at least mitigate this egregious child abuse by requiring that a healthcare provider must—and this is from the bill—exercise the same degree of professional care, skill, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious healthcare practitioner would render to any other child born alive.

Why can't we have that standard to try to save that child? The bill empowers the women upon whom the abortions are performed to obtain appropriate relief through civil action. We passed a bill like this when STEVE CHABOT was the prime sponsor years ago, but the enforcement has been almost nil if not none.

This is humane, pro-child, pro-human rights legislation, and I hope my colleagues on the other side realize these children have great value and should not be treated like junk.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the passionate vehemence of the gentleman, but the whole substance of his argument completely undercuts the meaning of their bill.

In the case that I could hear him talking about, Kermit Barron Gosnell was an American serial killer who indeed engaged in precisely the conduct the gentleman is talking about and was convicted of murder in Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia.

Infanticide is against the law in 50 States in America, and this guy was picked up for the conduct the gentleman spoke of. He was prosecuted for it, and he was sent to jail.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RASKIN. No.

Madam Speaker, I would like my time restored.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON), the distinguished ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government.

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, we are here again because Republicans have prioritized a bill designed to make headlines, not good law.

H.R. 21 is designed to mislead the public about those who need abortion care and the doctors who provide that care.

Let's be clear. As stated, the law of the land is that doctors have an obligation to provide appropriate medical care to their patients, including infants, and no one here is advocating for infanticide.

This bill goes further than restating the current law, and it is our job here to read the fine print. This bill would create harsh criminal and financial penalties for doctors and clinicians providing medically necessary and appropriate care to their patients.

As Representative KENNEDY's heart-breaking testimony just made clear, every pregnancy is different. Patients and providers have to be able to make the healthcare decisions that are right for their families without politicians mandating a one-size-fits-all approach and threatening healthcare providers who disagree.

Republican extremists can continue attacking healthcare providers and women's fundamental freedoms, but we are going to keep fighting to ensure that women can make their own healthcare decisions.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY. Madam Speaker, I am a healthcare provider, and I have been one for 30 years.

I rise today in support of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act to protect the lives of our country's most innocent. This is not about abortion.

As a physician, it is beyond my comprehension that anyone would not intervene to save an innocent and defenseless human life. I cannot in my deepest soul understand how anyone would not come to the aid of a helpless infant child. Neglect, in this instance, when the baby is outside the mother's body, is murder, plain and simple.

There have been so many instances of individuals who are alive today who were saved after an attempted abortion. They testify how their life was saved because some physician abided by their oath to do no harm, *primum non nocere*.

The child is born alive. It is not part of the mother's body. This is not about abortion. Neglect is harm. Neglect is immoral. Abortion is not the issue.

I strongly support this bill, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I urge my colleagues across the aisle to understand the delineation between an abortion and trying to save the life of someone who survives an abortion.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the powerful words of my friend from North Carolina, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I strongly oppose this legislation, which is not rooted in medical realities.

Physicians do not abort babies after birth, period. Healthcare providers have always been legally required to provide appropriate care. Patients and providers must be free to make health decisions based on their circumstances without political interference.

I will tell you what this bill would do. It will cause more pain and suffering for families who are already facing an extraordinarily heartbreaking situation. In many cases, it may be safer and healthier to treat a baby at the birth location rather than wasting precious time traveling to a hospital. This bill would take that medical judgment away from doctors and give it to politicians, putting infants' lives at greater risk. That is outrageous.

This bill is not about protecting children. It is about controlling women's lives. Republicans campaigned on the promise that they would not ban abortion, yet here we are in the first month of the new Congress and the GOP has already brought this cruel bill to the floor in an effort to advance a dangerous agenda to ban abortion nationwide, although this bill really will ban no abortions at all but rather threaten the lives of some newborns. It is shameful.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ONDER).

Mr. ONDER. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in strong support of H.R. 21, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

This legislation says that infants who are born alive after an attempted abortion are entitled to the same respect and medical care that would be provided to an infant of the same gestational age.

In some late-term abortions, the abortionist is unsuccessful at ending the life of the baby, and the baby is born alive. Babies are able to move and breathe on their own. Even pro-abortion academics admit this is often the case, and it is not rare.

A June 2024 article published in the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gyn-

ecology found that of 14,000 second-trimester abortions, over 1,500 babies were born alive, a rate of 11.2 percent.

This legislation unfortunately is necessary due to heartbreaking reports of abortionists in the United States placing these living, breathing babies in biohazard bags, vats of formaldehyde, or storing them away in a utility closet to die alone. In that sense, there is a complete analogy between what goes on in these abortions, after these abortions, and what Kermit Gosnell did and languished in prison for.

This commonsense legislation requires that abortion survivors be treated with dignity. Remember, this bill applies to the baby's right to care after a baby is born alive and has no implication for abortion or the mother's health.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 10 seconds to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. ONDER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from my home State of Missouri for bringing forward this important bill.

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Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter calling this a dangerous government intrusion into medical care which injects politicians into the patient-provider relationship, signed by The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Academy of Nursing, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, and a dozen other organizations.

JANUARY 22, 2025.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: We, the undersigned medical and health professional organizations, stand in strong opposition to H.R. 21/S. 6. This bill represents a dangerous government intrusion into medical care.

H.R. 21/S. 6 is a departure from current law. It injects politicians into the patient-provider relationship, disregarding health care professionals' training and clinical judgment and undermining their ability to determine the best course of action with their patients. Patients need and deserve access to compassionate and appropriate medical care. Every patient needs to be able to make the decision that is best for them and their family. H.R. 21/S. 6 would impose criminal and civil penalties on clinicians that could chill the provision of care by those who work with high-risk patients in complicated situations, limiting access for their patients.

Abortion is safe and is a component of comprehensive medical care. Health care professionals who provide abortion care comply with existing laws and provide excellent care. People seeking abortion care, including those with pregnancy complications, deserve the highest quality medical treatment based on their individual health circumstances. H.R. 21/S. 6 seeks to undermine access to abortion by stigmatizing the health care professionals who provide essential care.

We urge lawmakers to oppose the insertion of politics into medicine and vote against H.R. 21/S. 6.

Sincerely,

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Academy of Nursing, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American College of Nurse-Midwives, American College of Physicians, American Gynecological & Obstetrical Society, American Psychiatric Association, American Public Health Association.

American Society for Reproductive Medicine, American Society of Hematology, Council of Chairs of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Infectious Diseases Society for Obstetrics and Gynecology, National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health, North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology, Physicians for Reproductive Health, Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Society of Family Planning.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH), who is a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Representative MCBATH herself has experienced three miscarriages and had to give birth to a stillborn child.

Mrs. MCBATH. Madam Speaker, I had always wanted to start a family of my own, but like many women in America, I struggled to get pregnant. Some days I kept praying to God wondering if He was ever going to allow me to have a child at all. For far too many women in this country, the miracle of pregnancy often ends in tragedy.

Our State of Georgia has one of the worst rates of maternal death in this country, and Black mothers face even worse statistics. Now extremists want to mandate our healthcare decisions and intimidate our doctors with political games that cut off access to care, care that once saved my life.

My story is not unique. Lives are at risk, and I fear for the safety of families in Georgia and across the country if these attempts succeed.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE).

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call out the glaring hypocrisy of H.R. 21. Once again, the Republican Party is twisting the truth instead of telling the truth. With H.R. 21, Republicans claim they are saving lives of newborn babies. The last I checked, infanticide is already illegal in all 50 States.

This bill is the first step of the Republicans' radical agenda to make us less safe.

They boast about being the party of law and order. However, it seems that notion only applies when punishing women and healthcare providers, not the violent insurrectionists who stormed our Capitol on January 6. Shamefully, they don't seem to care about the five police officers who died as a result of January 6 or the 140 others who were injured.

What happened to Back the Blue?

They also don't seem to care about the women who have already died as a result of Donald Trump's extreme abortion ban. Apparently, not all lives matter.

The goal of H.R. 21 is clear: to further strip women of their fundamental rights by threatening doctors and healthcare providers with jail time.

Now Republicans want to lock up those who save lives while freeing cop killers?

It is radical and not what the American people want.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand with their constituents, not against them, and vote "no" on this dangerous, grossly hypocritical, and unnecessary bill.

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

Madam Speaker, my colleagues like to dismiss this as if it is not a real problem. Of course, those who have suffered through it, including the baby whom I described who was being held as it was dying for 45 minutes after such a grotesque procedure, beg to differ, as do the 143 babies whom the CDC, which is hardly a paragon of pro-life propaganda, writes that between 2003 and 2014 at least 143 babies died after being born alive.

This is hardly a fiction. This is hardly something that we should ignore.

Certainly, these are babies who are deserving of equal protection under the law. Our fellow Americans deserve protection.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Republicans' reproductive healthcare surveillance act.

This bill is the very definition of a wolf in sheep's clothing. It uses an intentionally scary title that simply doesn't happen. Babies born alive are not killed by abortions after birth.

Republicans pretend to support families and pregnant women, but this bill is clearly another attempt to control a woman's body. It is a bill to wedge the government between couples and their doctor when facing incredibly difficult decisions.

This bill pushes lies and misinformation about pregnancy and abortion care. It targets women who received heartbreaking diagnoses of serious health complications, the kind of complications that puts the life of a fetus or their own life at risk.

That is why the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists strongly opposes this legislation. These are the very frontline medical professionals who provide care for women throughout their pregnancy.

We all know women who are suffering due to the Republicans' agenda that puts pregnant women in the crosshairs of their extremism.

Sadly, these tragic stories are not hard to find in my home State of Florida. Let's not create more of them.

Mr. Speaker, we must reject these attacks and stand up for women in our country. I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

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

Mr. Speaker, for those who were not here at the beginning, I would repeat the testimony of Jill Stanek. She testified before the House Judiciary Committee after seeing the horrific reality.

She was a nurse, and she saw a child being aborted who was alive and was left to die alone in a utility closet. She went over and held the little survivor for 45 minutes until the baby died. Again, the baby had been aborted because the baby had Down syndrome.

I want to remind Members that Virginia Governor Northam said: "The infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired."

We are talking about a fellow living American baby. That is what we are talking about. We are not talking about abortion. We are talking about a child.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), who is the chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, when I was pregnant, I ended up in an emergency room waving my ultrasound picture showing I was pregnant. I was so proud. After multiple miscarriages, I wanted to keep this pregnancy, so I didn't take anesthesia.

As I lay bleeding on that operating table, I could hear the doctors yelling: We are losing her. We are losing her.

My doctors had to worry about keeping me alive that day, but they didn't have to worry about going to jail for any decision I made.

However, today Republicans would criminalize reproductive healthcare nationwide. Women experiencing heartbreaking, life-threatening pregnancies will die on the operating table because doctors will be scared of going to jail for 5 years under this bill.

Republicans don't seem to care about the deadly consequences.

Do they care about women at all?

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

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of strong women on this side of the aisle who beg to differ, including the lead author of the legislation.

I would note that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle refuse to focus on the main point, which is "born alive." We are talking about, again, a fellow living human being, a fellow American who is alive.

My colleagues don't want to address that because they know the horrors of that will not be accepted by the American people. We are just simply saying

that when you have a living human being, it should be protected and be given the same equal protection as any other American.

The fact of the matter is this is real life that we are dealing with.

Mr. Speaker, 284 babies were reported to have been born alive between 1997 and 2024. Florida alone reported 14 babies born alive in 2023. This is a real issue.

We are just simply saying that these precious babies, fellow Americans, deserve protection because they are alive. Under the Hippocratic oath, doctors should care for these living, fellow Americans.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI), who is the mother of two wonderful grown children and a consumer advocate.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak against this extreme legislation that would criminalize doctors. As we have heard, killing a baby is already against the law. What we should be doing is working together to get accurate healthcare information to anyone who is pregnant or who wants to be pregnant.

Here is a real story from Oregon. A county public health clinic closed, and when a local woman missed her period, she went to a so-called crisis pregnancy center. She got a test and an ultrasound.

The center said: You are pregnant. All is well. You should plan for a new baby.

A month later, she was hemorrhaging and went to the emergency department where the doctor diagnosed a uterine polyp and early cancer.

That blurry ultrasound she got at the crisis pregnancy center was not a baby. It was impacted stool in her colon. She was obviously and dangerously misdiagnosed.

Sadly, stories like this are not uncommon, which is why I will soon introduce the Stop Anti-Abortion Disinformation Act to prohibit unfair and deceptive advertising of services by crisis pregnancy centers. They often engage in deception to get people in, and then they mislead them about the services they provide and often tragically mislead them about their condition.

Now, that is a real problem and one that makes a compelling case not for this bill but for comprehensive reproductive healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “no” vote on this bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, I was just handed by my pro-life, female legislative director information here about pregnancy centers.

Pregnancy resource centers nationwide serve millions of pregnant women and new mothers each year. These cen-

ters provide services and resources often at no charge and include ultrasounds, pregnancy testing, STD testing, diapers, clothing, and educational programs.

Private and public adoption agencies assisted approximately 115,000 adoptions in 2022. These are organizations and entities that want to protect life.

Again, I will note that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will not address and do not want to address the simple purpose of this bill: protecting a living American from being allowed to die without having medical treatment provided to that child.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL), who is the chair emerita of the Democratic Women’s Caucus and who is also a proud mother and grandmother.

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. This bill is not about protecting anyone. It is about intimidating doctors and making it harder for women to get the care they need.

Let’s be clear: Every baby born in this country is already protected under the law. The bill creates unnecessary rules that aren’t based on medical facts or science. It threatens healthcare providers with jail for doing their job.

Instead of focusing on real issues like making healthcare more affordable or addressing the maternal healthcare crisis, Republicans are doubling down on their dangerous agenda of banning abortion nationwide.

Women deserve the freedom to make their own medical decisions without politicians getting in the way. That is why I strongly oppose this very deadly bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, we ask the mothers and fathers of America: Who do you want in the doctor’s office with you making this decision, a medical decision, OB-GYNs and doctors who vehemently oppose this legislation, or the MAGA politicians who are applauding this week the release of hundreds of violent cop assaulting convicted felons.

The vast majority of American people reject this legislation and say: Let us trust the medical practitioners.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to talk about jail and we are going to talk about who might be pardoned, then I am proud that President Trump seems to be on the verge of pardoning a large number of American citizens who have been put in jail at the hands of a weaponized Department of Justice against American citizens simply carrying out their First Amendment rights to speak out in defense of life.

For example, Lauren Handy, 31 years old—by the way, an active, progressive

activist for human rights—was put in jail for 57 months.

I am glad that it seems that President Trump is on the verge of pardoning Lauren Handy. Even though I disagree with her on a whole lot of issues, I was proud to sit with her and meet with her when she was being targeted for prosecution by the weaponized Department of Justice under Joe Biden to be put in jail because she is pro-life.

I think great things are going to happen.

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

□ 1445

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS).

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chairman, it is sadly unsurprising to me that Members of this body know next to nothing about pregnancy or abortion care, which is why we should not be the ones getting involved in these decisions in the first place.

Let’s clear a few things up for my colleagues. First of all, killing a baby is already illegal in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. It is called murder, and we already have criminal penalties for it. Second of all, no one—and I mean no one—goes through 8 or 9 months of pregnancy and all that comes with it, such as morning sickness, heartburn, swollen ankles, and all of the other uncomfortable and painful parts of pregnancy, and then, after 8 or 9 months of that, it is just like, no, I don’t want to do this.

Only 1 percent of all abortions happen at 21 weeks or later. If they do, it is because of a serious fetal abnormality or the health of the mother.

If you are the one getting that news, it is heartbreaking. It is earth-shattering. The last thing families need is government to interfere with their access to care.

This bill isn’t based on science or reality. It is a horrible, disgusting bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). The time of the gentlewoman has again expired.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague from Texas keeps referencing his female staff and colleagues, but it seems like there has been a coed exodus from his side of the aisle as support for this bill vanishes. In the meantime, I don’t have enough time, and I am happy to be yielded time to share with my colleagues.

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

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 8½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Maryland has 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I simply say I am proud to have my colleague here from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH), who is coed the last time I checked.

The fact of the matter, as my friend from Maryland and the last speaker is

trying to allude to here, when we are talking about it is already against the law and it is murder on the books, here is the problem: Down here in the District of Columbia, we have the D.C. five, which were very clearly full-term abortions. We have the bodies of five babies discovered in Washington outside of a Washington clinic.

As subcommittee chairman, I sent a letter to Washington, D.C., authorities to preserve the records. Biden's Department of Justice refused to look into this information, but the D.C. five reveals the uncomfortable truth about abortion and a reality that we are all dealing with here.

Again, I go back to the point. Talking about murder, we are also talking about babies being allowed to die and babies being allowed to sit there and literally gasp out their last breath rather than have doctors resuscitate those infants.

That is the truth that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle just simply do not want to recognize.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BYNUM), the distinguished Representative and mother of two.

Ms. BYNUM. Mr. Speaker, this extremist bill undermines women's access to healthcare. That is unacceptable, and it is, frankly, not what I was sent here to work on. I will be voting "no."

The evidence is clear. In States with less access to care, maternal mortality is higher, infant deaths are higher, and racial inequities are greater. These restrictions also make it harder for expectant mothers to receive the care they need in pregnancies with complications.

It is nonsense that my daughters have less rights than I did at their age. It is nonsense that we have had to decide with them where to live and where to go to school based on where they have rights. It is nonsense that my daughters are less safe because of government interference in their healthcare.

It is time that House Republicans put aside this foolishness and start focusing on real issues, like eliminating maternal mortality and increasing rural access to healthcare, like lowering costs and creating good jobs, like working across the aisle to deliver real results for real people.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH), my good friend.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I have to bring this back to what we are talking about because I have heard so many passionate words from the other side, and the words have nothing to do with the bill that we have in front of us.

Like I mentioned before, this bill is about medical care for babies. It says it in the title. The clerk mentioned it.

have mentioned it. It is about medical care for babies.

What we are trying to do here today is make sure that babies are treated with dignity and medical care that they will need so that babies aren't left to die in a closet alone and discarded like medical waste. We recognize the humanity of these babies. We ask for them to have medical care. That is what this is about.

Don't let the other side gaslight and pretend this is about abortion rights. This is about babies and medical care. I will continue to repeat that.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY), the co-chair of the Reproductive Freedom Caucus.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is another day under a Republican majority and of an antisense, antifaiths healthcare agenda. I don't know which is worse: the cruelty or the ignorance on full display here across the aisle.

I would ask my colleagues if they have ever met or spoken to a woman who had abortion care late in pregnancy? If they had, what they would have heard her share is about the nursery that she lovingly decorated. If they had, what they would have heard her share was about the name that she picked out. If they had, then they would have heard her share about how her world collapsed all around her when learning of her baby's devastating medical diagnosis.

Let me be clear what my colleagues are doing here. The majority is not only putting women's lives at risk, but they want to deny them the chance to hold their baby who will not survive. I don't know what God my colleagues on the other side of the aisle serve. The God I serve is one of love and mercy and would not deny a mother final moments with a dying child or subject her to carrying a lifeless fetus around.

Republicans want to force their way into the exam room during one of the most impossible, dangerous moments in someone's life. When a family learns their baby has a fatal diagnosis and would be born with only a short time to live, some people make the decision to end the pregnancy so they can hold their baby during their final moments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 20 seconds to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, how cruel it is that Republicans in Congress would deny them that small comfort? In these dire situations, families forego treatment which has no hope of saving their baby's life and instead spend time comforting them and saying good-bye. Physicians who care for families have shared how their patients spend this very limited devastating time with their infants.

Once again, we have ignorant, uninformed men who think they know better than doctors and mothers taking to

the House floor to deny us our medical care.

It is another day under a Republican majority. Enough.

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

Mr. Speaker, Gianna Jessen, another adult survivor of abortion, testified to the House Judiciary Committee in 2015, stating:

" . . . I was delivered alive in an abortion clinic in Los Angeles on April the 6th, 1977. . . . Thankfully the abortionist was not at work yet. Had he been there, he would have ended my life with strangulation, suffocation, or leaving me there to die."

I will have plenty to answer for when I meet my maker and talk to the good Lord, for my life as a flawed and sinful human being, but I will not have to answer for not standing up in every which way that I possibly can to stop those kinds of horrors and to stand up for a fellow living American, a fellow living human being allowed to die, for the political whims of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. GILLEN), the distinguished Representative and mother of four.

Ms. GILLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill. Since the disastrous Dobbs decision, we have seen nothing short of an all-out assault on women's reproductive rights and freedoms.

Make no mistake: This bill has nothing to do with its fallacious title. Infanticide is already a crime. Instead, this bill is aimed at deterring physicians from providing reproductive healthcare that many times is life-saving. I know this firsthand because when I was supposed to be thrilled by a 20-week sonogram, I got the devastating news that my daughter had no heartbeat. I needed to have an emergency abortion procedure to ensure that I could live to raise my two children already at home.

It is unthinkable that this law and laws like it are trying to strip my daughters of the same access to this healthcare. Americans want Congress to lower costs, secure our border, and create jobs; not interfere with heart-breaking family medical decisions. America's women deserve better. Our daughters deserve better.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her eloquent words. When will Republicans stop feeding on other people's tragedies? We don't need MAGA in the delivery room.

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

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. DEXTER), the mother of two and a critical care physician.

Ms. DEXTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in vehement opposition to this



bill, which amounts to legalizing physician intimidation and healthcare obstruction.

Killing infants after birth is murder. It is illegal everywhere in this country. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to make healthcare providers fear that they will be criminally prosecuted or sued for giving lifesaving, legal healthcare.

Under this bill, infants born with a heartbeat but without any chance of survival must be subjected to immediate traumatizing life support rather than being allowed to die peacefully in their mothers' arms. This bill does nothing to save babies or protect mothers. Instead, it is a disgusting fear tactic, and it will absolutely exacerbate the already dire shortage of women's healthcare across this Nation.

Make no mistake: Women across this country will be harmed with this bill. No doctor should have to choose between administering the treatment their patient needs and going to jail, and no politician should be making decisions about any patient's healthcare.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would just note that, in the very text of the legislation, Congress finds: "One, if an abortion results in the live birth of an infant, the infant is a legal person for all purposes under the laws of the United States, and entitled to all the protections of such laws; two, any infant born alive after an abortion or within a hospital, clinic, or other facility has the same claim to the protection of the law that would arise for any newborn, or for any person who comes to a hospital, clinic, or other facility for screening and treatment or otherwise becomes a patient within its care."

That is hardly anything to do with what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are talking about. We just heard one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle describe very specifically, yes, what we are trying to say we shouldn't do, which is, after a procedure, an abortion or otherwise, if you have a living human being, that, yes, you should try to resuscitate and save that child.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE).

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I know that this has been discussed already, but this has been talked about quite a bit in Virginia, and that is because our former Governor, Ralph Northam, was the one who really laid bare the horrible attitude on the left that, if a child is born with some abnormalities, that after that child is born, that child may not necessarily be given life-sustaining treatment. Instead, according to our former Governor, a conversation between the mother and the physician would ensue about whether or not to attempt to save this child's life after it had been born.

Mr. Speaker, this is a tragic story of just how far the left has gone, the atti-

tudes toward children born alive, and we must do all we can to stop this treatment of human beings.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SIMON), the mother of two, who, like so many women, was forced to make a choice when her child died in utero.

Ms. SIMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this misleading bill that deeply will criminalize doctors who provide the most basic and emergency healthcare to women.

His name was Selah Weston. At 21 weeks, his faint heartbeat clapped right next to my daughter's. He was a twin. I was given the opportunity to go home, and perhaps Selah would expel himself from my body, but all three of us became septic.

I had to go back to the emergency room, and my OB/GYN sat with me and my then-husband, who is now, too, in Heaven, and gave us the opportunity to say either we go through this procedure, or you die, Lelah dies, and Selah dies.

I want Congress not to be in those conversations with OB/GYNs who have to mourn with women who are facing death.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this bill. If we want to talk about children, let's talk about childcare. Let's talk about housing. Let's talk about healthcare. We can come together and create beloved communities for our children and parents. This ain't it.

□ 1500

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU).

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 21 would rob families of the ability to make difficult, complicated medical decisions in some of the most heartbreaking circumstances imaginable. It is a mean-spirited solution in search of a problem.

Infanticide is already illegal in every State of the Union, and Congress unanimously affirmed this with a law in 2002, but this bill is not about saving lives. It is about spreading misinformation about abortion care to further anti-abortion talking points.

If the majority is interested in caring for newborns, I invite them to support Democrats' efforts to provide paid family leave to every new parent.

Republicans are welcome to join our efforts to expand the child tax credit to families struggling with paying the bills, and we would be thrilled to have bipartisan support in this Chamber to make childcare affordable everywhere.

Instead, House Republicans have brought up a bill designed to intimidate doctors and perpetuate disinformation about how abortion care really works.

For this reason, at the appropriate time, I will offer a motion to recommit

this bill back to committee. If the House rules permitted, I would have offered my bill, the Women's Health Protection Act, legislation that would create a Federal right to abortion care, free from medically unnecessary restrictions in all 50 States, in all ZIP Codes.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for this motion to recommit.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE), my good friend.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to imagine, hard to believe that we are actually here debating a born-alive act, that we actually have to do this. The question is about life. When does life begin and is government responsible for protecting life.

I say life begins at conception and government is responsible for protecting life. If we go back to the document that is before our Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, what does it actually say?

It says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

What is one of the first unalienable rights? It is life.

I guess the question is: When does life begin? Life begins at conception, and that is why I stand here in support of this bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, now we have had the opportunity to be lectured about life by a gun dealer. That is pretty impressive. I think he gave the game away when he finished his remarks by saying "life begins at conception," a proposition that is rejected by the overwhelming majority of the American people who think that women have a right to choose, but that is a topic for another day. After spending all their time saying it wasn't about abortion, I am afraid he gave the game away at the end.

This bill is an exercise in complete legislative redundancy. It is an interference in other people's private and medical lives to prey on their personal tragedies and catastrophes as we have heard throughout the debate. It is a shocking threat to send OB/GYN doctors and physicians to jail at a time

when we have a chronic shortage of OB/GYN doctors and physicians as well as nurses across the country.

Their bill proposes to move in exactly the wrong direction, which is perhaps why they had a shortage of speakers on their side and we had a shortage of time because I could have had dozens more people who wanted to speak on behalf of the American majority against this absurd attempt to interfere in the medical lives of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I started this about an hour ago, and I was moved to talk, as I said, about a woman who testified in front of the House Judiciary Committee.

She described having been a nurse, having witnessed what occurred where, in her testimony, the child was born after the abortion procedure. The child survived for 45 minutes having been discarded into a utility closet. This nurse held this 22-week-old child, a child of God, who had been aborted because the child had Down syndrome.

This legislation is very simple. If a fellow American, a fellow human being, who is afforded equal protection under the law, is alive in a hospital, in a clinic, frankly anywhere, where a doctor is there and present and can perform life-saving treatment, it is our position that that child is deserving of the same equal protection under the law, under the Constitution of the United States, as any other living American, any of us in the Chamber, any of the Americans watching this now.

This child should not be left to die, should not be left in a utility closet without getting the care that a doctor, who is present, having taken the Hippocratic Oath, and could administer that care to save that child—that is what this bill is about, nothing more.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle know this. It is why for the last hour they have literally refused to address those facts. They have literally refused to defend this grotesque procedure. In the greatest country in the history of mankind, we allow the most vulnerable of our citizens to be denied equal protection under the law and denied the care that they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this year's March for Life is an engraved invitation to each and every one of us to seriously recommit and rededicate ourselves to the defense of the weakest and most vulnerable.

To recommit with love and compassion to tangibly assist women—especially through the extraordinary work of pregnancy care centers—in order to protect their precious babies and their own lives from the violence and cruelty of abortion.

Pregnancy care centers are under siege by Planned Parenthood—also known as Child Abuse Inc.—an organization that has killed more than 10 million babies in its clinics.

This year we recommit to exposing abortion methods to a society that has chosen to be blind to the realities of brutally dismembering helpless babies with sharp knife-like curettes or poisoning babies with pills that literally starve them to death and often result in their bodies being flushed down a toilet.

We are a people of indomitable hope—we absolutely refuse to entertain discouragement or defeat.

We thank President Trump for defeating not one but two extremist pro-abortion candidates—Hillary Clinton and Kamala Harris—and for his amazing defense of unborn children.

Abortion-President Joe Biden is gone—but his morbid legacy of packing the judiciary with litmus tested abortion activists, using executive orders to kill more babies and integrating the nefarious abortion agenda into countless benign and necessary programs like veterans' health and global health must be immediately reversed.

President Trump has done more to protect the innocent than any other president in history—and now, thank God, he's back.

Since the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*—achieved by the three Supreme Court justices President Trump appointed—half the states have enacted laws to protect unborn children, saving over 200,000 children over two years.

On Monday, President Trump issued a powerful executive order designed to defund the outrageously pro-abortion World Health Organization (WHO), and another—the expected reinstatement of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance to reverse Biden's hijacking of global health funding, which shamelessly promoted abortion on demand around the world including in President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Last week, the most recent revelation was that PEPFAR broke U.S. law to pay for abortions in Africa—a tip of the iceberg of the Biden-Harris anti-child activism at home and abroad. The 2025 Marist poll has found that 73 percent of Americans oppose using tax dollars for abortions in other countries.

Other pro-life executive orders are expected soon.

Special thanks to House Speaker MIKE JOHNSON and Senate Majority Leader JOHN THUNE and the Republican leadership in the House and Senate for their ongoing courageous legislative initiatives, including legislation to save babies born alive during the grisly abortion process.

The Born Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act under consideration in both the House and Senate seeks to end or at least mitigate this egregious child abuse by requiring that a health care provider must “exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious health care practitioner would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age” or be fined and/or face up to five years in prison.

The bill makes clear that no mother of a child born alive can ever be prosecuted.

It also empowers the woman upon whom the abortion is performed to obtain appropriate relief in a civil action.

This is humane, pro-child, human rights legislation.

Why is there opposition? Dr. Willard Cates, MD, former head of the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention's (CDC) Abortion Surveillance Unit, explained years ago: “(Live births) are little known because organized medicine, from fear of public clamor and legal action, treats them more as an embarrassment to be hushed up than a problem to be solved. It's like turning yourself in to the IRS for an audit . . . What is there to gain? The tendency is not to report because there are only negative incentives.” Cates was quoted by the Philadelphia Inquirer in “Abortion: The Dreaded Complication.”

Bottom line: pro-lifers are a people of persevering faith in God willing to bear any burden and endure any attack. We know that the cruel injustice of abortion need not be forever and that each day, despite setbacks, many unborn children and their mothers have been and are being protected. We have hope. We have just begun.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 5, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

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

Ms. CHU. 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:

Ms. Chu of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 21 to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The material previously referred to by Ms. CHU is as follows:

Ms. CHU of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 21 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Strike all that follows after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Women's Health Protection Act of 2025”.

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Abortion services are essential health care, and access to those services is central to people's ability to participate equally in the economic and social life of the United States. Abortion access allows people who are pregnant to make their own decisions about their pregnancies, their families, and their lives.

(2) Reproductive justice requires every individual to have the right to make their own decisions about having children regardless of their circumstances and without interference and discrimination. Reproductive justice is a human right that can and will be achieved when all people, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, immigration status, sex (including gender identity, sex stereotyping, or sexual orientation), age, or disability status have the economic, social, and political power and resources to define and make decisions about their bodies, health, sexuality, families, and communities in all areas of their lives, with dignity and self-determination.

(3) Abortion care, like all health care, is a human right that should not depend on one's ZIP Code or region, age, actual or perceived race, national origin, immigration status, sex, or disability status. Unfortunately, this

is the current reality for millions, creating a patchwork of abortion access across the United States. Protecting the right to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy, and the right of health care providers to provide abortion care, is necessary and essential to achieving this human right, and ultimately reproductive justice.

(4) On June 24, 2022, in its decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the Supreme Court overruled *Roe v. Wade*, reversing decades of precedent recognizing a constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy before fetal viability.

(5) The effects of the *Dobbs* decision were immediate and disastrous. In the aftermath of the *Dobbs* decision, many States imposed near-total bans on abortion. As of March 2023, abortion is unavailable in 14 States, leaving 17.8 million women of reproductive age (15-49) and transgender and gender non-conforming individuals with the capacity to become pregnant without abortion access in their home State. Within 100 days of the ruling, 66 clinics across 15 States were forced to stop offering abortions.

(6) Travel time to an abortion clinic, already a burden for abortion seekers under *Roe*, has more than tripled since *Dobbs*. As distance to an abortion facility increases, so do the accompanying (and potentially prohibitive) burdens of time off work or school, lost wages, transportation costs, lodging, child care costs, and other ancillary costs.

(7) Even before the *Dobbs* decision, access to abortion services had long been obstructed across the United States in various ways, including: prohibitions of, and restrictions on, insurance coverage; mandatory parental involvement laws; restrictions that shame and stigmatize people seeking abortion services; and medically unnecessary regulations that fail to further the safety of abortion services, but instead cause harm people by delaying, complicating access to, and reducing the availability of, abortion services.

(8) Being denied an abortion can have serious consequences for people's physical, mental, and economic health and well-being, and that of their families. According to the Turnaway Study, a longitudinal study published by *Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSRH)* in 2019, individuals who are denied a wanted abortion are more likely to experience economic insecurity than individuals who receive a wanted abortion. After following participants for five years, the study found that people who were denied abortion care were more likely to live in poverty, experience debt, and have lower credit scores for several years after the denial. These findings demonstrate that when people have control over when to have children and how many children to have, their children benefit through increased economic security and better maternal bonding.

(9) Abortion bans and restrictions have repercussions for a broad range of health care beyond pregnancy termination, including exacerbating the existing maternal health crisis facing the United States. The United States has the highest maternal mortality rate of any industrialized nations, and Black women and birthing people face three times the risk of dying from pregnancy related causes as their white counterparts. Even prior to *Dobbs*, research found that States that enacted abortion restrictions based on gestation increased their maternal mortality rate by 38 percent. Research has found that a nationwide ban would increase the United States maternal mortality rate by an additional 24 percent. Furthermore, States that have banned, are planning to ban, or have severely restricted abortion care have fewer maternal health providers, more maternity care deserts, higher rates of both maternal

and infant mortality, and greater racial inequity in health care.

(10) Abortion bans and restrictions additionally harm people's health by reducing access to other essential health care services offered by many of the providers targeted by the restrictions, including—

(A) screenings and preventive services, including contraceptive services;

(B) testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections;

(C) LGBTQ health services; and

(D) referrals for primary care, intimate partner violence prevention, prenatal care, and adoption services.

(11) This ripple effect has only worsened since the *Dobbs* decision. Clinicians and pharmacists have denied access to essential medication for conditions including gastric ulcers and autoimmune diseases because those drugs are also used for medication abortion care. Patients are reporting being denied or delayed in their receipt of necessary and potentially lifesaving treatment for ectopic pregnancies and miscarriage management because of the newfound legal risks facing providers.

(12) Reproductive justice seeks to address restrictions on reproductive health, including abortion, that perpetuate systems of oppression, lack of bodily autonomy, white supremacy, and anti-Black racism. This violent legacy has manifested in policies including enslavement, rape, and experimentation on Black women; forced sterilizations, medical experimentation on low-income women's reproductive systems; and the forcible removal of Indigenous children. Access to equitable reproductive health care, including abortion services, has always been deficient in the United States for Black, Indigenous, Latina/x, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and People of Color (BIPOC) and their families.

(13) The legacy of restrictions on reproductive health, rights, and justice is not a dated vestige of a dark history. Data show the harms of abortion-specific restrictions fall especially heavily on people with low incomes, people of color, immigrants, young people, people with disabilities, and those living in rural and other medically underserved areas. Abortion bans and restrictions are compounded further by the ongoing criminalization of people who are pregnant, including those who are incarcerated, living with HIV, or with substance-use disorders. These populations already experience health disparities due to social, political, and environmental inequities, and restrictions on abortion services exacerbate these harms. Removing bans and restrictions on abortion services would constitute one important step on the path toward realizing reproductive justice by ensuring that the full range of reproductive health care is accessible to all who need it.

(14) Abortion bans and restrictions are tools of gender oppression, as they target health care services that are used primarily by women. These paternalistic bans and restrictions rely on and reinforce harmful stereotypes about gender roles and women's decisionmaking, undermining their ability to control their own lives and well-being. These restrictions harm the basic autonomy, dignity, and equality of women.

(15) The terms "woman" and "women" are used in this bill to reflect the identity of the majority of people targeted and most directly affected by bans and restrictions on abortion services, which are rooted in misogyny. However, access to abortion services is critical to the health of every person capable of becoming pregnant. This Act is intended to protect all people with the capacity for pregnancy—cisgender women, transgender men, nonbinary individuals, those who iden-

tify with a different gender, and others—who are unjustly harmed by restrictions on abortion services.

(16) Pregnant individuals will continue to experience a range of pregnancy outcomes, including abortion, miscarriage, stillbirths, and infant losses regardless of how the State attempts to exert power over their reproductive decisionmaking, and will continue to need support for their health and well-being through their reproductive lifespans.

(17) Evidence from the United States and around the globe bears out that criminalizing abortion invariably leads to arrests, investigations, and imprisonment of people who end their pregnancies or experience pregnancy loss, leading to violations of fundamental rights to liberty, dignity, bodily autonomy, equality, due process, privacy, health, and freedom from cruel and inhumane treatment.

(18) All major experts in public health and medicine such as the American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Society of Addiction Medicine, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, oppose the criminalization of pregnancy outcomes because the threat of being subject to investigation or punishment through the criminal legal system when seeking health care threatens pregnant people's lives and undermines public health by deterring people from seeking care for obstetrical emergencies.

(19) Antiabortion stigma that is compounded by abortion bans and restrictions also contributes to violence and harassment that put both people seeking and people providing abortion care at risk. From 1977 to 2021, there were 11 murders, 42 bombings, 196 acts of arson, 491 assaults, and thousands of other incidents of criminal activity directed at abortion seekers, providers, volunteers, and clinic staff. This violence existed under *Roe* and has been steadily escalating for years. The presence of dangerous protestors and organized extremists acts as yet another barrier to abortion care, and this threat has become even more urgent as abortion bans proliferate and stigma around abortion care increases.

For full text of the bill, please see text of H.R. 12 in the 118th Congress.

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 yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. CHU. 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. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 375;

Passage of H.R. 471;

The motion to recommit on H.R. 21; and

Passage of H.R. 21, if ordered.

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 votes.

#### CONTINUED RAPID OHIA DEATH RESPONSE ACT OF 2025

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. 375) to require the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death, 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 gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 359, nays 62, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 24]

YEAS—359

Adams	Cohen	Frost
Aderholt	Cole	Garbarino
Aguilar	Comer	Garcia (CA)
Alford	Conaway	Garcia (IL)
Allen	Connolly	Garcia (TX)
Amo	Costa	Gillen
Amodoi (NV)	Courtney	Gimenez
Ansari	Craig	Golden (ME)
Auchincloss	Crawford	Goldman (NY)
Babin	Crenshaw	Gomez
Bacon	Crockett	Gonzales, Tony
Baird	Crow	Gonzalez, V.
Balderson	Cuellar	Gooden
Balint	Dauids (KS)	Goodlander
Barr	Davis (IL)	Gottheimer
Barragan	Davis (NC)	Graves
Barrett	De La Cruz	Gray
Baumgartner	Dean (PA)	Green, Al (TX)
Beatty	DeGette	Griffith
Begich	DeLauro	Guest
Bell	DelBene	Guthrie
Bentz	Deluzio	Hamadeh (AZ)
Bera	DeSaulnier	Harder (CA)
Bergman	DesJarlais	Haridopolos
Beyer	Dexter	Hayer
Bice	Diaz-Balart	Hill (AR)
Bilirakis	Dingell	Himes
Bishop	Doggett	Hinson
Bonamici	Dunn (FL)	Horsford
Bost	Edwards	Houchin
Boyle (PA)	Elfreth	Houlahan
Bresnahan	Ellzey	Hoyer
Brown	Emmer	Hoyle (OR)
Brownley	Escobar	Hudson
Buchanan	Espallat	Huffman
Budzinski	Estes	Huizenga
Bynum	Evans (CO)	Hurd (CO)
Calvert	Evans (PA)	Issa
Carbajal	Ezell	Ivey
Carey	Fallon	Jackson (IL)
Carson	Fedorchak	Jacobs
Carter (GA)	Feenstra	James
Carter (LA)	Fields	Jeffries
Carter (TX)	Figures	Johnson (GA)
Casar	Finstad	Johnson (SD)
Case	Fischbach	Johnson (TX)
Casten	Fitzgerald	Joyce (OH)
Castor (FL)	Fitzpatrick	Joyce (PA)
Castro (TX)	Fleischmann	Kamlager-Dove
Cherfilus-	Fletcher	Kaptur
McCormick	Flood	Kean
Chu	Fong	Keating
Ciscomani	Foster	Kelly (IL)
Cisneros	Foushee	Kelly (MS)
Clark (MA)	Fox	Kelly (PA)
Clarke (NY)	Frankel, Lois	Kennedy (NY)
Cleaver	Franklin, Scott	Khanna
Clyburn	Friedman	Kiggans (VA)

Kiley (CA)	Morelle	Smith (NJ)
Kim	Morrison	Smith (WA)
Krishnamoorthi	Moskowitz	Smucker
Kustoff	Moulton	Sorensen
LaHood	Mullin	Soto
LaLota	Murphy	Spartz
LaMalfa	Nadler	Stansbury
Landsman	Neal	Stanton
Langworthy	Neguse	Staubert
Larsen (WA)	Newhouse	Stefanik
Larson (CT)	Norcross	Steil
Latimer	Nunn (IA)	Stevens
Latta	Obernolte	Strickland
Lawler	Ocasio-Cortez	Strong
Lee (FL)	Olshewski	Subramanyam
Lee (NV)	Omar	Suozzi
Lee (PA)	Owens	Swalwell
Leger Fernandez	Pallone	Sykes
Letlow	Palmer	Takano
Levin	Panetta	Taylor
Liccardo	Pappas	Tenney
Lieu	Perez	Thanedar
Lofgren	Peters	Thompson (CA)
Loudermilk	Pfleger	Thompson (MS)
Lucas	Pingree	Thompson (PA)
Lucas	Pocan	Titus
Luna	Pou	Tlaib
Luttrell	Pressley	Tokuda
Lynch	Mace	Tonko
Mace	Quigley	Torres (CA)
Mackenzie	Ramirez	Torres (NY)
Magaziner	Randall	Trahan
Malliotakis	Raskin	Tran
Maloy	Reschenthaler	Turner (OH)
Mann	Rivas	Turner (TX)
Mannion	Rogers (AL)	Underwood
Matsui	Rogers (KY)	Valadao
McBath	Rose	Van Drew
McBride	Ross	Van Orden
McCaul	Rouzer	Vargas
McClain	Ruiz	Vasquez
McClain Delaney	Rulli	Veasey
McClellan	Rutherford	Velazquez
McClintock	Ryan	Vindman
McCollum	Salazar	Wagner
McDonald Rivet	Salinas	Walberg
McGarvey	Sanchez	Wasserman
McGovern	Scanlon	Schultz
McIver	Schakowsky	Waters
Meeks	Schneider	Schrier
Menendez	Scholten	Watson Coleman
Meng	Schrier	Weber (TX)
Messmer	Scott (VA)	Webster (FL)
Meuser	Scott, Austin	Westerman
Mfume	Scott, David	Wied
Miller (OH)	Sessions	Williams (GA)
Miller-Meeks	Sewell	Wilson (FL)
Min	Sherman	Wilson (SC)
Moolenaar	Sherrill	Wittman
Moore (NC)	Shreve	Womack
Moore (UT)	Simon	Yakym
Moore (WI)	Simpson	Zinke
Moore (WV)	Smith (MO)	
Moran	Smith (NE)	

NAYS—62

Arrington	Goldman (TX)	McDowell
Bean (FL)	Gosar	McGuire
Biggs (AZ)	Green (TN)	Miller (IL)
Biggs (SC)	Greene (GA)	Miller (WV)
Boebert	Grothman	Mills
Brecheen	Hageman	Moore (AL)
Burchett	Harrigan	Nehls
Burlison	Harris (MD)	Norman
Cammack	Harris (NC)	Ogles
Cline	Harshbarger	Onder
Cloud	Hern (OK)	Perry
Clyde	Higgins (LA)	Roy
Collins	Hunt	Schmidt
Crane	Jack	Schweikert
Crank	Jackson (TX)	Self
Davidson	Jordan	Steube
Donalds	Kennedy (UT)	Stutzman
Downing	Knott	Tiffany
Fry	Massie	Timmons
Fulcher	Mast	Van Duyne
Gill (TX)	McCormick	

NOT VOTING—11

Correa	Mrvan	Scalise
Garamendi	Pelosi	Whitesides
Grijalva	Petersen	Williams (TX)
Jayapal	Riley (NY)	

□ 1535

Messrs. KNOTT and HARRIGAN, Ms. BOEBERT, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Ms. HAGEMAN, Messrs. COLLINS, FRY, HERN of Oklahoma,

STUTZMAN, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Messrs. TIMMONS, DOWNING, SCHMIDT, Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina, Messrs. SCHWEIKERT, MAST, MCCORMICK, McDOWELL, and ROY changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. MCGARVEY changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

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.

#### FIX OUR FORESTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEUBE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 471) to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, 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 passage of the bill.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 279, nays 141, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 25]

YEAS—279

Aderholt	Cohen	Gomez
Aguilar	Cole	Gonzales, Tony
Alford	Collins	Gonzalez, V.
Allen	Comer	Gooden
Amodoi (NV)	Costa	Goodlander
Arrington	Craig	Gosar
Auchincloss	Crane	Graves
Babin	Crank	Gray
Bacon	Crawford	Green (TN)
Baird	Crenshaw	Greene (GA)
Balderson	Cuellar	Griffith
Barr	Dauids (KS)	Grothman
Barrett	Davidson	Guest
Baumgartner	Davis (NC)	Guthrie
Bean (FL)	De La Cruz	Hageman
Beatty	DesJarlais	Hamadeh (AZ)
Begich	Diaz-Balart	Harder (CA)
Bentz	Donalds	Haridopolos
Bera	Downing	Harrigan
Bergman	Dunn (FL)	Harris (MD)
Bice	Edwards	Harris (NC)
Biggs (AZ)	Ellzey	Harshbarger
Biggs (SC)	Emmer	Hern (OK)
Bilirakis	Estes	Higgins (LA)
Bishop	Evans (CO)	Hill (AR)
Boebert	Ezell	Himes
Bost	Fallon	Hinson
Brecheen	Fedorchak	Horsford
Bresnahan	Feenstra	Houchin
Buchanan	Finstad	Houlahan
Budzinski	Fischbach	Hoyer
Burchett	Fitzgerald	Hoyle (OR)
Burlison	Fitzpatrick	Hudson
Bynum	Fleischmann	Huizenga
Calvert	Flood	Hunt
Cammack	Fong	Hurd (CO)
Carbajal	Fox	Issa
Carey	Franklin, Scott	Jack
Carter (GA)	Friedman	Jackson (TX)
Carter (TX)	Fry	James
Chu	Fulcher	Johnson (LA)
Ciscomani	Garbarino	Johnson (SD)
Cline	Gill (TX)	Jordan
Cloud	Gillen	Joyce (OH)
Clyburn	Golden (ME)	Joyce (PA)
Clyde	Goldman (TX)	Kaptur

Kean  
 Kelly (MS)  
 Kelly (PA)  
 Kennedy (UT)  
 Kiggans (VA)  
 Kiley (CA)  
 Kim  
 Knott  
 Kustoff  
 LaHood  
 LaLota  
 LaMalfa  
 Langworthy  
 Larson (CT)  
 Latta  
 Lawler  
 Lee (FL)  
 Lee (NV)  
 Letlow  
 Levin  
 Liccardo  
 Lieu  
 Lofgren  
 Loudermilk  
 Lucas  
 Luna  
 Luttrell  
 Mace  
 Mackenzie  
 Magaziner  
 Malliotakis  
 Maloy  
 Mann  
 Massie  
 Mast  
 Matsui  
 McCaul  
 McClain  
 McClain Delaney  
 McClintock  
 McCormick  
 McDonald Rivet  
 McDowell  
 McGuire  
 Messmer  
 Meuser  
 Miller (IL)

NAYS—141

Adams  
 Amo  
 Ansari  
 Balint  
 Barragan  
 Bell  
 Beyer  
 Bonamici  
 Boyle (PA)  
 Brown  
 Brownley  
 Carson  
 Carter (LA)  
 Casar  
 Case  
 Casten  
 Castor (FL)  
 Castro (TX)  
 Cherfilus-  
 McCormick  
 Cisneros  
 Clark (MA)  
 Clarke (NY)  
 Cleaver  
 Conaway  
 Connolly  
 Courtney  
 Crockett  
 Crow  
 Davis (IL)  
 Dean (PA)  
 DeGette  
 DeLauro  
 DelBene  
 Deluzio  
 DeSaulnier  
 Dexter  
 Dingell  
 Doggett  
 Elfreth  
 Escobar  
 Espallat  
 Evans (PA)  
 Fields  
 Figures  
 Fletcher  
 Foster  
 Foushee

Frankel, Lois  
 Frost  
 Garcia (CA)  
 Garcia (IL)  
 Garcia (TX)  
 Goldman (NY)  
 Gottheimer  
 Green, Al (TX)  
 Hayes  
 Huffman  
 Ivey  
 Jackson (IL)  
 Jacobs  
 Jeffries  
 Johnson (GA)  
 Johnson (TX)  
 Kamlager-Dove  
 Keating  
 Kelly (IL)  
 Kennedy (NY)  
 Khanna  
 Krishnamoorthi  
 Landsman  
 Larsen (WA)  
 Latimer  
 Lee (PA)  
 Leger Fernandez  
 Lynch  
 Mannion  
 McBath  
 McBride  
 McClellan  
 McCollum  
 McGarvey  
 McGovern  
 McIver  
 Meeks  
 Menendez  
 Meng  
 Mfume  
 Min  
 Morelle  
 Morrison  
 Moulton  
 Nadler  
 Neal  
 Neguse  
 Norcross

Sherman  
 Sherrill  
 Shreve  
 Simpson  
 Smith (MO)  
 Smith (NE)  
 Smith (NJ)  
 Smucker  
 Sorensen  
 Spartz  
 Stanton  
 Stauber  
 Stefanik  
 Steil  
 Steube  
 Strong  
 Stutzman  
 Suozzi  
 Swalwell  
 Taylor  
 Tenney  
 Thompson (CA)  
 Thompson (PA)  
 Tiffany  
 Timmons  
 Peters (CA)  
 Pfluger  
 Reschenthaler  
 Rogers (AL)  
 Rogers (KY)  
 Rose  
 Rouzer  
 Roy  
 Ruiz  
 Rulli  
 Rutherford  
 Salazar  
 Scalise  
 Schmidt  
 Schneider  
 Scholten  
 Schrier  
 Schweikert  
 Scott, Austin  
 Self  
 Sessions  
 Sewell

Ocasio-Cortez  
 Olszewski  
 Omar  
 Pallone  
 Pingree  
 Pocan  
 Pou  
 Pressley  
 Quigley  
 Ramirez  
 Randall  
 Raskin  
 Rivas  
 Ross  
 Ryan  
 Salinas  
 Sanchez  
 Scanlon  
 Kelly (IL)  
 Kennedy (NY)  
 Khanna  
 Krishnamoorthi  
 Scott, David  
 Simon  
 Smith (WA)  
 Soto  
 Stansbury  
 Stevens  
 Strickland  
 Subramanyam  
 Sykes  
 Takano  
 Thanedar  
 Thompson (MS)  
 Titus  
 Tlaib  
 Tokuda  
 Tonko  
 Torres (NY)  
 Trahan  
 Turner (TX)  
 Underwood  
 Vargas  
 Conaway  
 Connolly  
 Wasserman  
 Schultz  
 Watson Coleman  
 Williams (GA)  
 Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—13  
 Correa  
 Garamendi  
 Gimenez  
 Grijalva  
 Jayapal  
 Moore (WI)  
 Mrvan  
 Onder  
 Pelosi  
 Peltersen  
 Riley (NY)  
 Whitesides  
 Williams (TX)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE  
 The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1542

So the bill was passed.  
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.  
 A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION 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. 21) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion, offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU), 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. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 205, nays 216, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 26]

YEAS—205

Adams  
 Aguilar  
 Amo  
 Ansari  
 Auchincloss  
 Balint  
 Barragan  
 Beatty  
 Bell  
 Bera  
 Beyer  
 Bishop  
 Bonamici  
 Boyle (PA)  
 Brown  
 Brownley  
 Budzinski  
 Bynum  
 Carbajal  
 Carson  
 Carter (LA)  
 Casar  
 Case  
 Casten  
 Castor (FL)  
 Castro (TX)  
 Cherfilus-  
 McCormick  
 Chu  
 Cisneros  
 Clark (MA)  
 Clarke (NY)  
 Cleaver  
 Clyburn  
 Cohen  
 Conaway  
 Connolly  
 Costa  
 Courtney  
 Craig  
 Crockett  
 Crow

Cuellar  
 Davids (KS)  
 Davis (IL)  
 Davis (NC)  
 Dean (PA)  
 DeGette  
 DeLauro  
 DelBene  
 Deluzio  
 DeSaulnier  
 Dexter  
 Dingell  
 Doggett  
 Elfreth  
 Escobar  
 Espallat  
 Evans (PA)  
 Fields  
 Figures  
 Fletcher  
 Foster  
 Foushee  
 Frankel, Lois  
 Friedman  
 Frost  
 Garcia (CA)  
 Garcia (IL)  
 Garcia (TX)  
 Lynch  
 Gillen  
 Golden (ME)  
 Goldman (NY)  
 Gomez  
 Gonzalez, V.  
 Goodlander  
 Gottheimer  
 Gray  
 Green, Al (TX)  
 Harder (CA)  
 Hayes  
 Himes  
 Horsford  
 Houlihan

Meng  
 Mfume  
 Min  
 Moore (WI)  
 Morelle  
 Morrison  
 Moskowitz  
 Moulton  
 Mullin  
 Nadler  
 Neal  
 Neguse  
 Norcross  
 Ocasio-Cortez  
 Olszewski  
 Omar  
 Pallone  
 Panetta  
 Pappas  
 Peters  
 Pingree  
 Pocan  
 Pou  
 Pressley  
 Quigley  
 Ramirez  
 Randall

NAYS—216

Garbarino  
 Gill (TX)  
 Gimenez  
 Goldman (TX)  
 Gonzales, Tony  
 Gooden  
 Gosar  
 Graves  
 Green (TN)  
 Greene (GA)  
 Griffith  
 Grothman  
 Guest  
 Guthrie  
 Hageman  
 Hamadeh (AZ)  
 Haridopolos  
 Harrigan  
 Harris (MD)  
 Harris (NC)  
 Harshbarger  
 Hern (OK)  
 Higgins (LA)  
 Hill (AR)  
 Hinson  
 Houchin  
 Burlison  
 Hudson  
 Calvert  
 Huizenga  
 Hunt  
 Hurd (CO)  
 Carter (GA)  
 Carter (TX)  
 Ciscomani  
 Cline  
 Cloud  
 Clyde  
 Cole  
 Collins  
 Comer  
 Crane  
 Crank  
 Crawford  
 Crenshaw  
 Davidson  
 De La Cruz  
 DesJarlais  
 Diaz-Balart  
 Donalds  
 Downing  
 Dunn (FL)  
 Edwards  
 Ellzey  
 Emmer  
 Estes  
 Evans (CO)  
 Ezell  
 Fallon  
 Fedorchak  
 Feenstra  
 Finstad  
 Fischbach  
 Fitzgerald  
 Fitzpatrick  
 Fleischmann  
 Flood  
 Fong  
 Foxx  
 Franklin, Scott  
 Fry  
 Fulcher

McCormick  
 McDowell  
 McGuire  
 Messmer  
 Meuser  
 Miller (IL)  
 Miller (OH)  
 Miller (WV)  
 Miller-Meeks  
 Mills  
 Moolenaar  
 Moore (AL)  
 Guest  
 Moore (NC)  
 Moore (UT)  
 Moore (WV)  
 Moran  
 Murphy  
 Nehls  
 Newhouse  
 Norman  
 Nunn (IA)  
 Obernolte  
 Ogles  
 Onder  
 Owens  
 Palmer  
 Perry  
 Pfluger  
 Reschenthaler  
 Rogers (AL)  
 Rogers (KY)  
 Rose  
 Rouzer  
 Roy  
 Rulli  
 Rutherford  
 Salazar  
 Scalise  
 Schmidt  
 Schweikert  
 Scott, Austin  
 Self  
 Sessions  
 Shreve  
 Simpson  
 Smith (MO)  
 Smith (NE)  
 Smith (NJ)  
 Smucker  
 Spartz  
 Stauber  
 Stefanik  
 Steil  
 Steube  
 Strong  
 Stutzman  
 Taylor  
 Tenney  
 Thompson (PA)  
 Tiffany  
 Timmons  
 Turner (OH)  
 Valadao  
 Van Drew  
 Van Dwyne  
 Van Orden  
 Veasey  
 Velazquez  
 Vindman  
 Wasserman  
 Schultz  
 Waters  
 Watson Coleman  
 Williams (GA)  
 Wilson (FL)

Westerman  
Wied

Wittman  
Womack

Yakym  
Zinke

Pfluger  
Reschenthaler  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rose  
Rouzer  
Roy  
Rulli  
Rutherford  
Salazar  
Scalise  
Schmidt  
Schweikert  
Scott, Austin  
Self  
Sessions  
Shreve

Simpson  
Smith (MO)  
Smith (NE)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smucker  
Spartz  
Stauber  
Stefanik  
Steil  
Steube  
Strong  
Stutzman  
Taylor  
Tenney  
Thompson (PA)  
Tiffany  
Timmons

Turner (OH)  
Valadao  
Van Drew  
Van Dуйne  
Van Orden  
Wagner  
Walberg  
Weber (TX)  
Webster (FL)  
Westerman  
Wied  
Wittman  
Womack  
Yakym  
Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER)(during the vote). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery, no matter how happy you are, that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

□ 1555

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to the death of my beloved wife of 41 years, Patty Williams, I was unable to be in D.C. and vote today. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 25 and YEA on Roll Call No. 27.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. RILEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber today due to illness. On January 18, 2025, I was seen in the emergency room and subsequently admitted for treatment of influenza and pneumonia. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 24, YEA on Roll Call No. 25, YEA on Roll Call No. 26, and NAY on Roll Call No. 27.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, due to travel restrictions related to my pregnancy, I was unable to travel to DC to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 24, YEA on Roll Call No. 25, YEA on Roll Call No. 26, and NAY on Roll Call No. 27.

□ 1600

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNOTT) laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

THE SPEAKER'S ROOMS,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, January 23, 2025.

I hereby designate the period from Thursday, January 23, 2025, through Monday, February 3, 2025, as a "district work period" under clause 13 of Rule 1.

MIKE JOHNSON,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

#### IMPROVING CARE OF VETERANS IN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

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

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the only geriatric nurse practitioner in Congress, I have seen firsthand the way in which our older veterans, especially those who require care in nursing homes, experience poor health outcomes because of a lack of advocacy in government.

The Department of Veterans Affairs regularly convenes a Geriatrics and

#### NOT VOTING—12

Correa  
Garamendi  
Grijalva  
Jayapal

Mrvan  
Pelosi  
Perez  
Pettersen

Riley (NY)  
Whitesides  
Williams (TX)  
Wilson (SC)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1548

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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 noes appeared to have it.

Mr. FRY. 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 217, nays 204, answered "present" 1, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 27]

YEAS—217

Aderholt  
Alford  
Allen  
Amodei (NV)  
Arrington  
Babin  
Bacon  
Baird  
Balderson  
Barr  
Barrett  
Baumgartner  
Bean (FL)  
Begich  
Bentz  
Bergman  
Bice  
Biggs (AZ)  
Biggs (SC)  
Bilirakis  
Boebert  
Bost  
Brecheen  
Bresnahan  
Buchanan  
Burchett  
Burlison  
Calvert  
Cammack  
Carey  
Carter (GA)  
Carter (TX)  
Ciscomani  
Cline  
Cloud  
Clyde  
Cole  
Collins  
Comer  
Crane  
Crank  
Crawford  
Crenshaw  
Cuellar  
Davidson  
De La Cruz  
DesJarlais  
Diaz-Balart  
Donalds  
Downing  
Dunn (FL)  
Edwards  
Elzey  
Emmer  
Estes  
Evans (CO)

Ezell  
Fallon  
Fedorchak  
Feenstra  
Finstad  
Fischbach  
Fitzgerald  
Fitzpatrick  
Fleischmann  
Flood  
Fong  
Foxy  
Franklin, Scott  
Fry  
Fulcher  
Garbarino  
Gill (TX)  
Gimenez  
Goldman (TX)  
Gonzales, Tony  
Gooden  
Gosar  
Graves  
Green (TN)  
Greene (GA)  
Griffith  
Grothman  
Guest  
Guthrie  
Hageman  
Hamadeh (AZ)  
Haridopolos  
Harrigan  
Harris (MD)  
Harris (NC)  
Harshbarger  
Hern (OK)  
Higgins (LA)  
Hill (AR)  
Hinson  
Houchin  
Hudson  
Huizenga  
Hunt  
Hurd (CO)  
Issa  
Jack  
Jackson (TX)  
James  
Johnson (LA)  
Johnson (SD)  
Jordan  
Joyce (OH)  
Joyce (PA)  
Kean  
Kelly (MS)

Kelly (PA)  
Kennedy (UT)  
Kiggans (VA)  
Kiley (CA)  
Kim  
Knott  
Kustoff  
LaHood  
LaLota  
LaMalfa  
Langworthy  
Latta  
Lawler  
Lee (FL)  
Letlow  
Loudermilk  
Lucas  
Luna  
Luttrell  
Mace  
Mackenzie  
Malliotakis  
Maloy  
Mann  
Massie  
Mast  
McCaul  
McClain  
McClintock  
McCormick  
McDowell  
McGuire  
Messmer  
Meuser  
Miller (IL)  
Miller (OH)  
Miller (WV)  
Miller-Meeks  
Mills  
Moolenaar  
Moore (AL)  
Moore (NC)  
Moore (UT)  
Moore (WV)  
Moran  
Murphy  
Nehls  
Newhouse  
Norman  
Nunn (IA)  
Oberholte  
Jordan  
Onder  
Owens  
Palmer  
Perry

Adams  
Aguilar  
Amo  
Ansari  
Auchincloss  
Balint  
Barragan  
Beatty  
Bell  
Bera  
Beyer  
Bishop  
Bonamici  
Boyle (PA)  
Brown  
Brownley  
Budzinski  
Bynum  
Carbajal  
Carson  
Carter (LA)  
Casar  
Case  
Casten  
Castor (FL)  
Castro (TX)  
Cherfilus-McCormick  
Chu  
Cisneros  
Clark (MA)  
Clarke (NY)  
Cleaver  
Clyburn  
Cohen  
Conaway  
Connolly  
Costa  
Courtney  
Craig  
Crockett  
Crow  
Davids (KS)  
Davis (IL)  
Davis (NC)  
Dean (PA)  
DeGette  
DeLauro  
DeBene  
Deluzio  
DeSaulnier  
Dexter  
Dingell  
Doggett  
Elfreth  
Escobar  
Espaillat  
Evans (PA)  
Fields  
Figures  
Fletcher  
Foster  
Foushee  
Frankel, Lois  
Friedman  
Frost  
Garcia (CA)  
Garcia (IL)  
Garcia (TX)

#### NAYS—204

Gillen  
Golden (ME)  
Goldman (NY)  
Gomez  
Goodlander  
Gottheimer  
Hoyer  
Hoyle (OR)  
Huffman  
Ivey  
Jackson (IL)  
Jacobs  
Jeffries  
Johnson (GA)  
Johnson (TX)  
Kamlager-Dove  
Kaptur  
Keating  
Kelly (IL)  
Kennedy (NY)  
Khanna  
Krishnamoorthi  
Landsman  
Larsen (WA)  
Larson (CT)  
Latimer  
Lee (NV)  
Lee (PA)  
Leger Fernandez  
Levin  
Liccardo  
Lieu  
Lofgren  
Lynch  
Magaziner  
Mannion  
Matsui  
McBath  
McBride  
McClain Delaney  
McClellan  
McCollum  
McDonald Rivet  
McGarvey  
McGovern  
McIver  
Meeks  
Menendez  
Meng  
Mfume  
Min  
Moore (WI)  
Morelle  
Morrison  
Moskowitz  
Moulton  
Mullin  
Nadler  
Neal  
Neguse  
Norcross  
Ocasio-Cortez

Olszewski  
Omar  
Pallone  
Panetta  
Pappas  
Perez  
Peters  
Pingree  
Pocan  
Pou  
Pressley  
Quigley  
Ramirez  
Hoyer  
Randall  
Raskin  
Rivas  
Ross  
Ruiz  
Ryan  
Salinas  
Sanchez  
Scanlon  
Schakowsky  
Schneider  
Scholten  
Schrier  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, David  
Sewell  
Sherman  
Sherrill  
Simon  
Smith (WA)  
Sorensen  
Soto  
Stansbury  
Stanton  
Liccardo  
Stevens  
Strickland  
Subramanyam  
Suozzi  
Swalwell  
Sykes  
Takano  
Thanedar  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Titus  
Tlaib  
Tokuda  
Tonko  
Torres (CA)  
Torres (NY)  
Trahan  
Tran  
Turner (TX)  
Underwood  
Vargas  
Vasquez  
Veasey  
Velázquez  
Vindman  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters  
Watson Coleman  
Williams (GA)  
Wilson (FL)

#### ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Gonzalez, V.

#### NOT VOTING—11

Correa  
Garamendi  
Grijalva  
Jayapal

Mrvan  
Pelosi  
Pettersen  
Riley (NY)

Whitesides  
Williams (TX)  
Wilson (SC)

Gerontology Advisory Committee to collaborate on strategies to better help seniors who have served our country age with grace and dignity.

However, advocates for those living in State veterans homes and those who provide nursing home domiciliary and adult care for our veterans are left completely out of the conversation. That is unacceptable and harmful to the long-term health of our veterans.

That is why I am introducing the Representing Our Seniors at VA Act to reform the VA's advisory committee and ensure a representative from the National Association of State Veterans Homes is included.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in this effort so we can improve the quality of care for our Greatest Generation living in assisted living facilities.

#### ENSURING ALL ISRAELI HOSTAGES RETURN HOME

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

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, after more than a year in captivity, 15 months of pain, fear, and horror, Israeli hostages are finally coming home.

The first three to finally return to their families' arms are Romi Gonen, Emily Damari, and Doron Steinbrecher. Relatives worked tirelessly to get their loved ones home, and I have had the heart-wrenching privilege of meeting with many of them.

Just last month, I met with Yarden Gonen, Romi's sister, and Aviva Siegel for the third time since October 7.

Aviva was taken hostage with her husband, Keith. Aviva was released between the pauses of 2023, 51 days later, but Keith remains in Gaza. He is expected to be released in this phase of the ongoing cease-fire.

After 15 months too many, Romi, Emily, Doron, and, God willing, 30 others will return home and then the remaining 70.

We must see this bilateral cease-fire through. We must ensure all hostages return home. God bless the people of Israel. God bless the hostages, living and dead. May they all come home soon.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

#### AMERICA FIRST POLICIES

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

Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the body for the first time to express appreciation and exhilaration with the opportunity that sits before us now.

Last week, former President Biden addressed the Nation for the last time

in a speech that was filled with blame-shifting and praise for his administration that left us with nothing but empty promises and lighter pockets.

President Trump is now at the helm, and I am confident that with his administration, in partnership with this House and our Senate colleagues, we will turn the page with policies that put America First, win the border war, protect tax dollars, keep our promises that were made to our veterans, and defend our sacred values.

That is what my constituents want from this Congress, and that is what I intend on helping deliver in my service to South Carolina's Third District.

#### MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER AND MORE AFFORDABLE

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

Ms. SALINAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to President Trump's unlawful attempt to end birthright citizenship.

The 14th Amendment clearly states that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are citizens of the United States. This law has been the law of the land for over 150 years, and it is core to our identity as a nation. Any attempt to change that through executive order is both unconstitutional and un-American.

As the daughter of an immigrant, I know the vast majority of immigrants work hard, pay taxes, own businesses, and contribute so much to our country's success.

I also agree that we need to secure our borders and fix our broken immigration system, but we can't accomplish any of that by relying on fear tactics and failed, inhumane policies from the past.

Instead, President Trump must work with Congress on serious bipartisan solutions that will actually make our communities safer and more affordable for everyone.

I am happy to work with the new administration to achieve that goal. However, if the President continues to pursue dangerous and harmful policies, I am prepared to defend the rights of my constituents.

Oregon sent me here to fight for them, and that is exactly what I intend to do.

#### RECOGNIZING PETAL, MISSISSIPPI, ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Petal, Mississippi, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

For half a century, Petal has been a vibrant and thriving community known for its strong sense of pride,

deep-rooted history, and outstanding contributions to south Mississippi. From its rich heritage to its remarkable growth, Petal has become a shining example of what makes our region so special.

As their Representative, I have seen firsthand the hard work and dedication of Petal's residents, leaders, and businesses. They have built a city that not only honors its past but also embraces a bright future.

This milestone is a testament to the resilience, unity, and spirit of this great community.

I look forward to seeing Petal continue to grow, thrive, and inspire for many years to come.

I congratulate Petal on 50 incredible years, and here is to the next 50. Thank you for all you do for the Fourth District of Mississippi.

#### PARDONING THOSE WHO AT- TACKED OFFICER BRIAN SICKNICK IS DISGRACEFUL

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick was born in New Brunswick and raised in South River, and he died in D.C. on January 7, 2021.

He succumbed to two successive strokes just hours after being pepper-sprayed by violent criminals attempting to stop the peaceful transfer of power and undo our democracy.

The men who attacked him just hours before his death, who were charged, tried, and convicted of assaulting a police officer, were just able to walk free. They were pardoned by Donald Trump.

Officer Sicknick made the ultimate sacrifice. Pardoning his attackers is an assault to his memory, an affront to his family, and a disgrace to the Constitution that he swore to uphold and gave his life to defend.

January 6 was a violent insurrection. We have proof. We have videos, and nothing will change that history.

#### SUPPORT AMERICAN MANUFACTURING

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I represent one of the heaviest manufacturing districts in the country. In fact, my family employs Hoosiers who build and fabricate products for our great American economy.

In 2017, President Trump laid out his plan to add rocket fuel to the American manufacturing sector. He enacted major tax cuts, eliminated regulatory red tape, and increased pressure on countries like China that have been eating our lunch for decades.

During Trump's first term, we saw businesses return home at a record

rate, supplying our country with a surplus of employment. You couldn't leave the house without seeing a "help wanted" sign.

Trump knows how to make businesses successful, and following his lead, we will make America successful again.

We need to support his efforts to de-regulate. We need to use every tool available to level the playing field. We must create an appealing business environment so that our great manufacturing companies can feel confident to grow here rather than looking abroad.

It is time to take pride in our abilities, our people, and the words "made in America."

#### RECOGNIZING RICK CARDINAL AND WENDI DAMM

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

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Rick Cardinal and Wendi Damm as Ohio's 13th Congressional District Champions of the Week.

Rick and Wendi are chemistry teachers at Barberton High School, and this year, they each earned the Gene Easter Award, which recognizes science teachers who demonstrate in their classrooms the importance of science and chemistry. They earned this award for their dedication to the Explorers Post, a program designed to inspire students to explore careers in STEM fields.

Ohio's 13th Congressional District has long been known for its scientific innovation, and Rick and Wendi are ensuring this legacy for generations to come.

Congratulations once again to Rick Cardinal and Wendi Damm on this fantastic accomplishment. I thank them for all they do to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians.

#### CELEBRATING AKERS MILL RAMP OPENING

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

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the opening of the Akers Mill ramp project.

During my first months in Congress in 2018, I gathered Federal officials to speak about the importance of the investment in our State's infrastructure. In July of that year, my team was able to announce a \$5 million grant, the final funding needed to complete the project.

I am so proud that, working together, we were finally able to secure the resources for our project that will serve more than 100,000 commuters in my community and benefit all of metropolitan Atlanta.

I thank the Cumberland Community Improvement District, our partners in

Cobb County, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and our State and Federal officials who had a hand in making this project a reality.

I congratulate the entire Cumberland community.

#### HONORING JUAN PABLO DUARTE

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Juan Pablo Duarte, the founding father of the Dominican Republic, where I was born.

Duarte was an instrumental person in the war for Dominican independence. He fought for the ideals of a liberal democracy after founding the nation.

January 26 marks Duarte's birthday, and it is celebrated by the Dominican Republic as a national holiday.

Each year, I have the pleasure of introducing a resolution that supports the ideals of Juan Pablo Duarte, and I look forward to doing it again. This is one of several bills that I will introduce to mark the beginning of Dominican Heritage Month.

We look forward to the February 11 event here at the Hill, Dominicans on the Hill.

In February, we will remember Juan Pablo Duarte for all of his sacrifices.

"God, Homeland, and Liberty,"  
"Dios, Patria, y Libertad."

□ 1615

#### PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

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

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, step right up, and prepare to be amazed.

This is an ordinary folder. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, no hidden compartments, and yet inside it is an invisible rabbit.

If you like that trick, Mr. Speaker, then you are going to love Donald Trump's national energy emergency. It is also totally imaginary, but as any good carnival barker will tell you, there is a sucker born every minute who falls for this shtick.

Let's review the numbers. Under the Biden administration, the U.S. created 16 million jobs, had the fastest growing economy in the OECD, held oil demand flat, drastically cut coal use, and embraced cleaner, cheaper renewables and efficiency. We decoupled economic growth from fossil fuel giving American people more heat, more light, more power, and more money.

That put downward pressure on domestic oil and gas prices which caused domestic fossil producers to export into less developed and more remunerative overseas markets.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before you say: There is no emergency here, consider

this from the perspective of our poor oil and gas producers. They are losing market share. They are making less money. However, they have got an ally in Donald Trump. After all, he is the guy who forced the Saudis to curtail production in 2020 to drive up oil prices and oil industry profits. That is right. He made sure U.S. consumers paid more for gasoline.

Ta-da.

Don't be a sucker, but if you are, Mr. Speaker, I am available for parties, and I can solve all your invisible rabbit problems. You can keep hopping, Mr. Speaker.

#### COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE ELISEO ALCON

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

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today with a heavy heart as we remember and honor the life and legacy of my dear friend and mentor, State Representative Eliseo Lee Alcon.

Chairman Alcon's legacy and passing leaves a hole in our community, but his legacy will live on.

A veteran, a judge, a State representative, a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Representative Alcon dedicated his life to public service and was rooted in our community.

A fierce advocate for the people, the economy, the environment, and our government, all New Mexicans across the State will miss him as we grieve his loss. Our prayers are with his family and everyone who loved and learned from Representative Alcon.

We will work to carry his vision forward and continue his fight to lift up our veterans and our military, our children and our elders, and all New Mexicans whom he loved so deeply.

Rest in peace, dear friend. We will miss you.

#### WILDFIRE CRISIS

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

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because tens of thousands of acres are on fire in my State of California.

More than 10,000 families have no home to go back to. Nearly 30 people have already lost their lives in this disaster, and the numbers keep climbing. Tens of thousands will have long-term health issues from the smoke, all because our government failed California.

These mega-fires could have been prevented if our government had done its job. We have been yelling from the rooftops for years that our communities are in danger. We have a massive firefighter shortage. Bureaucratic red tape holds everything up, and our lands aren't properly maintained.



Today, thankfully, my colleagues joined me in finally taking the first big step in dealing with this crisis. We passed the historic Fix Our Forests Act to finally do what is badly needed: real, comprehensive wildfire protection.

I am happy to say this is a true bipartisan effort. Wildfires don't care if we are Republican or Democratic, and neither should we. This is the first of many reforms needed to get this crisis under control, and time is running out.

#### VETERANS DESERVE MORE THAN PRESIDENT TRUMP'S DISRUPTIVE EXECUTIVE ORDERS

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

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the detrimental impacts that President Trump's recent flurry of executive orders targeting our workforce are already having.

Despite being in office for less than 3 days, President Trump has already caused major disruptions to the Federal workforce in my district.

The first casualty is the healthcare provided to our veterans. The Richmond VA Medical Center in my district was forced to rescind employment offers to essential hospital staff. Other VA hospitals across the country have done the same, including rescinding employment offers to nurses at a time when we face a nursing shortage.

The new VA medical center set to open in Fredericksburg, Virginia, now has to contend with hiring freezes and the inability to staff up, jeopardizing their opening in February.

Medical school students have been told they can't go to the VA for clinical rotations because of the hiring freeze, impacting the training of a critical workforce provider.

Our veterans deserve much more than this. They put their lives on the line for our Nation and should be able to access the healthcare services they need, but this hiring freeze is putting that in jeopardy.

#### EMERGENCY DISASTER AID

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave firefighters who have stepped into the breach to take on the fires raging across southern California. Their bravery has been on full display these past weeks, including in my own district, where they have valiantly and swiftly responded in Jurupa Valley to the Clay fire.

We all owe them our thanks.

Nevertheless, I am deeply troubled by some in the Republican Conference who are seeking to link emergency disaster aid to my home State with toxic policy goals. This would be a disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass emergency aid without policy riders, just as we did for the people in North Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, and many other States who have faced natural disasters.

Leveraging the losses of thousands establishes a dangerous precedent. It is unacceptable for politicians in Washington to endanger Americans' survival for their own political gain.

#### EXTREMISTS WHO ATTACKED POLICE OFFICERS

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, Officer Brian Sicknick, Officer Howard Liebengood, Officer Jeffrey Smith, Officer Kyle DeFreytag, and Officer Gunther Hashida.

These are the names of the U.S. Capitol Police and D.C. Metropolitan Police who died in the wake of the January 6 Capitol attack.

Mr. Speaker, 140 police officers were assaulted on January 6, but this week Donald Trump pardoned or commuted the sentences of over 1,500 individuals responsible for this attack.

He has made a mockery of our justice system and the rule of law. These were not hostages, and they were not victims. They were extremists who showed up armed, wore Nazi symbols, and attacked police officers.

They were militants who planned for months to overthrow the election and were convicted of sedition by a jury of their peers.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, the President has put dangerous criminals back on the streets. Today, I echo the National Association of Police Organizations in their condemnation of this act.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN JOSE FIDALGO BARROS

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

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Christian Jose Fidalgo Barros, who was called to be with his Lord in Heaven far too soon.

After Christian's first birthday, he was diagnosed with a rare form of high-risk neuroblastoma cancer. John and Tchintcia were unrelenting in their prayers and their efforts, as were his doctors, to extend and to save his life.

Christian's weary body is now at rest. His soul was called home on January 13, 2025, just weeks after his second birthday. Despite his short time here on Earth, Christian left an impression on all blessed to meet him and to bear witness to his faithfulness.

Christian means follower of Christ. I know he knew God. It was the only way he could have summoned the strength and kept a smile every day.

So last weekend, it was no surprise, given the masses and the multitudes he inspired, to see thousands of people show up to support Christian, John, Tchintcia, John Junior, Jeremiah, Casey, and Olivia. They braved the New England winter to share their love and support for the Barros family during this time of unspeakable grief.

The Barros family is our chosen family. To many in the city and our Commonwealth, they have put their love into action in public and in private and in big and small ways in public service. They are loved, and Christian belonged to all of us, which is why I am on the House floor eulogizing him because I believe his loss is one for our Nation. I mourn his loss, but I celebrate his life and his light.

Christian, we thank you for the happy memories you leave behind, and we thank you for inspiring us with your courage, your strength, and your joy.

#### UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA SPIRIT SQUAD

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

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the University of Minnesota Spirit Squad on their monumental performance at the 2025 UCA and UDA College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championships this weekend in Orlando, Florida.

The Gopher cheer team made history this weekend, securing the program's first-ever national title, winning the small, co-ed game day division. The Gophers also finished runner-up in small, co-ed cheer.

The University of Minnesota dance team earned their third straight national title in the Pom division on Sunday night, securing the dance program's 23rd title. The team also finished second in the jazz division.

These are tremendous achievements all around from the University of Minnesota Spirit Squad. We are incredibly proud of each and every one of our Gopher athletes for the hard work they have put in to bring home these national championships.

Go Gophers.

#### HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR

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

Mr. TRAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to wish all those who celebrate a happy lunar new year. Lunar new year is observed by many Asian countries around the world, including the incredible east and southeast Asian communities in my district.

As the son of Vietnamese refugees, I represent Little Saigon in Orange County, California. I am especially

proud to don my ao dai today, which is traditional garb that is worn to celebrate special occasions such as Tet, the Vietnamese lunar new year. The ao dai represents our cultural identity and heritage.

Tet is a time to reflect on the past, to embrace new beginnings, and to eat a lot of really good food. It is a vibrant celebration brimming with parades, festivals, and firecrackers.

What is more, it is a celebration of family, tradition, and the enduring spirit of hope. It is a time to express kindness and well-wishes to each other.

So as the Vietnamese saying goes: "Chúc mừng năm mới. An Khang Thịnh Vượng Vạn Sự Như Ý."

(English translation of Vietnamese is as follows:

"Happy new year, wishing you peace and prosperity, and may all your wishes come true.")

□ 1630

#### ELECTED WITH A MANDATE

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

Mr. CISNEROS. Mr. Speaker, President Trump was elected with a mandate to improve the daily lives of hardworking Americans, a mandate to lower housing costs, make groceries more affordable, and help families get ahead and stay ahead.

Let's take a moment to highlight what the President has done for the people during his first week in office: ended birthright citizenship, a guaranteed right under the 14th Amendment; terminated diversity, equity, and inclusion programs; withdrew the United States from the Paris agreement; renamed the Gulf of Mexico; raised the cost of prescription drugs for seniors on Medicare and Medicaid; pardoned 1,500 convicted felons who stormed our Capitol and violently assaulted our police officers on January 6, 2021; and created a special fake department for shadow president Elon Musk.

Wait. None of those executive orders lowered costs, let alone meaningfully improved the lives of the American people.

I urge the President to stop treating the White House like his Twitter account and get to work fixing the problems he was elected to solve.

#### RECOGNIZING UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS CHEER TEAM

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

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an incredible achievement by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas cheerleading team, who once again won the All Girl Division 1A Game Day Championship title last week.

This isn't the first time these amazing women have taken the top spot in

one of the most prestigious championships for cheerleading. With this year's performance, an iconic Elvis-inspired homage to our city, they have reaffirmed themselves as not just national champions, but a national powerhouse for years to come.

I congratulate every cheerleader, coach, and family member who made this success possible.

Go Rebels.

#### CELEBRATING ROGER DESJARDINS ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a happy 100th birthday to my constituent, Mr. Roger Desjardins.

Originally from Cumberland, Rhode Island, Mr. Desjardins served in the 43rd Infantry and saw combat during World War II as a machine gunner.

Honorably discharged in 1946, he worked as a pipefitter and a plumber in North Providence before retiring nearly four decades ago.

That doesn't mean age has slowed him down. At his centennial celebration last week, he showed off some karate moves, walking cane and all, that he practices to stay in shape.

Mr. Speaker, Roger is a quintessential Rhode Islander: feisty, selfless, and full of hope and good cheer. When asked what his birthday wish is, he simply said: to live another year or two.

It is my honor to recognize him today on the floor of the people's House so that his story and his dedicated service to our Nation may be remembered for all time.

#### A DIRECT ATTACK

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

Mr. TURNER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on September 24, 1965, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed an executive order which ensures equal opportunity for people of color and women; prohibits Federal contractors from engaging in discriminatory practices in recruitment, hiring, training, and discriminating based on race, sex, religion, or national origin.

This executive order was signed during the period of transformative progress, 1 year after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a few months after the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and 2 years after Dr. Martin Luther King's iconic "I Have a Dream" speech.

Yet, just 2 days after we honored the legacy of Dr. King this week, President Trump, with the mere stroke of a pen, seeks to undo what has been in place for nearly 60 years. His actions aim to undermine the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and threaten the livelihood of thousands of Federal workers and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I could not sleep last night, and these executive orders by the President are a direct attack. We must stand up and speak.

#### IN HONOR OF GUS WILLIAMS

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

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Gus Williams, a basketball great and New York 16th Congressional District native from Mt. Vernon, New York. Gus was born October 10, 1953, in Mt. Vernon, and his basketball talent made him one of the greatest players to ever hail from my hometown.

On the basketball court, Gus got the nickname "The Wizard" for his acrobatic style, speed, and incredibly accurate midrange jump shots—none of which I have.

He led the Mt. Vernon Knights high school basketball team to a 22-1 season, winning State championship and State Player of the Year in 1971.

He went to the University of South California, where he was Most Valuable Player in 1975, went onto an NBA career with the Golden State Warriors, and then signed with the Seattle SuperSonics. In 1979, Gus led the NBA SuperSonics to their NBA title, averaging 28 points in their final games. The Sonics retired Gus' No. 1 jersey in 2004.

I am grateful that I got to go to high school with Gus Williams, to have seen his magic and his skill in person before the rest of the world had the opportunity.

He will be deeply missed in the Mt. Vernon community, but his memory will live on.

#### HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This past Monday, our Nation celebrated MLK Day, a powerful reminder of the ongoing effort for equality and justice and the profound impact an individual can make.

It is also a day spent volunteering and a day of action. I am so deeply proud of the schools across Oakland County, Michigan, who engaged in volunteer activities.

I also would like to share some of Dr. King's powerful words that resonate not only with me, but I believe speak to the moments that we find ourselves in today:

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

"The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice."

“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.”

“I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

Lastly, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: ‘What are you doing for others?’”

In service, we honor Dr. King’s legacy, and we commit to his written words from the Birmingham jail that we continue to strive toward justice.

#### BEACON OF PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, tonight is going to be a little thick, so I apologize to everyone, but we are going to actually try something a little bit broader. We are going to actually play economist.

I am going to try actually to walk through three or four themes here of why what we must do is so difficult, why it absolutely has to happen, and the truth about the math. Let’s have some fun here.

Since I know everyone around here is a genius and we spend lots of time reading difficult things, I am sure every Member of Congress got their hand on the latest McKinsey report that came out a few days ago that actually walked through in beautiful detail what is happening in the industrialized world with the lack of young people. Okay. Let’s walk through this.

Idiots like me have been coming behind this microphone for almost a decade talking about the morality of prosperity. I don’t care if you are on the left or right, but having a society that grows and becomes prosperous and becomes more and more productive and can provide better things is moral, but, also, why is it so hard?

Look, this was done by our own CBO, taking updates from the data from the Census Bureau. In 8 years, the United States has more deaths than births. Last year, we had 17 States that had more deaths than births.

Okay. If Members read through, the term now has become “absence of young people.” There is lots of crazy discussions. There are entire books. I have all these things on my shelves about natalist policies and how many countries have tried to encourage higher fertility rates, and all failed. There really is no success in the entire world.

They have been able to move forward some of the fertility rates spiking up, and then they go back and fall back to the mean. It is the nature of wealth. It is the nature of modern societies, but then my colleagues come to me and say: David, you are on Ways and Means, chaired the Joint Economic Committee, so all of these economists

work for you. Show me how we are going to have 3 percent GDP growth every year.

I can show Members how to do it. I just need my colleagues to understand that the United States is better off than so many countries, but the fact of the matter is we are having fewer children than countries like France.

In 8 years, we have more deaths than births. Remember the first year of economics class where they walked through the formula and said, well, population growth, then capital expenditures for plant and equipment that are more productive, then spikes in technology. That is how the wealth of a nation is built. We are losing one of the things.

When people like me walk behind these microphones, my colleagues need to hear coming out of their mouths: I am willing to actually deal with the reality of how do we make capital investments in equipment that makes us more productive? How do we encourage the synthetic biology that makes us not only live longer, but able to survive and do well and enjoy life? How do we actually deal with not being fearful of AI and artificial intelligence, but use that to make this another American century? I can’t make the math work without the adoption of labor substitutes.

I am going to actually show something here that seems to make people mad when I get to it. Let’s wait, I am going to actually make a pitch that what are the two extraordinary privileges of this country?

Okay. Members are going to hear monetarists come behind the microphone all the time and say that people want to use the U.S. dollar and that people must use the U.S. dollar to borrow, to trade in, and to hold assets.

As an economist, what is actually more valuable than having the world reserve currency is that smart people, entrepreneurs, and people with wealth want to invest their lives, their time, and their talents in the United States.

We hold the two greatest extraordinary privileges from a worldwide economist. We have to start understanding the math and what we are up against because it is not us.

Start to take a look at what is going on. I know some of these charts are almost impossible to read, but the basic point of many of these is we have all talked about, in a couple of years, all of the baby boomers are 65 and up, and we have this huge population bubble.

We hate to say this because we get booed at our townhalls when we say this: The fact of the matter is, in the next 10 years, almost 100 percent of U.S. debt is interest and the growth of the cost of Medicare.

How many years have we known that baby boomers were going to turn 65? It has been 65 years, but we didn’t plan for it. We didn’t set it aside. One thing we weren’t ready for as a society is, in 1990, fertility rates started to roll over.

As the McKinsey report goes up and down, it is the absence of young people. Now make an economy grow.

Some of the points I am going to try to make here is this one. I need people to think. There was the kerfuffle last week when Elon Musk and some of the others got into the H-1B visas, bringing talent into the country. I am actually not even sure I liked the H-1 process. I would like to move maybe to a talent-based system.

The entire industrialized world is going through things very similar to us. China’s numbers look—it is the craziest charts you are ever going to see. It is like a boom.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the world competed for hydrocarbons, oil. We remember the oil.

The last decade, we sort of battled for where we could have supplies of rare earths. Some of the smartest economists who actually do demographics are now saying that the industrialized world is going to knife each other for smart people.

Now, maybe a smart person is the great carpenter or the synthetic biologist, but we need to start being honest with each other that my colleagues want us, particularly my economic team, to say: Build us ideas. Build us a plan. As we get ready to do reconciliation, do the things that provide us the growth so we can still be Americans, that sort of beacon of prosperity.

□ 1645

Mr. Speaker, you have to understand that, in 8 years, there will be more deaths than births.

Are we going to be willing to do very difficult things and move to a talent-based immigration system that doesn’t care about your race, your gender, who you cuddle with, or anything else? It cares about the talent.

I have actually done entire presentations here where I have shown that what happened at the border over the last 4 years will make the working poor poorer in this country. It is math. It is not my opinion. I am not demagoguing. It is math.

In part of our society, we have what is called the quartiles. I sort of despise that term. It is people who didn’t graduate high school, so what they do economically is sell their willingness to work. They go out and hang drywall. They bust their backsides, and then, tomorrow, they are competing against millions of other people with the same skill set. Look at how our economy works and the fact that, let’s be brutal, populations under a certain income will receive services from our society because we are a compassionate society.

When you start to see a talent-based immigration system, you have people here because of the productivity they bring to society. It turns out that when you look at their career, they pay a boatload of taxes and actually help us grow. We need to deal with the math, and the fact of the matter is, we look over and over at these things.

I am just using Japan because it is easy. Japan has almost 300 percent

debt-to-GDP, but it is a unique society because their corporations, their individuals, actually finance almost their entire debt, where the United States is chewing up much of our capital stock now. We are borrowing somewhere between maybe, if you actually just take this fiscal year, as high as \$80,000 every second. We borrow \$6 billion, \$7 billion every single day.

I have done the chart before, but think about this. We click off an additional trillion dollars of borrowing about every 125 days. Do you think it is going to go on forever?

I am going to show you, in the second part of this, a number of the biggest bond traders in the world, and Larry Fink and Ray Dalio are basically saying you guys got a problem, and it is coming fast. They are actually taking billions of dollars and starting to hedge even the U.S. bonds and saying we think you are going to 5 percent, 6 percent.

Please understand that if the United States ever went back to what was normal before the Great Recession of 2008, if we went back to a 6 percent handle on U.S. debt, in 9 years, 45 percent of all tax collections are interest. Why doesn't that scare the crap out of people?

Then, we are going to engage in policies where we are doing our best to scare to death the very people we are turning to, saying to please buy our bonds.

How do we do what is necessary, particularly in reconciliation, to not hurt working people by having their taxes go up because of the expiring provisions of TCJA, and then also, at the same time, deal with the math. If we finance everything, because we are already scheduled to borrow about \$22 trillion additional between now and, I think, 2034, is the intent to stack another \$5 trillion on top of that?

You don't think the bond markets aren't going to punish us? Little bits of interest just crush not only the U.S. Government but also working people.

How many people can afford a mortgage right now when it is over 7 percent? How many can afford a car loan? We just went through, functionally, 3, 4 years of inflation where, in my community, if you don't make 27 percent more, you are poorer today.

Isn't the employment rate great? It is, but it is wage growth, and wage growth goes up by two things: inflation, which means you are not getting ahead and are just treading water, or productivity.

When you are lacking population growth, how do you get productivity? Regulatory policy, good trade policy, great tax policy that makes it so you are investing in plants, equipment, and research and development to do it better, faster, cheaper. That is how you make people less poor.

This one is a little tricky, but it is fascinating. If you actually dig into the article, if you are out of your mind or geeky or you just don't have a life or

you don't have a Netflix subscription, you sort of dig into what level of productivity growth you actually need just to sustain your lifestyle.

It is all sorts of different countries, and for the United States, you need almost about 2 percent where we are looking at the different years. Do you see the pink line? We calculate if you are not having at least a 1.8 percent productivity gain, which is a lot, you are functionally poorer. You become poorer.

For all the people who complain about, well, don't do tax cuts for business. Okay. Don't do regulatory change for business. Okay. Now, go read the literature.

We know that, in 2017, when we did the change in the corporate tax rates, getting companies to move their money back here, getting them to invest in productivity, those things, we calculate from 60 to 70 percent of every dime they got went into wages because, once again, the primary way people make more money is productivity.

This is the chart I am sure will show up in an election ad beating the crap out of me, but you see this spike? That was the years of the open border. We go back to normality where the immigration system—except we are the last country really on Earth that uses a familial system.

In a familial system, you sponsor someone because your grandma was here. Your grandma sponsors her sister, and they sponsor theirs. That is a familial immigration system.

My argument is, as part of when we are starting to deal with productivity for the society, we actually have to start thinking about it from top to bottom. It is not just great AI policy, great synthetic biology policy, great regulatory policy, great tax policy. It is also going to have to be immigration.

Now, on to sort of the reality of where we are at. We actually got, I am going to call it, better news. CBO actually did some calculations and said we expect tax receipts to be up in this fiscal year.

I have come here repeatedly and shown my chart that says, for every \$1 the United States takes in in all sorts of tax receipts—remember, most of those tax receipts are going to Social Security, Medicare, those sorts of things, but for every \$1 we take in, \$1.39 is spent.

Guess what? The good news is that now it is no longer \$1.39 of spending for every \$1 we take in. Now it is \$1.36. It got better, but it is still terrifyingly bad. This is the improvement that so many people are running around being giddy about.

Let's actually sort of walk through some of these numbers as quickly as we can.

This chart says Federal spending as the share of total tax revenue. The reason I am showing you this is to give you an idea of the scale we are up against. If you actually take all of our

tax receipts, every dime, and say here is what we call mandatory spending—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, veterans benefits, and interest because you have to pay your interest—we are the ones who basically binge on debt. It consumes every dollar of tax receipts plus some.

We actually don't collect enough taxes to pay for our mandatory spending and our interest. That is our basic problem. If you do net interest and mandatory spending, it consumes everything.

Mr. Speaker, the point from this chart is very simple: Everything you and I vote on, everything a Member of Congress votes on, is on borrowed money. That is every dime of defense and every dime of nondefense discretionary.

We are going to do theatrical things like go on our local talk radio show, go on cable television, sometimes stand behind these mikes and say things that may be great policy, but we act like it actually will make a difference to these sorts of numbers. It doesn't.

I have heard my brothers and sisters here say things like, okay, ObamaCare subsidies for those who are here illegally. I am fine with that. Go ahead and get rid of them, but it is 9½ hours for an entire year's worth of borrowing.

In an entire year, you just covered 9½ hours. Don't act like it is a solution. It is one of a thousand things you have to do.

Here is the classic problem on the way this place thinks. It turns out that fixing things is complex, and we live in a society with these things where we want something that is simple, flashy, short. It turns out that complexity often requires a complex solution.

It is hard. We will have the armies of the lobbyists in the hallways mad at us. They don't like it when we tell the truth, Heaven forbid.

Have you ever gone home and talked to your voters and they think if you just got rid of foreign aid—and then you show them the chart. It is about a week of borrowing, and they just stare at you with daggers, like, how can that be?

It is not their fault. I believe the political class, the commentary class, and the partisan media class have just made up crap for years.

I challenge my brothers and sisters on the left and the right to know your math and start telling the truth. If you look at charts like this where this right here is breakeven, this is where the dollar is. Even this year, every dime of discretionary and a little sliver of mandatory are on borrowed money, once again.

The only reason I threw this chart in the way it is, where we did '24, '25—you see this. That was with the CBO's calculations that the law says next year they get to take in some \$400 billion additional taxes because Americans' taxes go up. We don't want that to happen. We want to protect hardworking people.

The very last board I am going to show here is the way you protect American people is you offset as much of that as you can because you give it to hardworking folks and then take it away from them in higher interest costs and higher financing costs. You smile at them and hand them a dollar in their face while you are grabbing their wallet from behind and stealing it from them. That moment of telling the truth about math is really important.

I brought a lot of the boards just trying to explain that, for the last couple of years, for every \$1 we took in in tax receipts, we spent \$1.39. This year, we will spend \$1.36, which means all that differential.

This is a little complex, but this will make it super simple, as best I can.

You are going to hear particularly Democrats and others say the tax reform caused this or that. You have to work through the incredible craziness of the pandemic, but if you look at the charts and actually take a look at the matching of TCJA and what we expected to be inflation-adjusted tax receipts—I am not playing the scam of looking at how much more money we are getting, even though we have had 25 percent inflation. For an honest number, when you actually calculate it and normalize it, guess what? Tax receipts are pretty much right on track.

We have a couple of these to give you sort of a sense. When you take a look at annual revenues match pre-TCJA projections, this one is important, and we often don't actually talk about it. Go back to the baseline numbers of CBO and Joint Tax before we did tax reform in 2017. Then, step up to where we are today and take a look where baseline is. If you adjust for inflation, it is normal.

□ 1700

The math is normal. When someone says, well, it is because you did this tax reform and you helped the economy, I am not standing in front of you and saying tax cuts pay for themselves. What I am saying is that the scale of the economy actually today is right on track to what the projections were before tax reform.

It is a complex calculation of everything from technology adoptions to new ways we do things to productivity gains, but the baseline number is the baseline number.

Now, back to trying to make the point. What is the issue with the United States bingeing on debt? Is it that we don't collect enough taxes, or is it that we spend too much money?

I have done entire presentations here where I have shown high marginal tax rates, low marginal tax rates, and we seem to hold about 17 percent of the size of the economy in taxes. You will often hear 17 percent of GDP.

It is historic. Somehow when you raise up the marginal tax rates, you are getting 17 percent of the economy. Part of that is an offset because the economy slows down. When you have

done low marginal tax rates, the economy grows, so you are getting 17 percent of the economy because the economy has expanded.

In trying to make the point that growth is moral, it is also great economics. How do you grow, grow, grow? I just showed you, in the beginning portion of this, we have an issue. In 8 years, we will have more deaths than births. We have a demographic issue—debt demographics. Demographics are your destiny.

I am just trying to point out on this, over the last 4 years, we functionally have borrowed \$7.8 trillion in deficits. That borrowing functionally is a current stimulus effect, but you are going to pay for it. It is coming out of your retirement, whether you know it or not. It is coming from your kids.

I am 62, and my wife is 62. I have a 9-year-old daughter and a 2½-year-old son. They both have the same birth mom. We have adopted them. My little boy, when he is 24, to keep baseline services, just to keep things even—what was that fancy word? *Ceteris paribus*—the United States, in about 22 years, would have to double every single tax. The math basically says my kids will be part of the first generation in America that will be poorer. That is the morality of this place.

They will say, DAVID, adopting modernization and cutting spending is really hard, and we are going to get someone who is going to say mean things about us. Instead, you are willing to screw over your kids? That is the morality of this place. How is that Republican or Democratic?

Then, once again, to my friends on the left over here, I have done a whole presentation on it. Go to the Manhattan Institute right now. Look up Riedl's analysis. Every tax hike—and there is a dozen of them—on those \$400,000 and up, when you do all the economic effects, produces about 1½ percent of GDP.

For those of us on the right, here are all the things we are willing to cut. It is about 1 percent of GDP.

If my math is right, that is—what?—2½ percent.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to borrow about 7 percent of the entire economy this year. Does anyone get the fraud? "Here are the tax hikes. It is rich people," or, "We are going to do these cuts."

We are not willing to do the hard things of modernizing how we deliver services to our brothers and sisters in this country because we are going to make some bureaucracy, some union, some company out there that lives off delivering the services the way they were doing it 30 years ago modernize.

Once again, over the last 4 years, we have gone from—what is it?—4 years ago, the debt was \$1.52 trillion. Last year, it was \$1.9 trillion. Now, you have to understand that that number also is a bit of a fraud.

The United States is one of the only countries that doesn't actually put in

its internal borrowing. We borrow money from the Social Security trust fund, from the veterans trust fund, from all these things. Are we not going to pay it back? You know we pay interest to those.

That is why the real number for this year is going to be closer to \$2.3 trillion because there is about another \$300 billion out there that we borrow internally that we also have to pay back and also have to pay interest.

Budget deficits are headed to—I have to make the point. If there is any staffer who actually writes memos for their boss, this is the one I want them to memorize. If we do the tax hikes that are coming and don't offset them—we don't pay for them—in 9 years, we are no longer at 7 percent of the economy in borrowed money. We are at, I think it is, 9.2 percent of the economy in borrowed money.

When the smart people are starting to tell us that small changes in interest rates—are we really dead set on trying to freak out our bankers, the people we turn to, and say: Please buy U.S. bonds. Help us finance the fact that we can't stop spending.

Let's say this again. If we went to a six handle on U.S. debt, so 6 percent, which I think, before 2008, we were at 5½, 6 percent, somewhere in there, in 9 years, 45 percent of all tax receipts would be just interest.

We are playing with live ammunition here, and we seem terrified to own a calculator.

You are going to tell our brothers and sisters, the hardworking people of this country, that we are not going to let your taxes be raised. Absolutely. But we don't want to do things that are hard and get yelled at by a lobbyist or some group back home, so we are just going to borrow the money. We are going to give it to you, and then a few years from now, you will find out that productivity in the country has slowed down because the capital stack, another \$4 trillion we have sucked out of the economy, doesn't get lent to your business, to you buying a house, to the new piece of equipment.

The economists have already done the calculations basically saying—I am sorry, it got crumpled as I was marching over here—you want to maximize the economic growth and the wealth of this country. There is a CBO report that has been vetted by my economists on Joint Economic. You want to maximize prosperity and the curve. You offset the spending because you are screwing up the available capital.

The reason really smart bond houses are now writing articles is the bingeing on debt that is going on in this country but also China and so many other places. Why do you think Great Britain this summer took down their government? Their bonds exploded; they lost their government. What the hell do you think is going on in France? What do you think is going on in Germany? What do you think happened in South Korea? What do you think was happening in Canada?

All these countries, even Germany, are just trying to deal with the financing costs of their pensions. The United States is much better off than many of these countries, but it is coming fast for us.

Do hard things today. Maximize prosperity tomorrow for every working person but also for my kids and maybe for your pension, your retirement.

Mr. Speaker, getting older isn't Republican or Democratic. It is math. Go to CBO's data and tell the truth: 100 percent of the debt for the next 30 years is Social Security and Medicare. The rest of the government actually grows slower than tax receipts. It is like \$124 trillion of borrowing, but everything is basically what we call discretionary. Military is actually squeezed to grow slower than the tax receipts. It actually has what they calculate as a positive balance.

This isn't mean because, the fact of the matter is, we have demonstrated here over and over that you could modernize how we deliver so many of these things to our brothers and sisters who have earned their benefits. You just have to be willing to tell the bureaucracy and the deliverers of those services, saying: We expect you to modernize.

Those of us with a fixation on watching the bond futures, the debt markets, today's interest rates are almost a full point higher than they were December 1. If that 1 percent works its way into U.S. bonds over the next 10 years, it is almost \$3 trillion of additional spending. It is almost everything we are talking about trying to cut.

Grow up. Figure out how to actually act like we are the board of directors of the biggest economy in the world, understand math, and start being fiscally disciplined. It doesn't mean cruel. It is not cutting and slashing. If you don't communicate to the world, who we ask for money, they raise our interest rates, and those interest rates are much more cruel than anything we could possibly do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Before we go to our next speaker, may I please remind the gallery to close the door if there are conversations outside the gallery.

#### PARDONING RIOTERS WHO ASSAULTED 140 POLICE OFFICERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HIMES. 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.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, here we are on the final legislative day of inauguration week.

As a Democrat, this was a week of mixed feelings for me and for my colleagues on this side of the aisle. I am also a genetic optimist, so on Monday, I went to the inauguration, yes, concerned, but also optimistic about new possibilities, committed as I always have been to finding ways to work with my Republican colleagues for the benefit of my constituents, and celebrating the peaceful transfer of power this time.

This time because, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, 4 years and 17 days ago today, in this Chamber, a brutal, violent, criminal attempt was made to prevent the peaceful transfer of power in our democracy.

Thousands of people rioted and descended on the Capitol. They broke windows, and they attacked police officers with heavy objects, with bear spray, with their fists, with anything at hand. Several carried firearms.

There were 140 police officers who were assaulted. Let me say that again: There were 140 police officers who were assaulted that day.

All of us have memories of that day. I started the day up in that corner of the gallery, and when it became clear that we had to evacuate, because I was in the gallery with some colleagues, it took a long time. We saw what was happening on the floor.

We saw the Capitol Police with weapons drawn as an object broke the window of the main door to the House. We watched the Capitol Police move a heavy article of furniture. In this country, it was an article of furniture that prevented the rioters from getting into this Chamber.

We have all seen those images. This time, we had a peaceful transfer of power.

Now, on Inauguration Day, I kept that optimism until the moment that the new President took the decision to pardon not those who were wrongly convicted for their actions on that day, not those who just got caught up in the frenzy and maybe didn't know that they were committing an offense by trespassing on the Capitol Grounds. The new President pardoned every single person, including those involved in those assaults on 140 police officers—every single one of them.

That was an uncomfortable moment for some of my colleagues, particularly on the Republican side. They were asked, and, well, they hadn't read the pardons, hadn't heard the story. It was an uncomfortable moment.

The Speaker responded by saying, yeah, we are not looking backward; we are looking forward. Then, very shortly thereafter, he reconstituted a committee to investigate the people who investigated what happened here on January 6.

□ 1715

The Speaker of the House said, House Republicans are proud of our work so far in exposing the false narratives peddled by the politically-motivated January 6th Select Committee during the 117th Congress; the false narratives.

Mr. Speaker, I get it. I get it. Sometimes people on my side of the aisle do things with which I do not agree, and I try to have the principle and the integrity to call them out for it.

You have two choices when people on your side do things that are wrong: You can call them out, you can stand with principle, and you can be clear; that is what leaders do. You can also obfuscate and try to change history, try to suggest that what we all saw and experienced traumatically wasn't what we all saw and experienced.

You can make stuff up, like maybe the FBI instigated it. Maybe it was really NANCY PELOSI's responsibility. Maybe it was antifa. Oh gosh, maybe the people who assaulted 140 police officers were just, like, tourists.

That is not the way of leadership. That is some dark, dark and evil way of proceeding. Why?

Because it dishonors the truth on which the stability of this Republic relies and maybe just as importantly: It dishonors all of us who were there that day and who saw with our own eyes what happened.

Maybe worst of all, it dishonors the brave men and women who put their lives on the line that day to protect us. Those of us who put up the signs on our office doors saying: Thank you, Capitol Police, only to turn around and remain silent when the attackers of the Capitol Police were pardoned on Monday.

These were people who put their lives on the line to protect us and the democracy. I think it is worth spending a minute or two, Mr. Speaker, to remind us who these people were and what happened.

Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, he stood outside the gates here and fended off the attackers as they bear sprayed him in the face and eyes.

The very next day, Officer Sicknick suffered two strokes and ultimately died, making him the first fatality of January 6. Officer Brian Sicknick was only the fourth Capitol Police officer to die in the line of duty.

Julian Khater pled guilty to pepper-spraying Brian Sicknick, and he was pardoned on Monday.

Officer Jeffrey Smith of the Metropolitan Police Department, he fought off rioters in the Capitol that day only to be struck in the face by a metal pole as the siege continued that night. You can imagine the trauma. We feel it. We didn't get struck in the face by a metal pole though. Days later, Officer Smith climbed into his Ford Mustang and shot himself in the head.

Those who assaulted Officer Jeffrey Smith are now pardoned.

Officer Howie Liebengood grew up in the Senate. He followed his father

around. His father, at the time, was the Senate Sergeant at Arms. On January 6, Officer Liebengood was posted to Senate security where he faced down the rioters.

He came back to work, despite what he had seen on January 6, on January 7, January 8, and January 9, unwilling to quit and inconvenience his fellow, similarly depleted and exhausted, officers. On the night of January 9, Howie Liebengood took out his service revolver and shot himself.

Officer Gunther Hashida was a decorated Metropolitan Police Department officer. Officer Hashida earned the Medal of Valor, the Lifesaving Medal, and a variety of other medals throughout his 18-year career. He served on the Department's emergency response team and responded here on January 6. Officer Hashida took his own life at home in July of 2021.

Officer Kyle DeFreitag was 26 years old. He had been on the job for 5 years when he deployed to the riot, to the insurrection. He was tasked with enforcing the curfew put in place that evening. He was 26 years old when he committed suicide.

The trauma suffered by these officers was not an accident. It wasn't an act of God or an act of nature. It was done to them by people, each and every one of whom has now been pardoned. Not just pardoned, but they are out there now celebrating and thinking about what is next.

I have three questions for my colleagues before I invite them to reflect on what this week has meant to them. The first question I have is: We put up the signs on the doors that say: Thank you, brave police officers.

Do we honor the heroic work of those who protected us, or do we denigrate it by suggesting that it just wasn't that big a deal?

Is this just about signs on office doors, or do we raise our voices and say: Those who attacked the people who protected us don't deserve a pardon and certainly don't deserve celebration.

Question number two: Are we—and when I say we, each and every one of us and each and every American—are we committed, without reservation or condition, to the idea that our differences are worked out in here with words and debate, not out there with bear spray and clubs?

Are we committed to that idea, or do we celebrate and pardon and elevate those who wield bear spray and clubs?

I hear all too often something that is pernicious in moral thinking and a corrosive of our political dialogue: the whataboutism. Yeah, I was bad on January 6, but what about Black Lives Matter throwing bricks through Starbucks' windows in Seattle? What about the Biden pardons?

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker, I am not a fan of the Biden pardons either. I am not afraid to say so because of that thing about principles.

Yet, the whataboutisms that equates a violent attempt to change the peace-

ful transfer of power with some idiot who throws a brick through a Starbucks window in Seattle or Portland, that is a lack of discernment.

More to the point, what a moral failure. We don't let 3-year-olds defend themselves with the idea that somebody else did it too.

How has this become an exculpatory thing in our politics?

Third and last, Mr. Speaker, and this is something that I think each and every one of us should reflect on: Where is your line? At what point do you say no? At what point do you find the courage to say no, Mr. President, that is not right?

This week, we learned that for most of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the pardon of the attackers of these police officers was not outside that line.

At what point do you say no?

At what point do you remember that the Congress is here to be a check and a balance on the President, regardless of the President's party?

Mr. Speaker, if you can't answer that question, if you don't have that point, and if you don't have the commitment to principle and the courage to stand by that point, well, Mr. Speaker, I fear for the future of our Republic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LANDSMAN).

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman HIMES for doing this Special Order and including us. I appreciate his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I was legitimately shocked. I am certain that this is the first time ever the President of the United States, certainly in my lifetime, released hundreds of violent criminals from jails and sent them into our communities. These are people who have now said that they are determined to buy weapons to pursue more violence.

These are convicted criminals. They conspired to overthrow their own government. They stormed this Capitol. They destroyed property, sacred property. They attacked police officers.

On day one, a day that was supposed to be about fixing the economy, lowering prices, actual border security, and real immigration reform, the focus was on releasing these violent criminals.

Mr. Speaker, it is a betrayal to the American people, to law enforcement, and it has made us all less safe.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman HIMES for having this Special Order, and I thank him for his passion.

Mr. Speaker, I represent many of those people who protect us on Capitol Hill, members of the Capitol Police, the Metropolitan/Washington D.C. Police force, the Arlington County Police, police who live in my northern Virginia district.

January 6 was not some distant abstract event for my constituents. De-

mocracy was on the line that day, but so were their lives, their bodies, their physical safety, and well-being.

As events spiraled out of control on January 6, calls for help went out on police radios, and they were answered by men and women in uniform throughout the Metropolitan, Washington, Virginia, Maryland area, some of whom were off duty. Many were off duty. They chose to get dressed, jump in their cars, and race in to help us, to protect our Capitol, to protect all who work here.

Hundreds of those officers still bear the wounds seen and unseen that will never heal. The January 6 pardons and commutations were some of the worst things that Donald Trump has ever done. With these pardons, Trump embraced lawlessness and violence.

Trump pardoned the people who beat and tased my constituent, Officer Michael Fanone, who was tased repeatedly in the neck. He described it as being like torture, and it led him to have a heart attack at that very time.

Trump pardoned the people who gave a brain injury to my constituent, Officer Jeffrey Smith, days before he died by suicide. Congressman HIMES mentioned how he was beat in the head with a pole. His wife, Erin Smith, said those injuries changed him in his final days. He was a different person.

Officer Smith's death was later ruled as a line-of-duty death because it resulted from injuries suffered here on our behalf.

Trump pardoned the people who attacked my constituent, Officer Brian Sicknick. They sprayed him with pepper spray hours before his death from two strokes.

The medical examiner said his death was from natural causes, but what happened to Brian before his death during the attack on the Capitol clearly led to his death.

Trump pardoned the people who chanted Nazi slogans, who yelled racial slurs at our Black police officers, and those who called for the assassination of Speaker NANCY PELOSI and Trump's own Vice President, Mike Pence.

□ 1730

Mr. Speaker, Trump pardoned a man who was charged with throwing an explosive device at the police in the Capitol. This was a man who had previously been convicted of domestic violence, battery by strangulation.

Trump pardoned a man who stomped on an officer's head, who beat other officers with a flagpole, a crutch, pieces of furniture, and sprayed officers with pepper spray. Trump pardoned a man who ripped off the gas mask of a police officer, beat him in the face with it, and crushed him in a door.

Trump pardoned hundreds of people who pled guilty to assaulting law enforcement, many of them with deadly weapons. He pardoned or commuted the sentences of over a dozen violent criminals convicted of seditious conspiracy. By pardoning those who carry out

these heinous crimes, Trump has made our country less safe. He betrayed law enforcement heroes who protected the Capitol at great personal cost.

These pardons send a message that violent crime, even against law enforcement, will be sanctioned by Trump's government if it is carried out in his name.

I urge my colleagues to remember the families of the five police officers who died as a result of January 6: Officer Brian Sicknick, Jeffrey Smith, Howie Liebengood, Gunther Hashida, and Kyle DeFreitag.

I urge everyone to remember the officers who defended the Capitol on January 6, who put themselves at risk to protect us, and will carry the scars of the seen and unseen as long as they will live.

These scars were inflicted by people who will face no further legal consequences for those acts thanks to President Donald Trump. This injustice is a gross betrayal of their service and sacrifice but does not diminish their patriotism.

After January 6, many of my colleagues posted messages of support for law enforcement and the Capitol Police. It was on their doors. It was on their walls and in the halls of Longworth and Rayburn and Cannon. It was even on social media.

Members like Speaker JOHNSON called for the prosecution of those criminals who committed those acts of violence against the police who guard the Capitol. Let me quote Speaker JOHNSON: To the fullest extent of the law.

Republicans went on to hold votes on symbolic, nonbinding resolutions expressing support for police. They told us to back the blue. Back the blue. Their silence, or worse, their defense of Trump's pardons are unforgivable. They can never again claim to back the blue with any credibility.

Finally, a warning: With these pardons, Trump put violent, dangerous people back into our communities. Many of them did terrible things on other days besides January 6, 2021. All of them had just been emboldened by receiving get-out-of-jail-free cards from this President. Who knows what other criminal acts they will perpetrate next. Unfortunately, we are all about to find out.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for organizing this Special Order, appropriately so, because this is the conclusion of the inauguration efforts of this week.

On January 6, 2021, I expressed numerous times to my constituents and to my colleagues that it was the saddest day of the 20 years that I have had the privilege and honor to serve in the Congress. That day the world watched as a violent mob of insurrectionists

breached the Capitol, attacked the police viciously, and tried to overturn a fair and free election.

I was one of 25 Members trapped in the House gallery for 40 minutes as we observed the counting of the ballots as part of our responsibility every 4 years. Let me just say this was not a peaceful protest, as some have tried to portray it, including President Trump and Speaker JOHNSON.

Let me repeat this. The photos and the videos that we have all seen over the last 4 years make it very clear. This was no lovefest. It was not a peaceful protest. It was a violent insurrection attempt to overthrow a fair and free election. I feel very strongly about this, having been trapped up in that gallery with my colleagues here for 40 minutes.

On that day I came to the House Chamber with my colleagues to certify the 2020 Presidential election which President Joe Biden had won overwhelmingly. Four years later, this week, my colleagues and I are speaking out to ensure that no one rewrites history with a false narrative which we see being attempted to take place.

Just a handful of brave Capitol Police Officers up in that gallery that day stood between us and the violent mob that had already breached the Senate Chamber and now were trying to force their way in here to the people's House.

I took this photograph when I was crouched down there with my gas mask because of the attempt of this violent insurrectionist group of people. I remember crouching on the floor with my colleagues, thinking how could this be happening. I thought it was surreal and unbelievable that it would happen in the United States of America, the oldest democracy in the world.

As a student of American history, I thought to myself that as strong and as resilient as our democracy and our country has been historically during wars and depressions, it was a stark reminder to me, while we were up there wondering what our fate might be, how fragile our democracy can be.

This week President Trump pardoned over 1,500 perpetrators convicted for assaulting police officers and, as was noted by some of my colleagues here this afternoon, some who lost their lives. These are some of the folks, these Proud Boys, that were trying to break into the Chamber. The police had them on the ground. They had their hands bound.

We finally got out of this Chamber and walked out. As we were being escorted to a safe place, we saw people trying to break in to get us, to get the Speaker, to hang the Vice President at the direction of President Trump. They were trying to overthrow the results of the 2020 elections.

I do not believe these pardons that took place here this week were justified, and I think the majority of Americans don't believe they were either. We cannot allow history to be rewritten. The facts are the facts. The docu-

mentation, the hearings, and the videos are proof of what happened that day.

Four years ago those violent insurrectionists chose a different path at President Trump's direction. They shattered the sacred tradition of a peaceful transfer of power which has been the cornerstone of our democracy, dating back to our first President, George Washington.

Let's talk about this week. While I didn't agree with the outcome of last year's election, I respected it. That is the essence of a democracy. This Monday, at the inauguration, we had a peaceful transfer of power led by President Biden and the other former Presidents. That is the way it is supposed to be. It wasn't that way 4 years ago. No, it wasn't that way 4 years ago.

Let me just say something, and I wish more of my Republican colleagues had the profiles in courage that I think is required. Democrats are not election deniers. We may not have liked the results of last year's election, but we accepted them. We cannot allow history to be rewritten nor can we forget the sacrifices of the brave Capitol Police who risked everything to protect our democracy.

The Capitol Police stood on the front lines, giving their all to defend the ideals that we hold dear. They should be appropriately honored with more than simply a sign on our doors. We owe it to their families and to our constituents to ensure that the truth remains clear that justice is served and that we never let those who sought to tear us apart rewrite the story on January 6, 2021.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by expressing the simple, plain truth. As a young boy, my mother told me: The truth is the truth. America is a great country. Some of us like to say it is the greatest country in the world because we honor the truth. That is why we are here today. That is why this Special Order is important. That is why I want to thank my colleagues for speaking out. America is a great country because we honor and respect the truth.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because in light of the President's January 6 pardons, someone has to stand up for the people who defend this building, who defend the Representatives of the United States of America, and who defend this magnificent institution. I thank my esteemed colleague, Congressman HIMES, for reserving this Special Order hour because it is time that truth speaks.

Just the other day at the beginning of this week, the members of the Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police protected us once again as we engaged in inauguration ceremonies of the 47th President of the United States of America. The irony is that while they



were protecting us, the Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Government was preparing to undermine the spirit and the substance of that protection.

The very idea of pardoning people who violently attack police officers who were protecting the United States Capitol is anathema and should be offensive to every Member of this body. I simply cannot think of a more disgraceful act than to disrespect the life and blood and legacy of the men and women of the Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police who in some cases literally gave their lives to protect this institution and us as Representatives.

To pardon people who relished and participated in acts of political violence that led to the death of innocent people is something that cannot be and should not be overlooked. It cannot be explained away nor can it be facilitated by politics and regular parliamentary procedure.

What the 47th President of the United States has done in pardoning the people who attacked the police officers is simply wrong. I echo the words of my dear colleague, Congressman COSTA. We have been taught right versus wrong. Every Member of my esteemed party and Members on the opposite aisle should join us in raising their voice. We are setting a precedent. We should know and we should call out when character counts.

It is offensive, to say nothing of the fact that it is a violation of the moral law that makes this country one of the finest flowers in the gardens of the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell the members of law enforcement who protect this building and who protect our lives that the Members of the Democratic Party see them. We understand them, and we respect them. We respect their character.

We are ashamed at the behavior of this institution. We are ashamed at the behavior of the 47th President of the United States of America. We are ashamed that our officers have been disgraced and humiliated while they come here to protect us every day. We have not afforded them the same protection that they give us every day.

We honor them. We respect them with giving them this hour to tell them that we have not forgotten those that have given their full measure of their duty to this country to protect us and to ensure that this democracy goes forward, even as they have been betrayed.

We do not support the unsolicited and unwarranted disrespect extended to them by the President of the United States of America. There were quotes given by Reverend Martin Luther King the other day. There is one quote I would like to share:

“Expediency asks the question, ‘Is it politic?’ Vanity asks the question, ‘Is it popular?’ But conscience asks the question, ‘Is it right?’”

There comes a time that we must take a position that is neither with politics nor does it have to be popular.

We must ask the question that conscience raises: Is it right?

□ 1745

At some point, we have to stop functioning in this building as if political parties are the only thing that matters. At some point, we have to summon the courage to do what is right, even when it is not necessarily politically expedient. This is one of those times.

What happened on January 6 was violent. What happened on January 6 was a disgrace to the men and women who serve this institution honorably. Anybody who tries to make it out to be anything other than that, than actually what it was, is lying about what we saw with our very own eyes.

We shall know the truth, and the truth shall set us all free. How can we go forward if we cannot go forward in the truth? No lie can live forever.

The election of 2020 had been decided. The people who came here on January 6—that was not a day that most people in American history know what procedurally happens here. What happens here was supposed to be the transfer of power with the electoral college votes that we ceremoniously pass.

No, people were summoned. People were called. Who called them? What were they called to do? They came here and built a noose and gallows outside to hang the Vice President of the United States of America.

We sit here in silence? We act like it never happened?

What concerns me most now is that we are sowing the seeds for future anarchists. We are sowing the seeds for future insurrectionists. We are sowing the seeds for future levels of violence.

I would remind my colleagues that history is watching, the future is listening, and our children are observing everything that we do.

Before we get up and speak recklessly about a mob that violently attacked police officers, we would all be wise to consider how our words will age in years to come and whether future generations will condemn what we said or that we remained silent about this issue.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is no lie can, will, or shall live forever. Whether today or tomorrow or whether in days or decades to come, truth will have its day. We shall know the truth, and the truth shall set us free.

Let us work to do what is right, even when it is hard. Let us affirm what is good, even when it is politically dangerous.

Just yesterday, in this same Chamber where the officers were defending us, insurrectionists of January 6 came in here and sat up in the gallery.

Just this past week, there were 32 miles of fencing all around our beautiful Capitol.

If we had known then what we know now, police should have had the day off so these people could have roamed this building freely. That was their intent, to destroy and kill.

The constitutional ideals that make this Nation as good as its promise are what each of us should be in service to do. When history calls, we must be available to something greater than ourselves.

I pray that we will answer this call. I pray we will not dishonor what is right. I pray we will stand up for those who consistently stand up for us.

I take a point of privilege to say thank you from the bottom of my heart to those officers who came to work on that dreadful day to do what was right and normal and moral but who had been betrayed.

Reverend Martin Luther King also said there comes a time when silence is betrayal. I feel that many of our officers have been betrayed.

We can fix this. We can stand up. We can speak up. We cannot betray the legacy of those officers who have been slain, violently killed. They did not give their life. Their life was taken from them. They should be with their loved ones today. Let us not curse their memory by not erecting a statue and a monument to their brave souls.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a very special thank-you to my colleague, Congressman HIMES, for having the courage and the fortitude to stand up. Let the record reflect in years to come that we did our best to make sure we honored our commitment to this country.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for his words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Vermont (Ms. BALINT), my fellow New Englander.

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, day one, our President made our country less safe. Day one, with an irresponsible stroke of his pen, Donald Trump released 500 violent felons back out onto our streets.

These are the criminals who brutally attacked cops who were protecting this building. These were the people who betrayed our country, our democracy. I am not talking about the people who merely showed up that day to protest and didn't commit crimes. This is about the attackers who beat cops with pipes and flagpoles and tasers and mace, who literally stomped on police and tried to poke their eyes out. These were the sweeping pardons that Donald Trump made on day one.

These pardons disproportionately benefited the most violent among the mob. Now, they are back out on the street, heading to our communities. A number of them have already publicly commented that they are going to go buy some more guns, that they are out for retribution and have no remorse for what they did.

Of course, Americans are angry by this, and rightly so. It is an awful thing that the President has done, and it puts Americans in danger.

Among those who are angry is the Fraternal Order of Police, the largest

police union in the U.S., and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. They understand, more than anyone, that this puts law enforcement at risk.

In a statement, they said: “When perpetrators of crimes, especially serious crimes, are not held fully accountable, it sends a dangerous message that the consequences for attacking law enforcement are not severe.” They further worried that it could encourage more violence against law enforcement.

If you can viciously attack a police officer and get off scot-free, what kind of message is that?

So, violence is acceptable if it is committed on Donald Trump’s behalf? It is okay to beat a cop if it is in the service of keeping him in power?

This is incredibly dangerous. I have to say, it looks an awful lot like the actions of someone who would like to be a dictator.

How can the officers who protect us believe that we actually value them if the President doesn’t believe in holding people accountable who attacked them? How?

Over the last 2 years, I have had the opportunity to get to know many of the officers on the Capitol Police force. They take their jobs incredibly seriously. They have our backs every day. They put their lives on the line not just to protect our flesh and blood but to protect the very democracy, to protect the ideals of this country.

Like many of those who spoke before me have said, it is important to make this connection. These pardons are part of a concerted effort to rewrite what happened on January 6. This desecrates the memory of Officer Brian Sicknick, who lost his life in defense of this building, and it diminishes the great sacrifices that were made by thousands of officers that day.

If we don’t push back on this perverted rewriting of history, we can look forward to our children and our grandchildren learning about the glories of January 6, 2021.

It has to be remembered for what it was. It was a domestic terrorist attack, plain and simple.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to be trapped in a lie that they can’t get out of. I know by the eye rolls. Actually, even before we went into the inauguration, I saw some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle doing impressions of the incoming President, making fun of him. They are now trapped in this lie that they have perpetuated for years now, and they don’t know how to get out of it.

What Donald Trump has done on day one is to say to the Capitol Police: I value violent felons more than I value you.

I know I speak for so many Americans today when I say that makes me sick.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Vermont for her words as we close this up.

As is so often true in this Chamber, we heard lots of words, and I think they were powerful words, honoring those who protected us and honoring the truth, but what can we do? What is the action? What can we actually do?

Under the law passed a few years ago, Congress is required to produce a plaque to honor those officers who sacrificed so much on that fateful day 4 years and 17 days ago.

I have a little photograph of it here. The plaque reads: “On behalf of a grateful Congress, this plaque honors the extraordinary individuals who bravely protected and defended this symbol of democracy on January 6, 2021. Their heroism will never be forgotten.”

You can only look at the photo of the plaque because the plaque has never been put up, as required by law, in the Capitol of the United States. It is a little curious. We say, “Their heroism will never be forgotten,” yet the plaque, as required by law, is not yet displayed in the Capitol of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### PARDONING PRO-LIFE ACTIVISTS TARGETED BY DOJ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACKENZIE). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, today, the President of the United States issued 21 very important pardons of individuals who had been put in jail, prosecuted, persecuted, for their religious beliefs and exercise of their speech. These are individuals who are pro-life who had been put in jail because a weaponized Department of Justice was unleashed against these individuals, very specifically and purposefully because they were espousing their pro-life views.

In the President’s action to formally pardon these 21 individuals, he rights a wrong that was carried out against them. More importantly, he sends a loud message that the Department of Justice cannot and should not be targeted toward individuals for their political beliefs and their political actions. That is precisely what happened to those 21 individuals.

How do we know this? If you look at the application of the so-called FACE Act that was used to prosecute these individuals, to arrest and prosecute them, 97 percent of the FACE Act prosecutions between 1994 and 2024 were initiated against pro-life Americans.

I want you to pause and listen to that again. Ninety-seven percent of the prosecutions under this one act were carried out against pro-life Americans—this despite the fact that there have been numerous attacks on pro-life facilities and crisis pregnancy centers in the wake of Dobbs. Ninety-one pregnancy resource centers have been at-

tacked since the Dobbs opinion was leaked.

In 2022, pro-life activist Mark Houck was arrested by the FBI for FACE Act violations related to an incident outside of an abortion facility. They didn’t charge him in Pennsylvania—in fact, they passed—but the Feds went after him.

□ 1800

Mr. Speaker, you have to ask yourself: Why is that true?

There have been 411 recorded attacks on Catholic churches since 2020.

Was the FACE Act used once by the Department of Justice against any of these Catholic churches?

No.

So what does that look like for these 21 individuals?

By the way, I think this is really important in the context of the speeches that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were just giving with respect to the treatment of those individuals incarcerated, charged, and prosecuted in the wake of January 6. I will come back to that in a minute.

Regarding these individuals whom I am talking about with respect to the pro-life prosecutions by the Department of Justice under Joe Biden, as one of the attorneys for one of the defendants put it:

“While Biden’s prosecutors almost entirely ignored the firebombing and vandalism of hundreds of pro-life churches and pregnancy centers, they viciously pursued pro-life Americans.”

“And had they been opposing anything but abortion, Joe Biden would have given them medals. Instead Biden wanted them branded as convicted felons and imprisoned for years in a Federal penitentiary.”

Eva Edl is an 89-year-old survivor of a Soviet concentration camp who sat in front of the entrance to an abortion clinic in a wheelchair. She was one of those targeted by the Biden Department of Justice.

Let’s be clear. She described how she was shipped off in cattle cars to concentration camps in Yugoslavia at age 9. They were packed in body to body with no food and no water. She lived through that. She is 89 years old.

Again, I want everybody to understand who is listening to this at home: An 89-year-old survivor of gulags in Europe was prosecuted by the Biden Department of Justice at age 89 for being in a wheelchair in front of an abortion clinic—a Federal crime, Federal Department of Justice.

Paulette Harlow is a 75-year-old grandmother from Kingston, Massachusetts. She has six children and is a grandmother to eight. She is suffering from health issues: liver disease and arthritis. She was prosecuted and sentenced to jail in a 25-month sentence in Texas, miles away from her home in Massachusetts. She is 75 years old.

Why?

It is because she was at an abortion clinic professing her faith and her hope

that they would not carry out abortions.

Lauren Handy is a peaceful, pro-life activist and was formally sentenced to 57 months, almost 5 years, plus 3 of supervision, for her efforts to peacefully save the lives of the unborn. I want to be very clear. Lauren, whom I met, is actually a progressive activist. She and I don't agree on a lot of issues, but she was out advocating for life, and she was sentenced by the Biden Department of Justice under Merrick Garland to 57 months in jail.

Again, I want everybody to think about that.

She was protesting an abortion clinic. Nobody here, Mr. Speaker, by the way, is saying that there isn't room for misdemeanor-type prosecutions if you are in the way and you won't listen to the calls for you to leave. Call it a misdemeanor, pay a fine, whatever it might be. It was a Federal prosecution and she was sentenced to 57 months.

John Hinshaw, 68 years old, was sentenced to 21 months. He said: "People are having prayer services all over the place for us. The expression of support has just been tremendous."

Today, the President of the United States righted those wrongs. He righted those wrongs for those four I have just described and 17 others for a total of 21. He also sent a loud message, as I said before, that the Department of Justice never again should be politicized to target people for their beliefs and to be used as a political weapon as it has been under the Joe Biden regime.

It is a new day, and it is an important day.

I want to follow up, though, on my colleagues here who took the floor regarding January 6. I was very clear on this House floor 4 years ago during January 6 that what occurred was wrong. What was occurring and what had occurred was wrong. Those who had broken the law should be prosecuted for breaking the law. I don't know anybody who disagrees with that. I really don't.

There are differing facts for each one of those 1,500 cases. Some of them are pretty bad facts, and regarding some of them there are absolutely no facts at all, but they were pursued anyway.

Therein lies the problem.

I want everybody to really listen to this point. There is going to be time for us to study all 1,500 cases, and we can look and we can judge what was the nature of how they were arrested, where they were arrested, where were they put in jail, how long were they in jail, what were the conditions in the jail, and how many of their loved ones could they talk to.

What was their access to defense counsel?

What was the nature of the prosecution?

What did the judges do?

What were the sentences?

We need to look at all those things.

Notably, the President commuted I think 14 individual sentences. I don't

have it right in front of me, but I think it was 14, which tells me that the President and his team went through and tried to differentiate some of the worst, most egregious acts in their view that shouldn't be pardoned but rather commuted to time served.

I would also note this: we are now 48 months beyond the events. Many of these individuals were arrested early in the process, they have been in jail, they have been in the judicial system and have been dragged along. I have talked to dozens of parents, family members, wives, husbands, and spouses of the people who were jailed who were unable to talk to their loved ones. These are people without criminal records, people who had done nothing else.

Many of these people were charged with just parading here in the Capitol complex which then the court said: Well we are not sure about that, and then crossing a line and being in a place you are not supposed to be in, the obstruction issues.

What were you obstructing exactly?

Again, I think it is important to note that what occurred that day should not have occurred, that many of the acts that occurred should and have been punished. Some that were punished should have been punished, but when you completely ignore the rule of law, when you politically charge people, and when you use the Department of Justice as a political weapon, Mr. Speaker, then you undermine the rule of law and you turn it on its head, so that there is no differentiation between the right and the wrong.

Mr. Speaker, when you literally go prosecute an 89-year-old gulag survivor because she was exercising her pro-life views at an abortion clinic, what do you think one's view is of the righteousness of the other actions of the Department of Justice?

Mr. Speaker, how do you look at the 1,500 and go through and break them down in a way when 48 months later, as a father was on a news show today talking about his son and saying that his son had been moved from jail to jail, had had to filter the water through a sock because there was so much rust in the water, that they weren't able to talk to him for 3 weeks over Christmas, they didn't even know where he was and he couldn't get access to counsel during a lot of those times. What are we supposed to do with that?

Ignore it?

The President came in and made a judgment that these 1,500 people of varying forms, some sentenced and some not, some had taken plea deals and some not, had had 48 months of their life turned upside down by a Department of Justice who wanted to try to make an example out of them and the President of the United States said: Enough.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker?

I agree.

That is because at the end of the day, 48 months later, many of them having

been in jail for all or a lot of that time, many of them had their doors broken down, and many of them had FBI raids—I had two grandmas driving from Austin, Texas, out into the hill country just a few months ago who were arrested and jailed overnight because they were physically present here at the Capitol. They were not even inside, to the best of my knowledge. I think they might have just crossed one of the bike lines.

Three years later two grandmothers are arrested and put in jail?

Does anybody see what happens when we politicize the justice system and the scales of justice become something that we can't look at as blindfolded?

Again, why am I talking about this?

It is because today the President righted the wrongs of those 21 individuals who were literally protesting, in their view, and I share that view, the murdering of unborn children. I think that stuff matters. I think it matters a lot because had Joe Biden and had Merrick Garland not politicized the Department of Justice, then maybe 20 or 30 cases of individuals who had done something that were particularly egregious that were prosecuted, maybe those wouldn't have been pardoned. I don't know. I haven't studied every case.

However, Mr. Speaker, when you are looking at 1,500 cases and all the people who are being abused, I think the President did the right thing and again differentiated between those with the commuted sentences.

Meanwhile, what the President is doing besides, I think, trying to restore balance to the justice system is he is keeping his promises to secure our country.

One of my colleagues over there said that the first thing the President did was make us less safe.

Is he serious?

Is he serious?

He thinks reversing politicized political prosecutions 4 years later is making us less safe.

May I remind my Democratic colleagues that the individual who burned down a police station, a career criminal, got 27 months. That is the idea of justice from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Let's put aside the \$2 billion worth of damages nationwide in the wake of the Floyd riots, and let's put aside all the other damage that flowed from that.

Meanwhile, what is the President doing?

He is making our Nation much more safe. There was an executive order declaring a national emergency at the border.

In the first Congress that I was in office, I introduced the Border Visibility and Security Act to help regain operational control of the border. I put together a bill calling on the designation of cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, and I am pleased that that was one of the President's executive orders this week, declaring cartels as foreign terrorist organizations.

He issued an executive order requiring Homeland Security to deport aliens with orders of removal. There are over 1 million with orders of removal that Joe Biden wouldn't do.

Again, the lawlessness of the previous administration set the stage for the dangers that we have experienced, and now President Trump is undoing that damage.

There was an executive order saying categorical parole policies, undoing the CBP-1 app that was used to flood the zone with people who came into our country and were released and did things like kill Jocelyn Nungaray, whose mother Alexis I have gotten to know and who was with me for the inauguration this weekend.

There is an executive order to end the catch-and-release program and an executive order to resume the successful migrant protection protocols and return to Mexico, so we can stop the flow. To reinstate recognition of title 42 where you cannot travel through the country with communicable diseases. An executive order ending birthright citizenship, as it has been applied wrongly and incorrectly for years, to people who have manufactured or have used a manufactured cottage industry in which people pay money to get delivered into the country, have a baby, get the citizenship, and then it is what is known as anchor babies. It is real, it is pervasive, it is problematic, and it turns our country's system on its head.

By the way, yes, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will say: Yeah, but a court today ruled that that is not constitutional, so they put an injunction on it.

We will see. We will see how this plays out in the legal system.

From my reading of the law, when the 14th Amendment was passed in 1868, a mere 4 years later, the United States Supreme Court in the Slaughterhouse Cases, explicitly said—4 years removed from the passage of an amendment to the United States Constitution, the then-sitting Supreme Court said that it did not apply to people who were here as the children that were being born here of people who were foreign citizens. Another court echoed that a decade or so later.

One court came in and said: Well, no, we think there is birthright citizenship if you are born here to a foreign national, but only if you are a legal permanent resident.

I believe the President's executive order is correct, I believe it is lawful, I believe it is constitutional, and I believe he ought to continue to enforce it.

We ought to be challenging this all the way up to the courts and immediately win this. I believe this Supreme Court will side on the right side, which is that you are a citizen if you are the child of an American citizen. Subject to the jurisdiction thereof has to matter.

□ 1815

The President is restoring our border, restoring law and order, and re-

versing the damage, and he should be. He should be thanked and congratulated for it.

What else has he been doing in the last, what am I adding up, 78 hours? President Trump, 78 hours in, has been withdrawing us from the disastrous World Health Organization, a globalist entity that has been undermining our sovereignty and wants to take away our own decisionmaking and make us subject to foreign powers on our health issues; withdrawing us from the disastrous Paris climate treaty that was making us beholden to China and foreign nationals and unable to advance and promote our own American energy.

By the way, had we not reversed all of that, we wouldn't have been adding fuel to the fire of Russia going into Ukraine, so to speak.

The President has been declaring a national energy emergency; unleashing American energy; opening up exploration; reversing Biden's ridiculous bans on offshore drilling; making it the policy of the United States to recognize two sexes, male and female; ending affirmative action and DEI in the Federal Government and trying to get us back to the actual view of a government that does not look through the lens of color or sex, but, rather, merit and hard work; and requiring that everybody actually shows up to work. Who knew?

All of those things are things that the President has been doing in a matter of 78 hours since getting sworn in a few feet from this Chamber and making our country immensely better off for it.

We have already seen a massive decline in the number of people trying to come across our border. Who knew? Who could have predicted that if the law is enforced maybe people will say: I guess we can't come now. Maybe the cartels will say: This may not be the profit center that we have at the moment.

Just last night, a guy was apprehended by ICE somewhere up in New York or somewhere in the northeast, and he lost his mind. He started swearing at Trump, F Trump, all this stuff. I am with Biden forever. I am not going back to Haiti, he said.

Yeah, he is. He is, and so are a lot of other people because prisons of the world shouldn't be dumped onto the streets of America, endangering our citizens. That is what Biden did, and that is what Trump is reversing.

Now we have to deliver. This is my message to my colleagues here. We have to deliver. My friends in the Freedom Caucus, other conservatives, we have put forward a plan that we believe would deliver and deliver quickly.

We don't have time to waste. The President needs resources. Tom Homan needs resources. The Border Patrol met with the union this last week. They need resources. ICE needs resources to do their job, so let's do it.

They want \$86 billion. Let's find it. We can. The defense needs to be mod-

ernized, built up after getting undermined and focused on all sorts of ridiculous woke and DEI policies. We need a new, modern, robust military to beat China. We can do that.

We put forward \$200 billion over 4 years under President Trump to modernize the military, an additional \$50 billion a year. Let's do it. We can do it, and we can pay for it. We said we would raise the debt ceiling over 2 years, about \$4 trillion. We are not inclined to want to raise the debt ceiling, if it hasn't been noticed, but we will do it.

The President wants us to get that aside so CHUCK SCHUMER can't play games with the bond market, so let's get rid of the debt, or let's increase the debt ceiling. Let's get \$86 billion for Border Patrol. Let's get \$200 billion for defense. Then let's apply a handful of cuts to pay for those things. I don't know, how about we repeal the student loan fiasco? It is \$100 billion to \$270 billion.

How about let's just apply Medicaid work requirements so that, if citizens are on Medicaid for able-bodied Americans—not all, but the able-bodied Americans—that they must work? It is a pretty popular issue. Every Republican has voted for it, and it is \$120 billion.

We can pay for defense, pay for Border Patrol, make our Medicaid system better, and reverse the ridiculous student loan bailouts which are giving money from one American to another.

The plumber who never went to college is subsidizing the sociology major sitting in their parents' basement tweeting about nonsense. How about we end that? The sociology major pays their student loans. They took the loans out. The plumber who didn't can go do their thing. Every American who I know who works hard agrees with that. We can do that.

Conservatives, the Freedom Caucus, have put that forward. We want to support President Trump. We want to make sure that President Trump can deliver on the border, get the debt ceiling away from being used politically by CHUCK SCHUMER, and so we put that plan forward.

I think we should have already done it. As usual, we sit in this body, and we debate, and we continue to debate. Unfortunately, we are still debating. Unfortunately, in my opinion, we are going to continue to debate because there is a real debate going on about taxing and spending. I am blowing Republicans' minds when I say that I am all for tax cuts, but Members better cut the spending so that we can actually reduce deficits.

I have been pretty clear about that. A lot of my colleagues have been pretty clear about that. Some of my colleagues here seem to want nothing but tax cuts and no spending cuts.

I will also hear a lot of my colleagues say: Yeah, I am for the spending cuts. I will say: Okay. Well, how many? How much? Well, I mean, as many as we can get.

Okay. Are we going to reduce deficits, or not? I mean, that is the question I am going to be asking everybody. Can they do math, and are we going to reduce deficits? That is the question every American sent us here to do. Do the hard work. Sit at the table. Why don't we put the microphones down, put the cameras away, use these tables, roll our sleeves up, get the paper out, and do the math?

Yes, tax cuts can and do produce economic growth. It puts more money in the hands of the people. Yes, it is morally correct to leave more money in the hands of the American people. I would gladly vote to get rid of the income tax, zero it out, leave the money in the hands of the people, but guess what? Whether it is President Trump's vision or views on tariffs, whether it is something else, there has to be some amount of revenue to pay for all of the promises and all of the programs that every politician loves to go home and run on.

Now the rubber meets the road, or the piper needs to be paid, or whatever metaphor one wants to use. We cannot have our cake and eat it, too. We can't run around and beat up the CBO and blame the CBO and say: They never score anything right. That is probably correct. They are human beings, and maybe they are biased. Fine.

Okay. My colleagues think they are biased? Great. Come in with models. Come in with somebody else's models and show me how the math is going to work out, that if we do all of these tax cuts and do no spending cuts, that somehow we are magically going to have deficits going down because it is just not going to be true in the aggregate.

When Ronald Reagan cut taxes in 1981 from the confiscatory top rate of 70 percent under Jimmy Carter to 28 percent on the top marginal rate, there was a lot of good economic growth.

Corporations aren't these blobs. They are people. When we cut corporate rates 8 years ago from 35 percent to 21 percent, there was pretty significant economic growth. That was pretty meaningful in trying to keep more capital here.

Expensing, research and development, all of these things create growth. A lot of tax cuts don't. Take the child tax credits. I get how child tax credits can be argued to be good policy, pro-family policy, good for hardworking families that have kids. There are a lot of arguments for child tax credits.

They are not going to be massively stimulative. They cost about \$800 billion over 10 years. So my point is, over here, it is like what are you cutting? What are we cutting because we can't continue to rack up deficits?

I think I am running close on time, and I just want to close with this: Right now, we have \$36 point whatever trillion in debt. Right now, we are racking up about \$1.8 trillion to \$2 trillion a year in deficits.

When the interest on the bonds that we currently hold are getting refi-

nanced over the next couple of years, those interest payments are going to go up, probably to the tune of another \$200 billion to \$300 billion a year.

If we renew all of the tax cuts, which I support, but we don't offer any cuts correspondingly, we will add hundreds of billions, if not several trillion dollars of deficit spending. The job for us, Republicans and Democrats, is to not do that.

I am asking for deficit neutrality on the tax bill. Let me just be clear. If all of my colleagues who want deficit neutrality or deficit reduction on the tax bill combined with spending cuts, being debated in reconciliation right now, if I win that fight that I am having right now with colleagues—because they are like, I don't know—the best we will get is the current deficit, that is how we would end up with exactly what we have right now of roughly \$2 trillion deficits.

By the way, it will get worse because of the interest I mentioned if we keep financing and refinancing our debt, and interest goes up.

What I am trying to scrap for in this body is just trying not to make it worse. It is like "Christmas Vacation." "Worse? How can it get any worse?"

This is how it can get worse: Vote for more deficits. We shouldn't do that.

My actual last point with, I think, 1½ minutes remaining, is that, if we are going to do anything at all in reconciliation on policy, we should be fighting for healthcare freedom.

My office put out a report 2 days ago entitled: "The Case for Healthcare Freedom." It is 48 pages that outlines all of the ways in which we are destroying the average American's access to healthcare; that we need to restore the doctor-patient relationship; that we need to break down the stranglehold that insurance companies and hospitals and pharma have on our healthcare. We need to free them up with expansive health savings accounts and allow them to decouple that so they can go out in the market and get actual insurance, go to direct primary care and actually get care for themselves instead of paying \$25,000 a year between their employer and themselves to be able to go to an insurance company and be told that they can't get care.

If we want to transform this country, we need to reduce the deficits, give the President what he needs to secure the border, and give us healthcare freedom. That is my call to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

## PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND WORKFORCE,

Washington, DC, January 23, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker of the House,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON: I hereby transmit the Rules of the Committee on Education and Workforce for the 119th Congress, as adopted by the Committee on January 15, 2025.

Sincerely,

TIM WALBERG,  
Chairman.

### RULE 1. REGULAR, ADDITIONAL, AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m., while the House is in session. The Committee shall meet for the consideration of a bill or resolution pending before the Committee or the transaction of other committee business on regular meeting days fixed by the Committee if notice is given in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(b) The Chair may call and convene, as he or she considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business.

(c) If at least three members of the Committee desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chair, those members may file with the clerk of the Committee their written request to the Chair for that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the staff director of the Committee shall notify the Chair of the filing of the request. If, within three calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chair does not call the requested special meeting to be held within seven calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Committee may file with the clerk of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Committee will be held, specifying the date and hour thereof, and the measure or matter to be considered at that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the staff director of the Committee shall notify all members of the Committee that such meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered. Such notice shall also be made publicly available in electronic form and shall satisfy the notice requirements in clause 2(g)(3)(A)(ii) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour and only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at that special meeting.

(d) Legislative meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be open to the public, including radio, television, and still photography coverage, unless such meetings are closed pursuant to the requirements of the Rules of the House of Representatives. No business meeting of the Committee, other than regularly scheduled meetings, may be held without each member being given reasonable notice.

(e) The Chair of the Committee or of a subcommittee, as appropriate, shall preside at meetings or hearings. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee or of a subcommittee, members shall preside as provided in clause 2(d) of Rule XI of the Rules of

the House of Representatives. No person other than a Member of Congress or Congressional staff may walk in, stand in, or be seated at the rostrum area during a meeting or hearing of the Committee or subcommittee unless authorized by the Chair.

**RULE 2. DECORUM**

The Chair shall enforce decorum.

**RULE 3. STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES AND JURISDICTION**

(a) There shall be four standing subcommittees. In addition to conducting oversight in the area of their respective jurisdictions as required in clause 2 of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, each subcommittee shall have the following jurisdiction:

*Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.*—Education from early learning through the high school level, including but not limited to elementary and secondary education, special education, homeless education, and migrant education; overseas dependent schools; career and technical education; school safety and alcohol and drug abuse prevention; school lunch and child nutrition programs; educational research and improvement including the Institute of Education Sciences; environmental education; pre-service and in-service teacher professional development including Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Title II of the Higher Education Act; early care and education programs including the Head Start Act and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act; adolescent development programs, including but not limited to those providing for the care and treatment of certain at-risk youth, including the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act; and all matters dealing with child abuse and domestic violence, including the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and child adoption.

*Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development.*—Education and workforce development beyond the high school level, including but not limited to higher education generally, postsecondary student assistance and employment services, and the Higher Education Act; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; all domestic volunteer programs; all programs related to the arts and humanities, museum and library services, and arts and artifacts indemnity; postsecondary career and technical education, apprenticeship programs, and workforce development, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development programs from immigration funding; science and technology programs; adult basic education (family literacy); all welfare reform programs, including work incentive programs and welfare-to-work requirements; poverty programs, including the Community Services Block Grant Act and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); the Native American Programs Act; the Institute of Peace; and all matters dealing with programs and services for the elderly including nutrition programs and the Older Americans Act.

*Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.*—Wages and hours of workers, including but not limited to the Davis-Bacon Act, the Walsh-Healey Act, the Service Contract Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act; workers' compensation including the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, and the Black Lung Benefits Act; the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act; the Family and Medical Leave Act; the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifica-

tion Act; the Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988; trade and immigration issues as they affect employers and workers; workers' safety and health, including but not limited to occupational safety and health, mine safety and health, and migrant and agricultural worker safety and health; and all matters related to equal employment opportunity and civil rights in employment.

*Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions.*—All matters dealing with relationships between employers and employees, including but not limited to the National Labor Relations Act, the Labor-Management Relations Act, and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act; the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and employment-related health and retirement security, including pension, health, and other employee benefits and the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

(b) The majority party members of the Committee may provide for such temporary, ad hoc subcommittees as determined to be appropriate.

**RULE 4. EX OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP**

The Chair of the Committee and the ranking minority party member ("Ranking Member") shall be ex officio members, but not voting members, of each subcommittee to which such Chair or Ranking Member has not been assigned and as ex officio members they shall not be counted for the purpose of constituting a quorum.

**RULE 5. SUBCOMMITTEE SCHEDULING**

(a) A Subcommittee chair shall set meeting or hearing dates after consultation with the Chair and other subcommittee chairs with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings, wherever possible. No such meetings or hearings, however, shall be held outside of Washington, D.C., without the prior authorization of the Committee Chair. Where practicable, 14 days' notice will be given of such meeting or hearing.

(b) Available dates for subcommittee meetings shall be assigned by the Chair to the subcommittees as nearly as practicable in rotation and in accordance with their workloads. As far as practicable, the Chair shall not schedule simultaneous subcommittee markups, a subcommittee markup during a full Committee markup, or any hearing during a markup.

**RULE 6. SUBCOMMITTEE RULES**

The rules of the Committee shall be the rules of its subcommittees.

**RULE 7. SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT OF MEMBERS**

To facilitate the oversight and other legislative and investigative activities of the Committee, the Chair of the Committee may, at the request of a subcommittee chair, make a temporary assignment of any member of the Committee to such subcommittee for the purpose of constituting a quorum and of enabling such member to participate in any public hearing, investigation, or study by such subcommittee to be held outside of Washington, D.C. Any member of the Committee may attend public hearings of any subcommittee and any member of the Committee may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chair for that purpose.

**RULE 8. HEARING PROCEDURE**

(a) The Chair, in the case of hearings to be conducted by the Committee, and the appropriate subcommittee chair, in the case of hearings to be conducted by a subcommittee, shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one week before the commencement of that hearing unless the Chair of the Com-

mittee, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member, determines that there is good cause to begin such hearing at an earlier date or the Committee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of members required under the rules of the Committee for the transaction of business. In the latter event, the Chair or the subcommittee chair, as the case may be, shall have such an announcement promptly published in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form. To the extent practicable, the Chair or the subcommittee chair shall make public announcement of the final list of witnesses scheduled to testify at least 48 hours before the commencement of the hearing. The staff director of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record as soon as practicable after such public announcement is made.

(b) Subcommittees are authorized to hold hearings, receive exhibits, hear witnesses, and report to the Committee for final action, together with such recommendations as may be agreed upon by the subcommittee. As practicable, such exhibits, including videos, shall be provided to the Chair the day before a hearing.

(c) All opening statements at hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee will be made part of the permanent written record. Opening statements by members may not be presented orally, unless the Chair of the Committee or any subcommittee determines that one statement from the Chair or a designee will be presented, in which case the Ranking Member or a designee may also make a statement. If a witness scheduled to testify at any hearing of the Committee or any subcommittee is a constituent of a member of the Committee or subcommittee, such member shall be entitled to briefly introduce such witness at the hearing.

(d) To the extent practicable, witnesses who are to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee shall file with the staff director of the Committee, at least 48 hours in advance of their appearance, a written statement of their proposed testimony, together with a brief summary thereof, and shall limit their oral presentation to a summary thereof of no more than five minutes. The staff director of the Committee shall promptly furnish to the staff director of the minority a copy of such testimony submitted to the Committee pursuant to this rule. The Chair of the Committee, or a member designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to witnesses.

(e) When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair by a majority of those minority party members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon. The minority party may waive this right by calling at least one witness during a Committee hearing or subcommittee hearing.

(f) In the conduct of hearings of subcommittees sitting jointly, the rules otherwise applicable to all subcommittees shall likewise apply to joint subcommittee hearings for purposes of such shared consideration.

**RULE 9. QUESTIONING OF HEARING WITNESSES**

(a) Subject to clauses (b), (c), and (d), a Committee member may question hearing witnesses only when the member has been recognized by the Chair for that purpose, and only for a five-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to

question a witness. The questioning of witnesses in both Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chair, followed by the Ranking Member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority party. The Chair shall exercise discretion in determining the order in which members will be recognized. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority party members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to place the members of the majority party in a disadvantageous position.

(b) The Chair may permit a specified number of members to question a witness for longer than five minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this clause shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(c) The Chair may permit Committee staff for the majority and the minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this clause shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(d) In an investigative hearing or in an executive session, the Chair's authority to extend questioning under subsection (b) and (c) of this rule shall be equal for the majority and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate and shall only be conducted by counsel for the majority and the minority party when authorized under subsection (c) of this rule.

(e) Each member may submit to the chair of the Committee additional questions for the record, to be answered by the witnesses who have appeared. Each member shall provide a copy of the questions in an electronic format to the clerk of the Committee no later than 10 business days following a hearing. The chair shall transmit all questions received from members of the Committee to the appropriate witnesses and include the transmittal letter and the responses from the witnesses in the hearing record. After consultation with the ranking minority member, the chair is authorized to close the hearing record no earlier than 120 days from the date the questions were transmitted to the appropriate witnesses. Members assigned to a subcommittee may submit questions for the record to such subcommittee in a manner consistent with this Rule.

#### RULE 10. SUBPOENA AUTHORITY

The power to authorize and issue subpoenas is delegated to the Chair of the full Committee, as provided for under clause 2(m)(3)(A)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chair shall notify the Ranking Member prior to issuing any subpoena under such authority. To the extent practicable, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Member at least 24 hours in advance of a subpoena being issued under such authority, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays. As soon as practicable after issuing any subpoena under such authority, the Chair shall notify in writing all members of the Committee of the issuance of the subpoena.

#### RULE 11. DEPOSITION PROCEDURE

(a) Consistent with House Rules, in accordance with Section 3(t) of H. Res. 5, the Chair, upon consultation with the Ranking Member, may order the taking of depositions pursuant to notice or subpoena as contemplated by this rule.

(b) The Chair or majority staff shall consult with the Ranking Member or minority staff no less than three business days before

any notice or subpoena for a deposition is issued. After such consultation, all members shall receive written notice that a notice or subpoena for a deposition will be issued.

(c) A notice or subpoena issued under this rule shall specify the date, time, and place of the deposition and the method or methods by which the deposition will be recorded. Prior to testifying, a deponent shall be provided with a copy of the Committee's rules and the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(d)(1) A deposition shall be conducted by one or more members or Committee counsel(s) as designated by the Chair or Ranking Member.

(2) A deposition shall be taken under oath or affirmation administered by a member or a person otherwise authorized to administer oaths and affirmations.

(e) A deponent may be accompanied at a deposition by counsel to advise the deponent of the deponent's rights. Only members and Committee counsel, however, may examine the deponent. No one may be present at a deposition other than members, Committee staff designated by the Chair or Ranking Member, such individuals as may be required to administer the oath or affirmation and transcribe or record the proceedings, the deponent, and the deponent's counsel (including personal counsel and counsel for the entity employing the deponent if the scope of the deposition is expected to cover actions taken as part of the deponent's employment). Observers or counsel for other persons or entities may not attend.

(f)(1) Unless the majority, minority, and deponent agree otherwise, questions in a deposition shall be propounded in rounds, alternating between the majority and minority. A single round shall not exceed 60 minutes per side, unless the members or counsel conducting the deposition agree to a different length of questioning. In each round, a member or Committee counsel(s) designated by the Chair shall ask questions first, and the member or Committee counsel(s) designated by the Ranking Member shall ask questions second.

(2) Any objection made during a deposition must be stated concisely and in a non-argumentative and non-suggestive manner. Deponent may refuse to answer a question only to preserve a privilege. When the deponent has objected and refused to answer a question to preserve a privilege, the Chair may rule on any such objection in a manner consistent with House Regulations. If the Chair overrules any such objection and thereby orders a deponent to answer any question to which a privilege objection was lodged, such ruling shall be filed with the clerk of the Committee and shall be provided to members and the deponent no less than three days before the ruling is enforced at a reconvened deposition. If a member of the Committee appeals in writing the ruling of the Chair, the appeal shall be preserved for Committee consideration. A deponent who refuses to answer a question after being directed to answer by the Chair in writing may be subject to sanction, except that no sanctions may be imposed if the ruling of the Chair is reversed on appeal. In all cases, when deposition testimony for which an objection has been made is offered for admission in evidence before the Committee, all properly lodged objections then made shall be timely and shall be considered by the Committee prior to admission in evidence before the Committee.

(g) Deposition testimony shall be transcribed by stenographic means and may also be video recorded. The clerk of the Committee shall receive the transcript and any video recording and promptly forward such to minority staff at the same time the clerk distributes such to other majority staff.

(h) The individual administering the oath shall certify on the transcript that the deposition was duly sworn. The transcriber shall certify that the transcript is a true, verbatim record of the testimony, and the transcript and any exhibits shall be filed, as shall any video recording, with the clerk of the Committee. In no case shall any video recording be considered the official transcript of a deposition or otherwise supersede the certified written transcript.

(i) After receiving the transcript, majority staff shall make available in a manner to be determined by the Chair the transcript for review by the deponent or deponent's counsel. No later than ten business days thereafter, the deponent may submit suggested changes to the Chair. Committee majority staff may direct the clerk of the Committee to note any typographical errors, including any requested by the deponent or minority staff, via an errata sheet appended to the transcript. Any proposed substantive changes, modifications, clarifications, or amendments to the deposition testimony must be submitted by the deponent as an affidavit that includes the deponent's reasons therefore. Any substantive changes, modifications, clarifications, or amendments shall be included as an appendix to the transcript, a copy of which shall be promptly forwarded to minority staff.

(j) The Chair and Ranking Member shall consult regarding the release of deposition transcript or electronic recordings. If either objects in writing to a proposed release of a deposition transcript or electronic recording or a portion thereof, the matter shall be promptly referred to the Committee for resolution.

#### RULE 12. QUORUMS

One-third of the members of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action other than amending Committee rules, closing a meeting from the public, reporting a measure or recommendation, or in the case of the Committee or a subcommittee authorizing a subpoena. For the enumerated actions, a majority of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum. Any two members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

#### RULE 13. REFERRAL OF BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER MATTERS

(a) The Chair shall consult with subcommittee chairs regarding referral to the appropriate subcommittees of such bills, resolutions, and other matters that have been referred to the Committee. Once copies of a bill, resolution, or other matter are available to the Committee, the Chair shall, within three weeks of such availability, provide notice of referral, if any, to the appropriate subcommittee.

(b) Referral to a subcommittee shall not be made until three days have elapsed after written notification of such proposed referral to all subcommittee chairs, at which time such proposed referral shall be made unless one or more subcommittee chair shall have given written notice to the Chair of the full Committee and to the chair of each subcommittee that he or she intends to question such proposed referral at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee, or at a special meeting of the Committee called for that purpose, at which time referral shall be made by the majority members of the Committee. All bills shall be referred under this rule to the subcommittee of proper jurisdiction without regard to whether the author is or is not a member of the subcommittee. Upon a majority vote of the Committee, a bill, resolution, or other matter referred to a subcommittee in accordance with this rule

may be recalled at any time for the Committees direct consideration or for reference to another subcommittee.

(c) The Chair shall announce the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third calendar day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day) on which members have notice thereof; but this requirement may be waived if the Chair of the Committee, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member, determines that there is good cause or the Committee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of members required under the rules of the Committee for the transaction of such business.

(d) When a bill or resolution is being considered by the Committee or a subcommittee, members shall provide the clerk in a timely manner a sufficient number of written copies of any amendment offered, so as to enable each member present to receive a copy thereof prior to taking action. However, if directed by the Chair or majority staff, an electronic submission to the clerk in a timely manner, in the manner prescribed by the Chair or majority staff, shall satisfy the requirement to provide the clerk in a timely manner a sufficient number of written copies of any amendment offered. A point of order may be made against any amendment not reduced to writing. A copy of each such amendment shall be maintained in the public records of the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be.

(e) In determining the order in which amendments to a matter pending before the Committee or a subcommittee will be considered, the Chair may give priority to:

(1) The Chair's mark, and

(2) Amendments, otherwise in order, including amendments in the nature of a substitute, that have been filed with the Committee at least 24 hours prior to the Committee or subcommittee business meeting on said measure or matter.

(f) The Chair shall provide, in a timely manner, electronically or in paper form to the Ranking Member a copy of each report received by the Chair that is authorized by statute to be transmitted to Congress and addressed by Rule II, section 2(b) of the Rules of the House of Representative, unless such report has been specifically marked as already having been sent to the Ranking Member or Minority Committee staff.

(g) The Chair or majority staff shall consult with the Ranking Member or minority staff before waiving Committee consideration of a bill referred to the Committee. The Chair shall provide to the Ranking Member a copy of any Committee letter exchanged with another committee waiving Committee consideration of a bill referred to the Committee within 24 hours of issuing such a letter.

#### RULE 14. VOTES

(a) With respect to each roll call vote on a motion to report any bill, resolution, or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered thereto, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(b) In accordance with clause 2(h) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Chair of the Committee or a subcommittee is authorized to postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment. Such Chair may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time after reasonable notice. When proceedings resume on a postponed

question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(c) The chair may conduct any record vote by electronic device in accordance with clause 2(n) of Rule XI.

#### RULE 15. RECORDS AND ROLL CALLS

(a) Written records shall be kept of the proceedings of the Committee and of each subcommittee, including a record of the votes on any question on which a roll call is demanded. The result of each such roll call vote shall be made available by the Committee or subcommittee for inspection by the public at reasonable times and shall be made available on the Committees website within 48 hours of such record vote. Information so available for public inspection and on the Committee's website shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition; the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition; and the names of those members present but not voting. The text of an amendment offered to a measure or matter considered in Committee shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than 24 hours after its final disposition in Committee. A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one member.

(b) In accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, any official permanent record of the Committee (including any record of a legislative, oversight, or other activity of the Committee or any subcommittee) shall be made available for public use if such record has been in existence for 30 years, except that—

(1) any record that the Committee (or a subcommittee) makes available for public use before such record is delivered to the Archivist under clause 2 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be made available immediately, including any record described in subsection (a) of this Rule;

(2) any investigative record that contains personal data relating to a specific living individual (the disclosure of which would be an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), any administrative record with respect to personnel, and any record with respect to a hearing closed pursuant to clause 2(g)(2) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be available if such record has been in existence for 50 years; or

(3) except as otherwise provided by order of the House of Representatives, any record of the Committee for which a time, schedule, or condition for availability is specified by order of the Committee (entered during the Congress in which the record is made or acquired by the Committee) shall be made available in accordance with the order of the Committee.

(c) The official permanent records of the Committee include noncurrent records of the Committee (including subcommittees) delivered by the Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Archivist of the United States for preservation at the National Archives and Records Administration, which are the property of and remain subject to the rules and orders of the House of Representatives.

(d)(1) Any order of the Committee with respect to any matter described in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be adopted only if the notice requirements of Committee Rule 12(c) have been met, a quorum consisting of a majority of the members of the Committee is present at the time of the vote, and a majority of those present and voting approve

the adoption of the order, which shall be submitted to the Clerk of the House of Representatives, together with any accompanying report.

(2) This subsection applies to any order of the Committee that—

(A) provides for the non-availability of any record subject to subsection (b) of this rule for a period longer than the period otherwise applicable; or

(B) is subsequent to, and constitutes a later order under clause 4(b) of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, regarding a determination of the Clerk of the House of Representatives with respect to authorizing the Archivist of the United States to make available for public use the records delivered to the Archivist under clause 2 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives; or

(C) specifies a time, schedule, or condition for availability pursuant to subsection (b)(3) of this Rule.

#### RULE 16. REPORTS

(a) Reports of the Committee. All Committee reports on bills or resolutions shall comply with the provisions of clause 2 of Rule XI and clauses 2, 3, and 4 of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(1) No such report shall be filed until copies of the proposed report have been available to all members at least 36 hours prior to such filing in the House of Representatives. No material change shall be made in the report distributed to members unless agreed to by the Ranking Member; but any member or members of the Committee may file, as part of the printed report, individual, minority, or dissenting views, without regard to the preceding provisions of this rule.

(2) Such 36-hour period shall not conclude earlier than the end of the period provided under clause 2(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives after the Committee approves a measure or matter if a member, at the time of such approval, gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, or additional views for inclusion as part of the printed report.

(3) To the extent practicable, any report prepared pursuant to a Committee or subcommittee study or investigation shall be available to members no later than 48 hours prior to consideration of any such report by the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be.

(4) No such report shall be filed until copies of the proposed report have been available to all members at least 36 hours prior to such filing in the House of Representatives. No material change shall be made in the report distributed to members unless agreed to by the Ranking Member; but any member or members of the Committee may file, as part of the printed report, individual, minority, or dissenting views, without regard to the preceding provisions of this rule.

(5) Such 36-hour period shall not conclude earlier than the end of the period provided under clause 2(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives after the Committee approves a measure or matter if a member, at the time of such approval, gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, or additional views for inclusion as part of the printed report.

(6) To the extent practicable, any report prepared pursuant to a Committee or subcommittee study or investigation shall be available to members no later than 48 hours prior to consideration of any such report by the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be.

(b) Disclaimers.

(1) A report on activities of the Committee required under clause 1 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall



include the following disclaimer in the document transmitting the report to the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Education and Workforce (or any subcommittee thereof) and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its members.

Such disclaimer need not be included if the report was circulated to all members of the Committee at least seven days prior to its submission to the House of Representatives and provision is made for the filing by any member, as part of the printed report, of individual, minority, or dissenting views.

(2) All Committee or subcommittee reports printed pursuant to legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report:

This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Education and Workforce (or pertinent subcommittee thereof) and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its members.

The minority party members of the Committee or subcommittee shall have three calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, to file, as part of the printed report, supplemental, minority, or additional views.

(c) Reports of Subcommittees. Whenever a subcommittee has ordered a bill, resolution, or other matter to be reported to the Committee, the chair of the subcommittee reporting the bill, resolution, or matter to the Committee, or any member authorized by the subcommittee to do so, may report such bill, resolution, or matter to the Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair of the subcommittee to report or cause to be reported promptly such bill, resolution, or matter, and to take or cause to be taken the necessary steps to bring such bill, resolution, or matter to a vote.

(1) In any event, the report, described in the proviso in subsection (c)(2) of this rule, of any subcommittee on a measure which has been approved by the subcommittee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the staff director of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the subcommittee, for the reporting of that measure. Upon the filing of any such request, the staff director of the Committee shall transmit immediately to the chair of the subcommittee a notice of the filing of that request.

(2) Bills, resolutions, or other matters favorably reported by a subcommittee shall automatically be placed upon the agenda of the Committee as of the time they are reported. No bill or resolution or other matter reported by a subcommittee shall be considered by the full Committee unless it has been delivered or electronically sent to all members and notice of its prior transmission has been in the hands of all members at least 48 hours prior to such consideration. When a bill is reported from a subcommittee, such measure shall be accompanied by a section-by-section analysis; and, if the Chair of the Committee so requires (in response to a request from the Ranking Member of the Committee or for other reasons), a comparison showing proposed changes in existing law.

#### RULE 17. APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES, NOTICE OF CONFERENCE MEETINGS, AND CONFERENCE MOTION

(a) Whenever in the legislative process it becomes necessary to appoint conferees, the Chair shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees the names of those members of the subcommittee that handled the legislation in the order of their seniority upon such sub-

committee and such other Committee members as the Chair may designate with the approval of the majority party members. Recommendations of the Chair to the Speaker shall provide a ratio of majority party members to minority party members no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio of majority members to minority party members on the full Committee. In making assignments of minority party members as conferees, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Member of the Committee.

(b) After the appointment of conferees pursuant to clause 11 of Rule I of the Rules of the House of Representatives for matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, the Chair shall notify all members appointed to the conference of meetings at least 48 hours before the commencement of the meeting. If such notice is not possible, then notice shall be given as soon as possible.

(c) The Chair is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House of Representatives whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

#### RULE 18. MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER SUSPENSION

(a) A member of the Committee may not seek to suspend the Rules of the House of Representatives on any bill, resolution, or other matter that has been modified after such measure is ordered reported, unless notice of such action has been given to the Chair and Ranking Member of the full Committee.

(b) The Chair of the Committee shall not request to have scheduled any bill or resolution for consideration under suspension of the Rules that expresses appreciation, commends, congratulates, celebrates, recognizes the accomplishments of, or celebrates the anniversary of, an entity, group, individual, institution, team, or government program; or acknowledges or recognizes a period of time for such purposes.

#### RULE 19. BROADCASTING OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

(a) Television, Radio and Still Photography.—

(1) Whenever a hearing or meeting conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee is open to the public, those proceedings shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography subject to the requirements of clause 4 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and except when the hearing or meeting is closed pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives and of the Committee. The coverage of any hearing or meeting of the Committee or any subcommittee thereof by television, radio, or still photography shall be under the direct supervision of the Chair of the Committee, the subcommittee chair, or other member of the Committee presiding at such hearing or meeting and may be terminated by such member in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(2) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be then currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(3) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be then accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery.

(b) Audio and Video Coverage of Committee Hearings and Meetings.— To the maximum extent practicable, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings and shall maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public, unless such hearing or meeting is closed pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives and of the

Committee. Such coverage shall be fair and nonpartisan in accordance with clause 4(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and other applicable rules of the House of Representatives and of the Committee. Personnel providing such coverage shall be employees of the House of Representatives or currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

#### RULE 20. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) The employees of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chair in consultation with subcommittee chairs and other majority party members of the Committee within the budget approved for such purposes by the Committee.

(b) The staff appointed by the minority shall have their remuneration determined in such manner as the minority party members of the Committee shall determine within the budget approved for such purposes by the Committee.

#### RULE 21. SUPERVISION AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEE STAFF

The staff of the Committee shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chair, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of such staff members and delegate authority as he or she determines appropriate. The staff appointed by the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the minority party members of the Committee, who may delegate such authority as they determine appropriate. All Committee staff shall be assigned to Committee business and no other duties may be assigned to them.

#### RULE 22. AUTHORIZATION FOR TRAVEL

(a) Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolutions as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern travel of Committee members and staff. Travel to be paid from funds set aside for the full Committee for any member or any staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chair. Travel may be authorized by the Chair for any member and any staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee thereof and meetings, conferences, and investigations that involve activities or subject matter under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. The Chair shall review travel requests to assure the validity to Committee business. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

- (1) The purpose of the travel;
- (2) The dates during which the travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the travel is being made;
- (3) The location of the event for which the travel is to be made; and
- (4) The names of members and staff seeking authorization.

(b)(1) In the case of travel outside the United States of members and staff of the Committee for the purpose of conducting hearings, investigations, studies, or attending meetings and conferences involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of the Committee or pertinent subcommittees, prior authorization must be obtained from the Chair, or, in the case of a subcommittee, from the subcommittee chair and the Chair. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chair, in writing, a request for such authorization. Each request, which shall be filed in a manner that allows for a reasonable period of time for review before such travel is scheduled to begin, shall include the following:

(A) The purpose of travel;  
(B) The dates during which the travel will occur;

(C) The names of the countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each;

(D) An agenda of anticipated activities for each country for which travel is authorized together with a description of the purpose to be served and the areas of Committee jurisdiction involved; and

(E) The names of members and staff for whom authorization is sought.

(2) Requests for travel outside the United States may be initiated by the Chair or the chair of a subcommittee (except that individuals may submit a request to the Chair for the purpose of attending a conference or meeting) and shall be limited to members and permanent employees of the Committee.

(3) The Chair shall not approve a request involving travel outside the United States while the House is in session (except in the case of attendance at meetings and conferences or where circumstances warrant an exception).

(4) At the conclusion of any hearing, investigation, study, meeting, or conference for which travel outside the United States has been authorized pursuant to this rule, each subcommittee (or members and staff attending meetings or conferences) shall submit a written report to the Chair covering the activities of the subcommittee and containing the results of these activities and other pertinent observations or information gained as a result of such travel.

(c) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, or regulations of the House of Representatives and of the Committee on House Administration pertaining to such travel, including rules, procedures, and limitations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration with respect to domestic and foreign expense allowances.

(d) Prior to the Chair's authorization for any travel, the Ranking Member shall be given a copy of the written request therefor.

#### RULE 23. BUDGET AND EXPENSES

(a) The Chair, in consultation with the majority party members of the Committee, shall prepare a preliminary budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, for necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee; and, after consultation with the minority party membership, the Chair shall include amounts budgeted to the minority party members for staff personnel to be under the direction and supervision of the minority party, travel expenses of minority party members and staff, and minority party office expenses. All travel expenses of minority party members and staff shall be paid for out of the amounts so set aside and budgeted. The Chair shall take whatever action is necessary to have the budget as finally approved by the Committee duly authorized by the House of Representatives. After such budget shall have been adopted, no change shall be made in such budget unless approved by the Committee. The Chair or the chair of any standing subcommittee may initiate necessary travel requests as provided in Committee Rule 22 within the limits of their portion of the consolidated budget as approved by the House, and the Chair may execute necessary vouchers therefor.

(b) Subject to the Rules of the House of Representatives and procedures prescribed by the Committee on House Administration, and with the prior authorization of the Chair of the Committee in each case, there may be expended in any one session of Congress for necessary travel expenses of witnesses attending hearings in Washington, D.C.:

(1) Out of funds budgeted and set aside for each subcommittee, not to exceed \$5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending hearings of each such subcommittee;

(2) Out of funds budgeted for the full Committee majority, not to exceed \$5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending full Committee hearings; and

(3) Out of funds set aside to the minority party members:

(A) Not to exceed, for each of the subcommittees, \$5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending subcommittee hearings, and

(B) Not to exceed \$5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending full Committee hearings.

(c) A full and detailed monthly report accounting for all expenditures of Committee funds shall be maintained by the Committee, and it shall be available to each member of the Committee. Such report shall show the amount and purpose of each expenditure, and the budget to which such expenditure is attributed.

#### RULE 24. CHANGES IN COMMITTEE RULES

The Committee shall not consider a proposed change in these rules unless the text of such change has been delivered or electronically sent to all members and notice of its prior transmission has been in the hands of all members at least 48 hours prior to such consideration.

### PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

#### RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

##### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,

Washington, DC, January 23, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
*Speaker of the House,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Please find attached a copy of the Rules of the Committee on Financial Services for the 119th Congress for submission into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Pursuant to clause 2 of Rule XI of the House of Representatives, the Committee adopted the rules of the Committee on January 22, 2025.

Sincerely,

FRENCH HILL,  
*Chairman.*

#### RULE 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Financial Services (hereinafter in these rules referred to as the "Committee") and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are privileged motions in the Committee and shall be considered without debate. A proposed investigative or oversight report shall be considered as read if it has been available to the members of the Committee for at least 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such day).

(b) Each subcommittee is a part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable.

(c) The provisions of clause 2 of rule XI of the Rules of the House are incorporated by reference as the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

#### RULE 2 MEETINGS

##### *Calling of Meetings*

(a)(1) The Committee shall regularly meet on the first Tuesday of each month when the House is in session.

(2) A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of

the Chair of the Committee, there is no need for the meeting.

(3) Additional regular meetings and hearings of the Committee may be called by the Chair in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(4) Special meetings shall be called and convened by the Chair as provided in clause 2(c)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

##### *Notice for Meetings*

(b)(1) The Chair shall notify each member of the Committee of the agenda of each regular meeting of the Committee at least three calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) before the time of the meeting.

(2) The Chair shall provide to each member of the Committee at least three calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) before the time of each regular meeting for each measure or matter on the agenda a copy of—

(A) the measure or materials relating to the matter in question; and

(B) an explanation of the measure or matter to be considered, which in the case of an explanation of a bill, resolution, or similar measure, shall include a summary of the major provisions of the legislation, an explanation of the relationship of the measure to present law, and a summary of the need for the legislation.

(3) At least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of legislation, the Chair shall cause the text of such legislation to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(4) The provisions of this subsection may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the Committee or by the Chair with the concurrence of the ranking minority member.

#### RULE 3 MEETING AND HEARING PROCEDURES

##### *In General*

(a)(1) Meetings and hearings of the Committee shall be called to order and presided over by the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, by a member designated by the Chair to carry out such duties.

(2) Meetings and hearings of the committee shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) Any meeting or hearing of the Committee that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by television broadcast, radio broadcast, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4 of rule XI of the Rules of the House (which are incorporated by reference as part of these rules). Operation and use of any Committee operated broadcast system shall be fair and nonpartisan and in accordance with clause 4(b) of rule XI and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House.

(4) To the extent feasible, members and witnesses may use the Committee equipment for the purpose of presenting static exhibits electronically during a meeting or hearing, provided the information is transmitted to the appropriate Committee staff in an appropriate electronic format at least one business day before the meeting or hearing so as to ensure display capacity and quality. The content of all materials must relate to the pending business of the Committee and conform to the rules of the House. The confidentiality of the material will be maintained by the technical staff until its official presentation to the Committee members. For the purposes of maintaining the official records of the Committee, printed copies of exhibits presented, to the extent practicable, must accompany the presentations.

(5) No person, other than a Member of Congress, Committee staff, or an employee of a

Member when that Member has an amendment under consideration, may stand in or be seated at the rostrum area of the Committee rooms unless the Chair determines otherwise.

#### Quorum

(b)(1) For the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence, two members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(2) A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of reporting any measure or matter, of authorizing a subpoena (other than a subpoena authorized and issued by the Chair pursuant to subsection (e)(1)), of closing a meeting or hearing pursuant to clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House (except as provided in clause 2(g)(2)(A) and (B)) or of releasing executive session material pursuant to clause 2(k)(7) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) For the purpose of taking any action other than those specified in paragraph (2) one-third of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

#### Voting

(c)(1) No vote may be conducted on any measure or matter pending before the Committee unless the requisite number of members of the Committee is actually present for such purpose.

(2) A record vote of the Committee shall be provided on any question before the Committee upon the request of one-fifth of the members present.

(3) No vote by any member of the Committee on any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(4) In addition to any other requirement of these rules or the Rules of the House, including clause 2(e)(1)(B) of rule XI, the Chair shall make the record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded publicly available in electronic form on the Committee's website not later than 24 hours after such vote is taken. Such record shall include in electronic form the text of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition, the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members of the Committee present but not voting. With respect to any record vote on any motion to report or record vote on any amendment, a record of such votes shall be included in the report of the Committee showing the total number of votes cast for and against and the names of those members of the committee present but not voting.

(5) **POSTPONED RECORD VOTES.**—(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the Chair may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chair may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time, but no later than the next meeting day.

(B) In exercising postponement authority under subparagraph (A), the Chair shall take all reasonable steps necessary to notify members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed record vote.

(C) When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(D) The Chair's authority to postpone recorded votes will not be used to prejudice a member with regard to the offering of another amendment. In the application of this rule, the Chair will consult regularly with the ranking minority member regarding the scheduling of the resumption of postponed votes.

(6) The Chair may conduct, in consultation with the Ranking Member, any record vote by electronic device in accordance with clause 2(n) of rule XI.

(7) It shall not be in order to consider a bill or an amendment thereto if the stated provisions of such measure—

(A) are known to have the net effect of increasing mandatory spending for the period of either

(i) the current year, the budget year, and the four fiscal years following that budget year; or

(ii) the current year, the budget year, and the nine fiscal years following that budget year; or

(B) authorize an increase in authorizations, appropriations, or direct spending in any given year, unless fully offset by at least an equal reduction in current spending; or

(C) authorize discretionary appropriations using terms such as "such sums as may be necessary" or similar language that fails to specify the actual amount of funding being authorized by the bill or amendment; or

(D) authorize appropriations without including a sunset provision.

#### Hearing Procedures

(d)(1)(A) The Chair shall notice the date, place, and subject matter of any Committee hearing at least one week before the commencement of the hearing unless the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee by majority vote with a quorum present for the transaction of business, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, in which case the Chair shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date.

(B) Not less than three calendar days before the commencement of a hearing (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) announced under this paragraph, the Chair shall provide to the members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject of the hearing, or in the case of a hearing on a measure or matter, a copy of the measure or materials relating to the matter in question and a concise explanation of the measure or matter to be considered. At the same time the Chair provides the information required by the preceding sentence, the Chair shall also provide to the members of the Committee a list of the witnesses expected to appear before the Committee at that hearing. The witness list may not be modified within 24 hours of a hearing unless the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause for such modification.

(2) To the greatest extent practicable—

(A) each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the Committee 48 hours in advance of the appearance sufficient copies (including a copy in electronic form), as determined by the Chair, of a written statement of proposed testimony and shall limit the oral presentation to the Committee to a brief summary thereof; and

(B) each witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity shall include with the written statement of proposed testimony a curriculum vitae, a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of any Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two preceding fiscal years, and a disclosure of whether the witness is a fiduciary (including, but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent) of any organization or entity, that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing. Such disclosure statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form

not later than one day after the witness appears.

(3) The requirements of paragraph (2)(A) may be modified or waived by the Chair when the Chair determines it to be in the best interest of the Committee.

(4)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the five-minute rule shall be observed in the questioning of witnesses before the Committee or any of its subcommittees until each present member thereof has had an opportunity to question the witnesses. The Chair shall, so far as practicable, recognize alternately based on seniority of the majority and minority members present at the time the hearing was called to order and others based on their arrival at the hearing. The Chair shall, so far as practicable, defer to the ranking member with respect to the order of recognition for minority Members. No member shall be recognized for a second period of five minutes to question witnesses until each present member of the Committee or such subcommittee has been recognized once for that purpose.

(B) The Chair may permit a specified number of members to question one or more witnesses for a specified period of time not to exceed 60 minutes in the aggregate, equally divided between and controlled by the Chair and the ranking minority member.

(5) Whenever any hearing is conducted by the Committee on any measure or matter, the minority party members of the Committee shall be entitled, upon the request of a majority of them before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon. The Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, will determine the date, time, and place of such hearing.

(6) At any hearing of the Committee, opening statements by members of the Committee shall be limited to 10 minutes in the aggregate. The Chair shall control five minutes and recognize members in the Chair's sole discretion. The ranking minority member shall control five minutes; the Chair shall recognize members for such time according to the direction of the ranking minority member as communicated to the Chair.

(7) Notwithstanding any member's oral delivery of an opening statement, written opening statements by any member of the Committee submitted to the Chair within 5 legislative days after the adjournment of a hearing shall be made a part of the official hearing record thereof.

#### Subpoenas and Oaths

(e)(1) The power to authorize and issue subpoenas is delegated to the Chair. Unless there are exigent circumstances, the Chair will provide written notice to the ranking minority member at least 48 hours in advance of the authorization and issuance of a subpoena, and such notice shall include a full copy of the proposed subpoena including any proposed document schedule.

(2) Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chair or by any member designated by the Committee and may be served by any person designated by the Chair or such member. The Chair or any person designated by the Chair to serve a subpoena will copy the ranking minority member or designated minority staff when a subpoena is issued and served electronically.

(3) The Chair, or any member of the Committee designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to witnesses before the Committee.

#### Depositions

(f) The Regulations for the Use of Deposition Authority as passed by the Committee

on Rules pursuant to *H. Res. 5* titled—Adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives for the One Hundred Nineteenth Congress, and for other purposes—are incorporated by reference and shall be considered the rules of the Committee.

**RULE 4 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING MEASURES OR MATTERS**

(a) No measure or matter shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present.

(b) The Chair of the Committee shall report or cause to be reported promptly to the House any measure approved by the Committee and take necessary steps to bring a matter to a vote.

(c) The report of the Committee on a measure which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the clerk of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure pursuant to the provisions of clause 2(b)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House.

(d) All reports printed by the Committee pursuant to a legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report: "This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Financial Services and may not necessarily reflect the views of its Members."

(e) The Chair is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

*Supplemental, Minority, Additional, or Dissenting Views*

(f) If at the time of approval of a measure or matter by the Committee, a member of the Committee gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views for inclusion in the report to the House thereon, Members shall not have less than two additional calendar days after the day notice has been given (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day) to file such written and signed views with the clerk of the Committee.

**RULE 5 SUBCOMMITTEES**

*Establishment and Responsibilities of Subcommittees*

(a)(1) There shall be six subcommittees of the Committee as follows:

(A) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets includes—

(i) securities, including retirement savings plans and products, exchanges, and finance;

(ii) capital markets activities, including securitization, business capital formation, securities lending, and repurchase agreements;

(iii) investment companies, investment advisers, and advisers to private funds;

(iv) activities involving accounting and auditing;

(v) activities involving futures, forwards, options, and other types of derivative instruments;

(vi) the Securities and Exchange Commission;

(vii) the Financial Accounting Standards Board;

(viii) the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board;

(ix) the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board;

(x) the Securities Investor Protection Corporation;

(xi) self-regulatory organizations registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission; and

(xii) initiatives to protect investor interest and to promote investor confidence in market integrity and provide greater access to investment opportunities.

(B) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions includes—

(i) all agencies, including the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Reserve System, and the National Credit Union Administration, which directly or indirectly exercise supervisory or regulatory authority in connection with, or provide deposit insurance for, financial institutions, and the establishment of interest rate ceilings on deposits;

(ii) matters related to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau;

(iii) the chartering, branching, merger, acquisition, consolidation, or conversion of financial institutions;

(iv) consumer credit, including the provision of consumer credit by insurance companies, and further including those matters in the Consumer Credit Protection Act dealing with truth in lending, extortionate credit transactions, restrictions on garnishments, fair credit reporting and the use of credit information by credit bureaus and credit providers, equal credit opportunity, debt collection practices, and electronic funds transfers;

(v) creditor remedies and debtor defenses, Federal aspects of the Uniform Consumer Credit Code, credit and debit cards, and the preemption of State usury laws;

(vi) consumer access to financial services, including the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and the Community Reinvestment Act;

(vii) the terms and rules of disclosure of financial services, including the advertisement, promotion and pricing of financial services, and availability of government check cashing services;

(viii) deposit insurance;

(ix) consumer access to savings accounts and checking accounts in financial institutions, including lifeline banking and other consumer accounts;

(x) financial stability and systemic risk, including matters relating to the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research;

(xi) financial aid to all sectors and elements within the economy; and

(xii) economic stabilization.

(C) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND INSURANCE.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance includes—

(i) insurance generally, including but not limited to, terrorism risk insurance, private mortgage insurance, government sponsored insurance programs, including those offering protection against crime, fire, flood (and related land use controls), earthquake and other natural hazards, and the Federal Insurance Office;

(ii) housing (except programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs), including mortgage and loan insurance pursuant to the National Housing Act; rural housing; housing and homeless assistance programs; all activities of the Government National Mortgage Association; secondary market organizations for home mortgages, including the Federal National Mortgage Association, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, and the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation; the Federal Housing Finance Agency; the Federal Home Loan Banks; housing construction and design and safety standards; housing-related energy conservation; housing research and demonstration programs; financial and technical

assistance for nonprofit housing sponsors; housing counseling and technical assistance; regulation of the housing industry (including landlord/tenant relations); and real estate lending including regulation of settlement procedures;

(iii) community development and community and neighborhood planning, training and research; national urban growth policies; urban/rural research and technologies; and regulation of interstate land sales; and

(iv) the qualifications for and designation of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (other than matters relating to tax benefits).

(D) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, ILLICIT FINANCE, AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions includes—

(i) financial support networks of national security threats, including matters related to terrorist financing, money laundering, drug sale proceeds, and alternative remittance systems;

(ii) methods to detect and inhibit terrorism and illicit finance, including matters related to anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards, asset forfeiture, and financial sanctions; as well as programs related to such matters administered by agencies or subunits thereof, including activities of the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network;

(iii) inter-governmental initiatives to detect and inhibit terrorism and illicit finance, including the Financial Action Task Force;

(iv) multilateral development lending institutions, including activities of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies as related thereto, and monetary and financial developments as they relate to the activities and objectives of such institutions;

(v) international trade, including but not limited to the activities of the Export-Import Bank;

(vi) the International Monetary Fund, its permanent and temporary agencies, and all matters related thereto;

(vii) international investment policies, both as they relate to United States investments for trade purposes by citizens of the United States and investments made by all foreign entities in the United States;

(viii) defense production matters as contained in the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended; and

(ix) coins, coinage, currency, and medals, including commemorative coins and medals, proof and mint sets and other special coins, the Coinage Act of 1965, gold and silver, including the coinage thereof (but not the par value of gold), gold medals, counterfeiting, currency denominations and design, the distribution of coins, and the operations of the Bureau of the Mint and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

(E) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIGITAL ASSETS, FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology, and Artificial Intelligence includes—

(i) digital assets, including but not limited to cryptocurrencies, stablecoins, and central bank digital currencies (CBDCs);

(ii) development of new or alternative forms of currency;

(iii) activities of digital asset issuers, digital asset trading and lending platforms, digital asset custody providers, and other digital asset intermediaries;

(iv) matters related to innovative consumer financial products and services, including consumer transactions using mobile

devices, and matters related to regulatory technology (RegTech);

(v) matters related to the Department of Treasury, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Reserve System, and the National Credit Union Administration, to the extent they directly or indirectly exercise supervisory or regulatory authority in connection with nonbank financial firms offering innovative consumer products and services and financial institutions and firms engaging in digital asset-related activity.

(vi) matters related to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the extent they directly or indirectly exercise supervisory or regulatory authority over nonbank financial technology (FinTech) firms providing innovative consumer financial products and services; and

(vii) matters related to technologies of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing.

(F) **SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS.**—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations includes—

(i) overseeing all agencies, departments, programs, matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee;

(ii) overseeing agency, department, and operational adherence to statutory authority, including promulgating regulations;

(iii) conducting investigations within agencies, departments, and programs; and

(iv) conducting research and analysis regarding matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, including the impact or probable impact of tax policies affecting matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

(2) In addition, each such subcommittee shall have specific responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chair refers to it.

(3) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within its general responsibility. This review and study may include but is not limited to reviewing waste, fraud and abuse; the impact of regulatory overreach; and adherence to the Administrative Procedure Act and congressional intent with respect to such laws.

(4) Each subcommittee may make recommendations with regard to the necessity or desirability of enacting, changing, or repealing any legislation within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee.

*Referral of Measures and Matters to Subcommittees*

(b)(1) The Chair may regularly refer to one or more subcommittees such measures and matters as the Chair deems appropriate given its jurisdiction and responsibilities. In making such a referral, the Chair may designate a subcommittee of primary jurisdiction and subcommittees of additional or sequential jurisdiction.

(2) All measures or matters shall be subject to consideration by the full Committee.

(3) In referring any measure or matter to a subcommittee, the Chair may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(4) The Chair, in his or her sole discretion, may discharge a subcommittee from consideration of any measure or matter referred to a subcommittee of the Committee.

*Composition of Subcommittees*

(c)(1) Members shall be elected to each subcommittee and to the positions of chair and

ranking minority member thereof, in accordance with the rules of the respective party caucuses. The Chair of the Committee shall designate a member of the majority party on each subcommittee as its vice chair. The Chair may designate one member of the Committee of the majority party who previously has served as the chair of the Committee as the Chair Emeritus.

(2) The Chair and ranking minority member of the Committee shall be ex officio members with voting privileges of each subcommittee of which they are not assigned as members and may be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum in such subcommittees. The Chair Emeritus shall be an ex officio member without voting privileges of each subcommittee to which he or she is not assigned and shall not count for purposes of establishing a quorum in such subcommittees.

(3) The subcommittees shall be comprised as follows:

(A) The Subcommittee on Capital Markets, shall be comprised of 25 members, 14 elected by the majority caucus and 11 elected by the minority caucus.

(B) The Subcommittee on Financial Institutions shall be comprised of 25 members, 14 elected by the majority caucus and 11 elected by the minority caucus.

(C) The Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance shall be comprised of 19 members, 10 elected by the majority caucus and 9 elected by the minority caucus.

(D) The Subcommittee on National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions shall be comprised of 18 members, 10 elected by the majority caucus and 8 elected by the minority caucus.

(E) The Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology, and Artificial Intelligence shall be comprised of 21 members, 12 elected by the majority caucus and 9 elected by the minority caucus.

(F) The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations shall be comprised of 12 members, 7 elected by the majority caucus and 5 elected by the minority caucus.

*Subcommittee Meetings and Hearings*

(d)(1) Each subcommittee of the Committee may be authorized at the sole direction of the Chair to meet, hold hearings, receive testimony, mark up legislation, and report to the full Committee on any measure or matter referred to it, consistent with subsection (a).

(2) No subcommittee of the Committee may meet or hold a hearing at the same time as a meeting or hearing of the full Committee.

(3) The chair of each subcommittee shall set hearing and meeting dates only with the approval of the Chair with a view toward assuring the availability of meeting rooms and avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings.

*Effect of a Vacancy*

(e) Any vacancy in the membership of a subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of the subcommittee as long as the required quorum is present.

*Records*

(f) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall provide the full Committee with copies of such records of votes taken in the subcommittee and such other records with respect to the subcommittee as the Chair deems necessary for the Committee to comply with all rules and regulations of the House.

RULE 6 STAFF

*In General*

(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the professional and other staff of the Com-

mittee shall be appointed, and may be removed by the Chair, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of the Chair.

(2) All professional and other staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee shall be appointed, and may be removed, by the ranking minority member of the Committee, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of such member.

(3) It is intended that the skills and experience of all members of the Committee staff be available to all members of the Committee.

*Subcommittee Staff*

(b) From funds made available for the appointment of staff, the Chair of the Committee shall, pursuant to clause 6(d) of rule X of the Rules of the House, ensure that sufficient staff is made available so that each subcommittee can carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the Committee and that the minority party is treated fairly in the appointment of such staff.

*Compensation of Staff*

(c)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Chair shall fix the compensation of all professional and other staff of the Committee.

(2) The ranking minority member shall fix the compensation of all professional and other staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee.

RULE 7 BUDGET AND TRAVEL

*Budget*

(a)(1) The Chair, in consultation with other members of the Committee, shall prepare for each Congress a budget providing amounts for staff, necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee and its subcommittees.

(2) From the amount provided to the Committee in the primary expense resolution adopted by the House of Representatives, the Chair, after consultation with the ranking minority member, shall designate an amount to be under the direction of the ranking minority member for the compensation of the minority staff, travel expenses of minority members and staff, and minority office expenses. All expenses of minority members and staff shall be paid for out of the amount so set aside.

*Travel*

(b)(1) The Chair may authorize travel for any member and any staff member of the Committee in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is granted, there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

(A) The purpose of the travel.

(B) The dates during which the travel is to occur.

(C) The names of the States or countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(D) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought.

(2) Members and staff of the Committee shall make a written report to the Chair on any travel they have conducted under this subsection, including a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and of pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

(3) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

RULE 8 COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

*Records*

(a)(1) There shall be a transcript made of each regular meeting and hearing of the

Committee, and the transcript may be printed if the Chair decides it is appropriate or if a majority of the members of the Committee requests such printing. Any such transcripts shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require that all such transcripts be subject to correction and publication.

(2) The Committee shall keep a record of all actions of the Committee and of its subcommittees. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of rule XI of the Rules of the House and shall be available in electronic form and for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(3) All Committee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the Chair, shall be the property of the House, and all Members of the House shall have access thereto as provided in clause 2(e)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(4) The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chair shall notify the ranking minority member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of the rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

#### *Committee Publications on the Internet*

(b) The Chair shall maintain an official Committee website for the purpose of carrying out the official responsibilities of the Committee, including communicating information about the Committee's activities. The ranking minority member may maintain an official website. To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form on the official Committee website maintained by the Chair.

#### *Audio and Video Coverage of Committee Hearings and Meetings*

(c)(1) To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings; and,

(2) maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

## PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,

Washington, DC, January 23, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker of the House,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a)(2) of House Rule XI, I am submitting to you a copy of the Rules of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for the 119th Congress adopted on January 22, 2025, for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Sincerely,

BRIAN J. MAST,  
Chairman.

### 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The Rules of the House of Representatives, and in particular, the committee rules

enumerated in clause 2 of rule XI, are the rules of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (hereafter referred to as the "Committee"), to the extent applicable.

(b) A motion to recess and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are privileged non-debatable motions in Committee.

(c) The Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs shall consult the Ranking Minority Member to the extent possible with respect to the business of the Committee. Each subcommittee of the Committee is a part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules, to the extent applicable.

(d) The Chairman of the Full Committee shall designate a Member of the majority party as its Vice Chairman.

### 2. DATE OF MEETING

The regular meeting date of the Committee shall be the first Tuesday of every month when the House of Representatives is in session pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XI of the House of Representatives. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman as the Chairman may deem necessary or at the request of a majority of the Members of the Committee in accordance with clause 2(c) of rule XI of the House of Representatives. The determination of the business to be considered at each meeting shall be made by the Chairman subject to clause 2(c) of rule XI of the House of Representatives. A regularly scheduled meeting need not be held if, in the judgment of the Chairman, there is no business to be considered.

### 3. QUORUM AND RECORD VOTING

For purposes of taking testimony and receiving evidence before the Committee or subcommittee, two Members shall constitute a quorum, and the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee shall make every effort to ensure that the relevant Ranking Minority Member or another Minority Member is present at the time a hearing is convened.

One-third of the Members of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action, except: (1) reporting a measure or recommendation; (2) closing Committee meetings and hearings to the public; (3) authorizing the issuance of subpoenas; and (4) any other action for which an actual majority quorum is required by any rule of the House of Representatives or by law.

No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the House of Representatives unless a majority of the Committee is actually present. No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the full Committee by a subcommittee unless half of the subcommittee is actually present. A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the Members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one Member.

The relevant Chairman may conduct any record vote by electronic device in accordance with clause 2(n) of rule XI of the House of Representatives.

### 4. MEETINGS AND HEARINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

#### (a) Meetings

(1) Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, of the Committee or a subcommittee shall be open to the public except when the Committee or subcommittee, in open session and with a majority present, determines by record vote that all or part of the remainder of the meeting on that day shall be closed to the public, because disclosure of matters to be considered would endanger national security, would compromise sensitive law en-

forcement information, or would tend to defame, degrade or incriminate any person or otherwise violate any law or rule of the House of Representatives. No person, other than Members of the Committee and such congressional staff and departmental representatives as the Committee or subcommittee may authorize, shall be present at any business or markup session which has been closed to the public. This subsection does not apply to open Committee hearings which are provided for by subsection (b) of this rule.

(2) The Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter, or adopting an amendment. The relevant Chairman may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time. When exercising postponement authority, the relevant Chairman shall take all reasonable steps necessary to notify Members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed record vote. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

#### (b) Hearings

(1) Each hearing conducted by the Committee or a subcommittee shall be open to the public except when the Committee or subcommittee, in open session and with a majority present, determines by record vote that all or part of the remainder of that hearing on that day should be closed to the public because disclosure of testimony, evidence or other matters to be considered would endanger the national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or otherwise would violate any law or rule of the House of Representatives. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a majority of those present, there being in attendance the requisite number required under the rules of the Committee to be present for the purpose of taking testimony—

(A) may vote to close the hearing for the sole purpose of discussing whether testimony or evidence to be received would endanger the national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or violate paragraph (2) of this subsection; or

(B) may vote to close the hearing, as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) Whenever it is asserted by a Member of the Committee that the evidence or testimony at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, or it is asserted by a witness that the evidence or testimony that the witness would give at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate the witness—

(A) such testimony or evidence shall be presented in executive session, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection, if by a majority of those present, there being in attendance the requisite number required under the rules of the Committee to be present for the purpose of taking testimony, the Committee or subcommittee determines that such evidence or testimony may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person; and

(B) the Committee or subcommittee shall proceed to receive such testimony in open session only if the Committee, a majority being present, determines that such evidence or testimony will not tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person.

(3) No Member of the House of Representatives may be excluded from non-participatory attendance at any hearing of the Committee or a subcommittee unless the House of Representatives has by majority

vote authorized the Committee or subcommittee, for purposes of a particular series of hearings, on a particular article of legislation or on a particular subject of investigation, to close its hearings to Members by the same procedures designated in this subsection for closing hearings to the public.

(4) A Member of the House of Representatives who is not a Member of the Committee may not be recognized to participate in a Committee or subcommittee hearing except by the unanimous consent of Committee Members present at such hearing. Participatory recognition of a non-Committee Member shall occur only after all Committee Members seeking recognition, both majority and minority, have had their opportunity to participate and question any witnesses.

(5) The Committee or a subcommittee may by the procedure designated in this subsection vote to close one (1) subsequent day of hearing.

(6) No congressional staff shall be present at any meeting or hearing of the Committee or a subcommittee that has been closed to the public, and at which classified information will be involved, unless such person is authorized access to such classified information in accordance with rule XX of the House of Representatives.

#### 5. CONVENING HEARINGS AND MARKUPS

##### (a) Hearings

(1) Notice. Public announcement shall be made of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted by the Committee or a subcommittee at the earliest possible date, and in any event at least one (1) week before the commencement of that hearing. If the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee, with the concurrence of the relevant Ranking Minority Member, determines that there is good cause to begin a hearing sooner, or if the Committee or subcommittee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of members required under the rules of the Committee for the taking of action, the Chairman of the full Committee, if concurring, shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. No change shall be made to a publicly announced hearing title until after consultation with the relevant Ranking Minority Member and notice to previously announced witnesses.

(2) Member Day Hearing. During the first session of the Congress, the full Committee shall hold a hearing at which it receives testimony from Members, Delegates, and the Resident Commissioner on proposed legislation within its jurisdiction.

(b) Markups and Other Meetings to Transact Business

(1) Convening. The Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee may call or convene, as the relevant Chairman considers necessary, meetings of the Committee or subcommittee for the consideration of a bill or resolution pending before the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be, or for the conduct of other Committee or subcommittee business.

(2) Notice. Public announcement shall be made by the Chairman of the full Committee of the date, place, and subject matter of any markup or other meeting to conduct business at the earliest possible date, and in any event at least one (1) week before the commencement of such markup or meeting, unless the relevant Chairman determines, in consultation with the relevant Ranking Minority Member, that there is good cause to begin such a markup or meeting on an earlier date. If such determination is made, the Chairman of the full Committee, if concurring in that determination, shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date.

(3) Agenda and Texts. The relevant Chairman shall provide to all Committee or subcommittee Members an agenda for each Committee and subcommittee markup or other meeting to transact business, setting out all items of business to be considered, including whenever possible a copy of any measure scheduled for markup, at least 48 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) before the meeting. Bills on subjects not listed on such agenda shall be subject to a point of order unless their consideration is agreed to by a two-thirds vote of the Committee or subcommittee, or by the Chairman of the full Committee with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member. The text of any measure to be marked up shall be made publicly available in electronic form at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the markup meeting, or at the time of an announcement under subparagraph (b)(2) made within 24 hours before such meeting.

(c) Publication. Public announcement of all hearings and markups shall be published in the Daily Digest portion of the Congressional Record and made publicly available in electronic form. Members shall be notified by the Staff Director of all meetings (including markups and hearings) and briefings of subcommittees and of the full Committee.

(d) Member Seating. During Committee and subcommittee hearings and markups, chairs on the dais are for Members. No staff member other than a Committee or subcommittee staff director, counsel, or professional staff member may occupy a chair on the dais, unless authorized by the Chairman of the full Committee, after consultation with the Ranking Member of the Full Committee. Only one staff member each from the majority and the minority may occupy chairs on the dais at any time during a hearing or markup.

#### 6. WITNESSES

##### (a) Questioning of Witnesses

(1) In so far as practicable, witnesses shall be permitted to present their oral statements without interruption subject to reasonable time constraints imposed by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee, with questioning by the Committee Members taking place afterward. Members should refrain from questions until such statements are completed.

(2) In recognizing Members, the relevant Chairman shall, to the extent practicable, give preference to the Members on the basis of their arrival at the hearing and seniority, taking into consideration the majority and minority ratio of the Members actually present. A Member seeking recognition to speak or ask a question shall address the relevant Chairman and not the witness.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), each Member may question the witness for 5 minutes, the reply of the witness being included in the 5-minute period. After all Members have had an opportunity to ask questions, any additional round of questioning allowed by the relevant Chairman shall begin again under the 5-minute rule.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), the relevant Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, may permit one (1) or more majority Members of the Committee designated by the relevant Chairman to question a witness for a specified period of not longer than 30 minutes. On such occasions, an equal number of minority Members of the Committee designated by the Ranking Minority Member shall be permitted to question the same witness for the same period of time. Committee staff may be permitted to question a witness for equal specified periods either with the concurrence of the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the full

Committee or by motion. However, in no case may questioning by Committee staff proceed before each Member of the Committee who wishes to speak under the 5-minute rule has had one opportunity to do so.

##### (b) Testimony of Witnesses

(1) Advance Filing Requirement. Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee is required to file testimony with the Committee or subcommittee at least two (2) business days in advance of that appearance. For purposes of this subsection, testimony includes the written statement of a witness, as well as any video, photographs, audio-visual matter, posters, or other supporting materials that the witness intends to present or display before the Committee. Such testimony should be provided in electronic form to the extent practicable. The Committee or subcommittee shall notify Members at least two business days in advance of a hearing of the availability of testimony submitted by witnesses. In addition, each witness shall provide sufficient copies, as determined by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee, of his or her proposed written statement to be provided to Members and staff of the Committee or subcommittee, the news media, and the general public. The text of the written statement provided pursuant to this paragraph shall be considered final, and may not be revised by the witness after the Committee meeting at which the witness appears.

(2) Witness Preclusion and Waiver. The requirements of paragraph (1) or any part thereof may be waived by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee, or the presiding Member, or the Ranking Member of the Committee or subcommittee as it relates to witnesses who are called by the minority to testify, provided that the witness or the relevant Chairman or Ranking Minority Member has submitted, prior to the witness appearance, a written explanation to the reasons testimony has not been made available to the Committee or subcommittee. If a witness who is not an official of the U.S. Government has not submitted testimony as required by paragraph (1) and no such written explanation has been submitted, the witness shall be released from testifying unless a majority of the Committee or subcommittee votes to accept his or her testimony.

(3) Remote Witness Participation. Remote participation is available only for witnesses appearing in a non-governmental capacity and in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with the regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection 3(j) of House Resolution 5. The Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee shall promptly, and not later than 48 hours beforehand if possible, notify the relevant Ranking Member of any witness who is likely to present testimony other than in person, such as by videoconference. A witness may not testify via telephone or other audio-only medium without the concurrence of the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee or subcommittee. The relevant Chairman shall make reasonable efforts to verify the identity of any witness participating remotely.

(4) "Truth In Testimony" Disclosure. In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include:

(A) a curriculum vitae;

(B) a disclosure of the amount and source of any Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) or of any contract, grant or payment originating with a foreign government, received during the past 36 months by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of, and the witness's representational capacity at, the hearing;

(C) a disclosure of whether the witness is negotiating or awaiting approval to receive a contract with, a grant or payment from, a foreign government;

(D) a disclosure of whether the witness is a fiduciary (including, but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent) of any organization or entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing; and

(E) a disclosure of whether the witness is an active registrant under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy, safety, or security of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form 24 hours before the witness appears to the extent practicable, but not later than one day after the witness appears.

(5) **Witness Presentation.** A witness shall limit his or her oral presentation to a brief summary of his or her written statement.

(6) **Translation.** A witness requiring an interpreter or translator should include in the testimony provided pursuant to paragraph (1) the identity of the interpreter or translator that the witness intends to use. Unless properly noticed as a separate witness, an interpreter or translator appearing before the Committee should not present views or statements other than those expressed by the witness.

(c) **Oaths.** The Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee, or any Member of the Committee designated by the relevant Chairman, may administer oaths to any witness appearing before the Committee.

#### 7. PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF COMMITTEE RECORDS

An accurate stenographic record shall be made of all hearings and markup sessions. Members of the Committee and any witness may examine the transcript of his or her own remarks and may make any grammatical or technical changes that do not substantively alter the record. Any such Member or witness shall return the transcript to the Committee offices within seven (7) calendar days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) after receipt of the transcript, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.

Any information supplied for the record at the request of a Member of the Committee shall be provided to the Member when received by the Committee.

Transcripts of hearings and markup sessions (except for the record of a meeting or hearing which is closed to the public) shall be printed as soon as is practicable after receipt of the corrected versions, except that the Chairman may order the transcript of a hearing to be printed without the corrections of a Member or witness if the Chairman determines that such Member or witness has been afforded a reasonable time to correct such transcript and such transcript has not been returned within such time. The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with rule VII of the House of Representatives. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of the rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on the written request of any Member of the Committee.

The Committee shall, to the maximum extent feasible, make its publications available in electronic form, including official prints of hearings and markups.

#### 8. EXTRANEOUS MATERIALS IN COMMITTEE HEARINGS PRINTS

No extraneous material shall be printed in either the body or appendices of any Committee or subcommittee hearing, except

matter which has been accepted for inclusion in the record during the hearing or by agreement of the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or subcommittee within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Copies of bills and other legislation under consideration and responses to written questions submitted by Members shall not be considered extraneous material.

Extraneous material in either the body or appendices of any hearing to be printed which would be in excess of eight (8) printed pages (for any one submission) shall be accompanied by a written request to the relevant Chairman. Such written request shall contain an estimate in writing from the Public Printer of the probable cost of publishing such material.

#### 9. INFORMATION ON COMMITTEE ACTION

(a) **Record Votes.** The result of each record vote in any meeting of the Committee outside of executive session shall be made publicly available in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote. Such result shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition, the name of each Member voting for and against, and the Members present but not voting.

(b) **Amendments.** Not later than 24 hours after the adoption of any amendment, or 48 hours after the disposition or withdrawal of any other amendment to a measure or matter considered by the Committee, the text of each such amendment shall be made publicly available in electronic form.

(c) **Hearing and Markup Attendance.** Member attendance at each Committee hearing and markup shall be recorded and included in the Committee print of the transcript of that hearing or markup.

#### 10. PROXIES

Proxy voting is not permitted in the Committee or in subcommittees.

#### 11. REPORTS

(a) **Reports on Bills and Resolutions.** To the extent practicable, not later than 24 hours before a report is to be filed with the Clerk of the House on a measure that has been ordered reported by the Committee, the Chairman shall make available for inspection by all Members of the Committee a copy of the draft Committee report in order to afford Members adequate information and the opportunity to draft and file any supplemental, minority or additional views which they may deem appropriate.

With respect to each record vote on a motion to report any measure or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those Members voting for and against, shall be included in any Committee report on the measure or matter.

(b) **Prior Approval of Certain Reports.** No Committee, subcommittee, or staff report, study, or other document which purports to express publicly the views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations of the Committee or a subcommittee may be released to the public or filed with the Clerk of the House unless approved by a majority of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate. A proposed investigative or oversight report shall be considered as read if it has been available to Members of the Committee for at least 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day). In any case in which clause 2(1) of rule XI and clause 3(a)(1) of rule XIII of the House of Representatives does not apply, each Member of the Committee or subcommittee shall be given an opportunity to have views or a disclaimer included as part of the material filed or released, as the case may be.

(c) **Foreign Travel Reports.** At the same time that the report required by clause 8(b)(3) of rule X of the House of Representatives, regarding foreign travel reports, is submitted to the Chairman, Members and employees of the Committee shall provide a report to the Chairman listing all official meetings, interviews, inspection tours and other official functions in which the individual participated, by country and date. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Chairman may waive the listing in such report of an official meeting, interview, inspection tour, or other official function. The report shall be maintained in the Committee offices and shall be available for public inspection during normal business hours. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no Member or employee of the Committee will be authorized for additional Committee travel until the reports described in this subsection have been submitted to the Chairman for that person's prior Committee travel.

#### 12. REPORTING BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Except in extraordinary circumstances, bills and resolutions will not be taken to the House of Representatives for action unless and until the Committee or relevant subcommittee has ordered reported such bill or resolution, a quorum being present.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, a bill or resolution originating in the House of Representatives that contains exclusively findings and policy declarations or expressions of the sense of the House of Representatives or the sense of the Congress shall not be considered by the Committee or a subcommittee unless such bill or resolution has at least 25 House co-sponsors, at least 10 of whom are Members of the Committee.

For purposes of this rule, extraordinary circumstances will be determined by the Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member and such other Members of the Committee as the Chairman deems appropriate.

The Committee or a subcommittee shall not consider a bill or resolution originating in the House of Representatives that expresses appreciation, commends, congratulates, celebrates, recognizes the accomplishments of, or celebrates the anniversary of, an entity, event, group, individual, institution, team, or government program, or that acknowledges or recognizes a period of time for such purposes, except in circumstances determined by the Chairman with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member.

The Chairman is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

#### 13. STAFF SERVICES

(a) The Committee staff shall be selected and organized so that it can provide a comprehensive range of professional services in the field of foreign affairs to the Committee, the subcommittees, and all its Members. The staff shall include persons with training and experience in foreign affairs, making available to the Committee individuals with knowledge of major countries, areas, and U.S. overseas programs and operations.

(b) Subject to clause 9 of rule X of the House of Representatives, the staff of the Committee, except as provided in paragraph (c), shall be appointed by the Chairman with the approval of the majority of the Members in the majority party of the Committee. Their remuneration shall be fixed by the Chairman, and they shall work under the general supervision and direction of, and may be removed by, the Chairman. Staff assignments are to be authorized by the Chairman or by the Staff Director under the direction of the Chairman.



(c) Subject to clause 9 of rule X of the House of Representatives, the staff of the Committee assigned to the minority shall be appointed by the Ranking Minority Member with the approval of the majority of the minority party Members of the Committee. Their remuneration shall be fixed by the Ranking Minority Member, and they shall work under the general supervision and direction of, and may be removed by, the Ranking Minority Member.

(d) The Chairman shall ensure that sufficient staff is made available to each subcommittee to carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the Committee. The Chairman shall ensure that the minority party is fairly treated in the appointment of such staff.

#### 14. NUMBER AND JURISDICTION OF SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) Full Committee. The full Committee is responsible for oversight and legislation relating to: Management, operations, and programs of the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the U.S. Agency for Global Media, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, the Peace Corps, and other U.S. government entities within the Committee's jurisdiction; foreign assistance (including development assistance, the Millennium Challenge Account, HIV/AIDS in foreign countries, security assistance, and Public Law 480 programs abroad); national security developments affecting foreign policy; strategic planning and agreements; war powers, treaties, executive agreements, and the deployment and use of United States Armed Forces; peacekeeping and, peace enforcement, the imposition and enforcement of United Nations or other international sanctions; the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs; nonproliferation, arms control and disarmament issues; counterterrorism; activities and policies of the State, Commerce, and Defense Departments and other agencies related to the Arms Export Control Act, the Export Control Reform Act, and the Foreign Assistance Act, including export and licensing policy for munitions items and technology and dual-use equipment and technology; international law; global energy, environmental, cyberspace, and technology policy issues; promotion of democracy; international law enforcement issues, including narcotics control programs and activities; embassy security; international broadcasting; public diplomacy, including international communication and information policy, and international education and exchange programs; international economic policy and U.S. export promotion; and all other matters not specifically assigned to a subcommittee.

The full Committee may conduct oversight and investigations with respect to any matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee as defined in the Rules of the House of Representatives, including special oversight functions relating to customs administration, intelligence activities relating to foreign policy, international financial and monetary organizations, and international fishing agreements.

Notwithstanding subcommittee jurisdiction as identified in subsection (b) of this rule, the full Committee may exercise and assume authority delegated to a subcommittee thereof, at the judgment of the Chairman of the full committee.

(b) Subcommittees. There shall be seven (7) standing subcommittees. The names and jurisdiction of those subcommittees shall be as follows:

(1) Africa Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Africa Subcommittee

shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) The Office of Foreign Assistance;
- (B) The Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy;
- (C) Millennium Challenge Corporation; and
- (D) The U.S. Agency for International Development.

(2) East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Pacific Subcommittee shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) Bureaus and programs of the Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment; and
- (B) U.S. International Development Finance Corporation.

(3) Europe Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Europe Subcommittee shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) Bureaus and programs of the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security; and
- (B) The Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy.

(4) Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) Bureaus and programs of the Under Secretary for Management; and
- (B) The Bureau of Counterterrorism.

(5) South and Central Asia Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Asia Subcommittee shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) Bureaus and programs of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs; and
- (B) The Peace Corps.

(6) Western Hemisphere Subcommittee. The regional oversight focus of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee shall align with the area of responsibility of the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. This subcommittee shall also have functional jurisdiction over the bureaus and programs of the Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights.

(7) Oversight and Intelligence Subcommittee. There is no specific regional oversight focus of the Oversight and Intelligence Subcommittee. This subcommittee shall have functional jurisdiction over the following:

- (A) The United States Mission to the United Nations;
- (B) The Bureau of International Organizations Affairs;

(C) Offices that report directly to the Secretary of State, to include: Office of the Ombuds, Office of Civil Rights, Office of Global Women's Issues, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Legal Adviser, Office of Policy Planning, Office of the Chief of Protocol, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and all Special Envoys and Special Representatives.

(c) Legislative Jurisdictions. The subcommittees shall have jurisdiction over the following within their respective functional domains:

(1) Authorization and reauthorization of bureaus and programs;

(2) Legislation with respect to disaster assistance outside the Foreign Assistance Act, boundary issues, and international claims;

(3) Legislation with respect to region- or country-specific loans or other financial relations outside the Foreign Assistance Act; and,

(4) Legislation and oversight regarding human rights practices in particular countries.

(d) Regional Oversight. The subcommittees with regional oversight shall have jurisdiction over the following within their respective regions:

(1) Matters affecting the political relations between the United States and other countries and regions, including resolutions or other legislative measures directed to such relations;

(2) Oversight of regional lending institutions;

(3) Oversight of matters related to the regional activities of the United Nations, of its affiliated agencies, and of other multilateral institutions;

(4) Identification and development of options for meeting future problems and issues relating to U.S. interests in the region;

(5) Concurrent oversight jurisdiction with respect to functional matters assigned to the regions of other subcommittees insofar as they may affect the region;

(6) Oversight of foreign assistance activities affecting the region, with the concurrence of the Chairman of the full Committee; and,

(7) Such other matters as the Chairman of the full Committee may determine.

#### 15. POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) In General. Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it.

(b) Scheduling. Subcommittee chairmen shall set meeting dates after consultation with the Chairman, other subcommittee chairmen, the relevant Ranking Minority Member and other appropriate Members, with a view toward minimizing scheduling conflicts. Subcommittee meetings shall not be scheduled to occur simultaneously with meetings of the full Committee. Hearings shall not be scheduled to occur prior to the first vote or subsequent to the last vote of a legislative week, or outside of Washington, D.C., without prior consultation with the relevant Ranking Minority Member. In order to ensure orderly administration and fair assignment of hearing and meeting rooms, the subject, time, and location of hearings and meetings shall be arranged in advance with the Chairman through the Staff Director of the Committee.

(c) Participation. The Chairman of the full Committee and the Ranking Minority Member may attend the meetings and participate in the activities of all subcommittees of which they are not Members, except that they may not vote or be counted for a quorum in such subcommittees.

(d) Required Oversight Hearings. During each 180-day period following organization of the Committee, each subcommittee shall hold at least one hearing on oversight of U.S. Government activities.

#### 16. REFERRAL OF BILLS BY CHAIRMAN

In accordance with rule 14 of the Committee and to the extent practicable, relevant legislation and other matters referred to the Committee may be referred by the Chairman to one or more subcommittees of jurisdiction. In referring any legislation to a subcommittee, the Chairman may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the full Committee.

The Chairman may designate a subcommittee Chairman or other Member to take responsibility as manager of a bill or resolution during its consideration in the House of Representatives.

#### 17. PARTY RATIOS ON SUBCOMMITTEES AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

The majority party caucus of the Committee shall determine an appropriate ratio of majority to minority party Members for each subcommittee. Party representation on each subcommittee or conference committee shall be no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio for the full Committee. The Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member are authorized to negotiate matters affecting such ratios including the size of subcommittees and conference committees.

#### 18. SUBCOMMITTEE FUNDING AND RECORDS

Each subcommittee shall have adequate funds to discharge its responsibility for legislation and oversight.

In order to facilitate Committee compliance with clause 2(e)(1) of rule XI of the House of Representatives, each subcommittee shall keep a complete record of all subcommittee actions which shall include a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded. The result of each record vote shall be promptly made available to the full Committee for inspection by the public in accordance with rule 9 of the Committee.

All subcommittee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be kept distinct from the congressional office records of the Member serving as Chairman of the subcommittee. Subcommittee records shall be coordinated with the records of the full Committee, shall be the property of the House, and all Members of the House shall have access thereto.

#### 19. MEETINGS OF SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

The Chairman shall call a meeting of the subcommittee chairmen on a regular basis not less frequently than once a month. Such a meeting need not be held if there is no business to conduct. It shall be the practice at such meetings to review the current agenda and activities of each of the subcommittees.

#### 20. ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

(a) Authorized Persons. In accordance with the stipulations of the Rules of the House of Representatives, all Members of the House who have executed the oath required by clause 13 of rule XXIII of the House of Representatives shall be authorized to have access to classified information within the possession of the Committee.

Members of the Committee staff shall be considered authorized to have access to classified information within the possession of the Committee when they have the proper security clearances, when they have executed the oath required by clause 13 of rule XXIII of the House of Representatives, and when they have a demonstrable need to know. The decision on whether a given staff member has a need to know will be made on the following basis:

(1) In the case of the full Committee majority staff, by the Chairman, acting through the Staff Director;

(2) In the case of the full Committee minority staff, by the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, acting through the Minority Staff Director;

(3) In the case of subcommittee majority staff, by the chairman of the subcommittee;

(4) In the case of the subcommittee minority staff, by the Ranking Minority Member of the subcommittee.

No other individuals shall be considered authorized persons, unless so designated by the Chairman of the full Committee.

(b) Designated Persons. Each Committee Member is permitted to designate one member of his or her staff as having the right of access to information classified Confidential. Such designated persons must have the proper security clearance, have executed the oath required by clause 13 of rule XXIII of the House of Representatives, and have a need to know as determined by his or her principal. Upon request of a Committee Member in specific instances, a designated person also shall be permitted access to information classified Top Secret which has been furnished to the Committee pursuant to section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended. Upon the written request of a Committee Member and with the approval of the Chairman in specific instances, a designated person may be permitted access to other classified materials. Designation of a staff person shall be by letter from the Committee Member to the Chairman.

(c) Location. Classified information will be stored in secure safes in the Office of the Security Officer and in the Office of the Minority Staff Director. All materials classified Top Secret or higher must be stored in a Secure Compartmentalized Information Facility (SCIF).

(d) Handling. Materials classified Confidential or Secret may be taken from Committee offices to other Committee offices and hearing rooms by Members of the Committee and authorized Committee staff in connection with hearings and briefings of the Committee or its subcommittees for which such information is deemed to be essential. Removal of such information from the Committee offices shall be only with the permission of the Chairman under procedures designed to ensure the safe handling and storage of such information at all times. Except as provided in this paragraph, Top Secret materials may not be taken from approved storage areas for any purpose, except that such materials may be taken to hearings and other meetings that are being conducted at the Top Secret level when necessary. Materials classified Top Secret may otherwise be used under conditions approved by the Chairman after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member.

(e) Notice. Appropriate notice of the receipt of classified documents received by the Committee from the Executive Branch will be sent promptly to Committee Members through the Survey of Activities or by other means.

(f) Access. Except as provided for above, access to materials classified Top Secret or otherwise restricted held by the Committee will be in approved Committee spaces. The following procedures will be observed:

(1) Authorized persons will be permitted access to classified documents after inquiring of the Staff Director or an assigned staff member. Access to the SCIF will be afforded during regular Committee hours.

(2) Authorized persons will be required to identify themselves, to identify the documents or information they wish to view, and to sign the Classified Materials Log, which is kept with the classified information.

(3) The assigned staff member will be responsible for maintaining a log which identifies: (1) authorized persons seeking access, (2) the classified information requested, and (3) the time of arrival and departure of such persons. The assigned staff member will also assure that the classified materials are returned to the proper location.

(g) Divulgence. Classified information provided to the Committee by the Executive Branch shall be handled in accordance with the procedures that apply within the Executive Branch for the protection of such information. Any classified information to which access has been gained through the Com-

mittee may not be divulged to any unauthorized person. Classified material shall not be photocopied or otherwise reproduced. In no event shall classified information be discussed in a non-secure environment. Apparent violations of this rule should be reported as promptly as possible to the Chairman for appropriate action.

(h) Other Regulations. The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may establish such additional regulations and procedures as in his judgment may be necessary to safeguard classified information under the control of the Committee. Members of the Committee will be given notice of any such regulations and procedures promptly. They may be modified or waived in any or all particulars by a majority vote of the full Committee.

#### 21. BROADCASTING OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

All Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings which are open to the public may be covered, in whole or in part, by television broadcast, radio broadcast, and still photography, or by any such methods of coverage in accordance with the provisions of clause 3 of House rule XI.

The Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee shall determine, in his or her discretion, the number of television and still cameras permitted in a hearing or meeting room, but shall not limit the number of television or still cameras to fewer than two (2) representatives from each medium.

Such coverage shall be in accordance with the following requirements contained in section 116(b) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, and clause 4 of XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives:

(a) If the television, Internet or radio coverage of the hearing or meeting is to be presented to the public as live coverage, that coverage shall be conducted and presented without commercial sponsorship.

(b) No witness served with a subpoena by the Committee shall be required against his will to be photographed at any hearing or to give evidence or testimony while the broadcasting of that hearing, by radio or television, is being conducted. At the request of any such witness who does not wish to be subjected to radio, television, Internet or still photography coverage, all lenses shall be covered and all microphones used for coverage turned off. This subparagraph is supplementary to clause 2(k)(5) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives relating to the protection of the rights of witnesses.

(c) The allocation among cameras permitted by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee in a hearing room shall be in accordance with fair and equitable procedures devised by the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(d) Television cameras shall be placed so as not to obstruct in any way the space between any witness giving evidence or testimony and Member of the Committee or its subcommittees or the visibility of that witness and that Member to each other.

(e) Television cameras shall operate from fixed positions but shall not be placed in positions which obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing by the other media.

(f) Equipment necessary for coverage by the television and radio media shall not be installed in, or removed from, the hearing or meeting room while the Committee or subcommittee is in session.

(g) Floodlights, spotlights, strobe lights, and flashguns shall not be used in providing any method of coverage of the hearing or meeting, except that the television media may install additional lighting in the hearing room, without cost to the Government,

in order to raise the ambient lighting level in the hearing room to the lowest level necessary to provide adequate television coverage of the hearing or meeting at the current state-of-the-art level of television coverage.

(h) In the allocation of the number of still photographers permitted by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee in a hearing or meeting room, preference shall be given to photographers from Associated Press Photos, United Press International News pictures, and Reuters. If requests are made by more of the media than will be permitted by the Chairman of the full Committee or a subcommittee for coverage of the hearing or meeting by still photography, that coverage shall be made on the basis of a fair and equitable pool arrangement devised by the Standing Committee of Press Photographers.

(i) Photographers shall not position themselves, at any time during the course of the hearing or meeting, between the witness table and the Members of the Committee or its subcommittees.

(j) Photographers shall not place themselves in positions which obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing by the other media.

(k) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(l) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be currently accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery Committee of Press Photographers. (m) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media and by still photography shall conduct themselves and their coverage activities in an orderly and unobtrusive manner.

#### 22. SUBPOENA POWERS

A subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Chairman, in accordance with clause 2(m) of rule XI of the House of Representatives, in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities within the jurisdiction of the Committee, following consultation with the Ranking Minority Member.

In addition, a subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Committee or its subcommittees in accordance with clause 2(m) of rule XI of the House of the Representatives, in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the Members voting, a majority of the Committee or subcommittee being present. Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman or by any Member designated by the Committee.

#### 23. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES

Whenever the Speaker is to appoint a conference committee, the Chairman shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees those Members of the Committee who are primarily responsible for the legislation (including to the full extent practicable the principal proponents of the major provisions of the bill as it passed the House), who have actively participated in the Committee or subcommittee consideration of the legislation, and who agree to attend the meetings of the conference. With regard to the appointment of minority Members, the Chairman shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member.

#### 24. GENERAL OVERSIGHT

Not later than March 1 of the first session of a Congress, the Committee shall adopt an oversight plan in accordance with the provisions of clause 2(d) of rule X of the House of Representatives.

In accordance with the provisions of clause 2(n) of rule XI of the House of Representatives, the Committee or a subcommittee thereof shall hold at least one hearing during each 120-day period following its establishment on the topic of waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement in programs within its jurisdiction, as documented in reports received from a Federal Office of the Inspector General or the Comptroller General of the United States that have been provided to the Ranking Minority Member prior to the notice of the hearing pursuant to Committee rule 5.

#### 25. COMMITTEE PANELS AND TASK FORCES

##### (a) Committee Panels

(1) The Chair may designate a panel of the Committee consisting of members of the Committee to inquire into and take testimony on a matter or matters that fall within the jurisdiction of more than one subcommittee and to report to the Committee.

(2) No panel appointed by the Chair shall continue in existence for more than six months after the appointment. A panel so appointed may, upon the expiration of six months, be reappointed by the Chair for a period of time which is not to exceed six months.

(3) Consistent with the party ratios established by the majority party, all majority members of the panels shall be appointed by the Chair, and all minority members shall be appointed by the Ranking Minority Member. The Chair shall choose one of the majority members so appointed who does not currently chair another subcommittee of the Committee to serve as Chair of the panel. The Ranking Minority Member shall similarly choose the ranking minority member of the panel.

(4) No panel shall have legislative jurisdiction.

##### (b) Committee and Subcommittee Task Forces

(1) The Chair, or the Chair of a subcommittee with the concurrence of the Chair, may designate a task force to inquire into and take testimony on a matter that falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee, respectively. The Chair and the Ranking Minority Member or the Chair and the ranking minority member of a subcommittee shall each appoint an equal number of members to the task force. The Chair or the Chair of a subcommittee shall choose one of the members so appointed, who does not currently chair another subcommittee of the Committee, to serve as Chair of the task force. The Ranking Minority Member or the ranking minority member of a subcommittee shall similarly appoint the ranking minority member of the task force.

(2) No task force appointed by the Chair or the Chair of a subcommittee shall continue in existence for more than three months. A task force may only be reappointed for an additional three months with the written concurrence of the Chair and the Ranking Minority Member or the concurrence of the Chair and the ranking minority member of the subcommittee whose Chair appointed the task force.

(3) No task force shall have legislative jurisdiction.

#### 26. OTHER PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

The Chairman, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may establish such other procedures and take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the foregoing rules or to facilitate the effective operation of the Committee. Any additional procedures or regulations may be modified or rescinded in any or all particulars by a majority vote of the full Committee.

## PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

REVISION TO THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, January 23, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and clause (b) of Rule I of the Rules of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I respectfully submit the amended Rules of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the 119th Congress for publication in the Congressional Record. On January 22, 2025, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session for an organizational meeting and adopted an amendment to Rule VII of the Committee Rules, by voice vote, with a quorum present.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,  
Chairman.

#### RULE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

##### (a) APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (hereinafter referred to in these as rules the "Committee") and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are non-debatable privileged motions in the Committee and its subcommittees.

(2) SUBCOMMITTEES.—Each subcommittee is part of the Committee, and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and its rules so far as applicable.

(3) INCORPORATION OF HOUSE RULE ON COMMITTEE PROCEDURE.—Rule XI of the Rules of the House, which pertains entirely to Committee procedure, is incorporated and made a part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable. Pursuant to clause 2(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee is authorized to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

(b) PUBLICATION OF RULES.—Pursuant to clause 2(a) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee's rules shall be publicly available in electronic form and published in the Congressional Record not later than 60 days after the Chairman is elected in each odd-numbered year.

(c) VICE CHAIR.—The Chairman shall appoint a Vice Chair of the Committee and of each subcommittee. If the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee is not present at any meeting of the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be, the Vice Chair shall preside. If the Vice Chair is not present, the ranking majority member who is present shall preside at that meeting.

#### RULE II. REGULAR, ADDITIONAL, AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) REGULAR MEETINGS.—Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held on the last Wednesday of every month to transact its business unless such day is a holiday, or the House is in recess or is adjourned, in which case the Chairman shall determine the regular meeting day of the Committee for that month. A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chairman, there is no need for the meeting. This paragraph shall not apply to meetings of any subcommittee.

(b) **ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.**—The Chairman may call and convene, if the Chairman considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to the call of the Chairman.

(c) **SPECIAL MEETINGS.**—If at least three members of the Committee desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chairman, those members may file with the Clerk of the Committee their written request to the Chairman for that special meeting. Such request shall specify the measure or matter to be considered. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify the Chairman of the filing of the request. If, within three calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman does not call the requested special meeting, to be held within seven calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Committee may file with the Clerk their written notice that a special meeting of the Committee will be held, specifying the date and hour thereof, and the measure or matter to be considered at that special meeting. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify all members of the Committee that such meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered; and only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at that special meeting. Such notice shall also be made publicly available in electronic form and shall be deemed to satisfy paragraph (d)(1).

(d) **NOTICE.**—

(1) **MINIMUM NOTICE PERIOD.**—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee or subcommittee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third calendar day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day) on which members have notice thereof.

(2) **CHANGES IN MEETING TIMES.**—A meeting may commence sooner than announced if the Chairman, with concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause to begin the meeting sooner or the Committee or subcommittee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business. The Chairman shall make a public announcement of the meeting time change at the earliest possible opportunity.

(3) **NOTIFICATION OF DAILY DIGEST CLERK.**—The Clerk of the Committee shall notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record promptly and make publicly available in electronic form a time change for a Committee or subcommittee meeting made under this paragraph.

(e) **PROHIBITION ON SITTING DURING JOINT SESSION.**—The Committee may not sit during a joint session of the House and Senate or during a recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress.

#### RULE III. MEETINGS AND HEARINGS GENERALLY

(a) **MINIMUM PERIOD FOR AVAILABILITY OF COMMITTEE MARKUP TEXT.**—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make publicly available, in electronic form, the text of any legislation to be marked up at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of legislation, or at the time of a meeting announcement under paragraph (d)(2) of Committee Rule II if made within 24 hours before such meeting.

(b) **OPEN MEETINGS.**—Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, and each hearing of the Committee or a subcommittee shall be open to the public, except as provided by clause 2(g) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House or clause 2(k) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(c) **MEETINGS TO BEGIN PROMPTLY.**—Each meeting or hearing of the Committee shall begin promptly at the time so stipulated in the public announcement of the meeting or hearing.

(d) **ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE.**—Except as provided under paragraph (e) of Committee Rule IV, a Committee member may address the Committee or a subcommittee on any bill, motion, or other matter under consideration—

(1) only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose; and

(2) only for five minutes until such time as each member of the Committee or subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to address the Committee or subcommittee.

A member's remarks shall be limited to the subject matter under consideration. The Chairman shall enforce this paragraph.

(e) **PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS IN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS AND HEARINGS.**—All members of the Committee who are not members of a particular subcommittee may, by unanimous consent of the members of such subcommittee, participate in any subcommittee meeting or hearing. However, a member who is not a member of the subcommittee may not vote on any matter before the subcommittee, be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum, or raise points of order.

(f) **MEMBER DAY HEARING.**—Pursuant to section 3(r) of House Resolution 5, the Committee shall hold a hearing at which it receives testimony from Members, Delegates, and the Resident Commissioner on proposed legislation within the Committee's jurisdiction during the first session of the 119th Congress.

(g) **BROADCASTING.**—Whenever a meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, or a hearing is open to the public, that meeting or hearing shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography in accordance with clause 4 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House. Operation and use of any Committee internet broadcast system shall be fair and non-partisan and in accordance with clause 4(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House. Further, pursuant to clause 2(e)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings. The Committee shall also maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

(h) **ACCESS TO THE DAIS AND LOUNGES.**—Access to the hearing rooms' daises and to the lounges adjacent to the Committee hearing rooms shall be limited to Members of Congress and employees of Congress during a meeting or hearing of the Committee unless specifically permitted by the Chairman or ranking minority member.

(i) **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**—During a hearing, markup, or other meeting of the Committee, audible sounds or vocal use of cellular telephones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the Committee room.

(j) **AVAILABILITY OF TEXT OF AMENDMENTS IN ELECTRONIC FORM.**—Pursuant to clause 2(e) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, not later than 24 hours after the adoption of any

amendment, or 48 hours after the disposition or withdrawal of any other amendment, to a measure or matter considered by the Committee, the Chairman shall cause the text of the amendment to be made publicly available in electronic form.

#### RULE IV. HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) **ANNOUNCEMENT OF HEARING.**—

(1) **MINIMUM NOTICE PERIOD.**—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee or subcommittee hearing, which may not commence earlier than the one week after such notice.

(2) **CHANGES IN HEARING TIMES.**—A hearing may commence sooner than announced if the Chairman, with concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner or the Committee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business. The Chairman shall make a public announcement of the hearing time change at the earliest possible opportunity.

(3) **NOTIFICATION OF DAILY DIGEST CLERK.**—The Clerk of the Committee shall notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record promptly and make publicly available in electronic form a time change for a Committee or subcommittee hearing made under this paragraph.

(b) **WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PROPOSED TESTIMONY; ORAL STATEMENT.**—

(1) **FILING OF STATEMENT.**—So far as practicable, each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a Subcommittee shall file with the Clerk of the Committee or subcommittee, at least two calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day) before the day of the witness' appearance, a written statement of proposed testimony. The Chairman, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, may take the following actions for failure to comply with this requirement: (A) exclude such witness' written testimony from the hearing record; (B) bar such witness' oral presentation of the testimony; or (C) both (A) and (B). Each witness' oral presentation shall be limited to a summary of the written statement.

(2) **TRUTH IN TESTIMONY INFORMATION.**—Pursuant to clause 2(g)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, in the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae, a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the past 36 months by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing, and a disclosure of whether the witness is a fiduciary (including but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent) of any organization or entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing.

(3) **AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION IN ELECTRONIC FORM.**—Statements filed under this paragraph, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form 24 hours before the witness appears, to the extent practicable, but not later than one day after the witness appears.

(c) **MINORITY WITNESSES.**—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee or subcommittee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman by a majority of those minority members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon.

(d) SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER.—Upon announcement of a hearing, to the extent practicable, the Committee shall make available to all members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject matter (including legislative reports and other materials) under consideration. In addition, upon announcement of a hearing and subsequently as they are received, the Chairman shall make available to the members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on such matter.

(e) OPENING STATEMENTS; QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES.—

(1) OPENING STATEMENTS.—

(A) CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MEMBER.—At a hearing of the Full Committee, the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee shall each be entitled to present an oral opening statement of five minutes. At a hearing of a subcommittee, the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee and the Chairman and ranking minority member of the subcommittee shall each be entitled to present an opening statement for five minutes.

(B) OTHER MEMBERS.—At a hearing of the Full Committee or a subcommittee, other members of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, may submit written opening statements for the record. The Chairman presiding over the hearing may permit oral opening statements by other members of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member.

(2) QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES.—The questioning of witnesses in Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chairman, followed by the ranking minority member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority parties. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chairman shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority nor the members of the minority. The Chairman may accomplish this by recognizing two majority members for each minority member recognized.

(f) PROCEDURES FOR QUESTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A Committee member may question a witness at a hearing—

(A) only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose; and

(B) subject to subparagraphs (2) and (3), only for five minutes until such time as each member of the Committee or subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to question the witness.

A member's remarks shall be limited to the subject matter under consideration. The Chairman shall enforce this subparagraph.

(2) EXTENDED QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY MEMBERS.—The Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee or subcommittee by motion, may permit a specified number of its members to question a witness for longer than five minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority party and minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(3) EXTENDED QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY STAFF.—The Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee or subcommittee by motion, may permit Committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority

party and minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(4) RIGHT TO QUESTION WITNESSES FOLLOWING EXTENDED QUESTIONING.—Nothing in subparagraph (2) or (3) affects the right of a member (other than a member designated under subparagraph (2)) to question a witness for five minutes in accordance with subparagraph (1)(B) after the questioning permitted under subparagraph (2) or (3).

(g) ADDITIONAL HEARING PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Clause 2(k) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House (relating to additional rules for hearings) applies to hearings of the Committee and its subcommittees.

(2) NON-GOVERNMENTAL WITNESS.—Pursuant to section 3(i) of House Resolution 5 and subject to the regulations issued by the Chairman of the Committee on Rules and printed in the Congressional Record, the Chairman of the Committee may allow for the remote appearance of witnesses appearing in a non-governmental capacity.

#### RULE V. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, AND REPORTS

(a) FILING OF REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairman of the Committee shall report promptly to the House any measure or matter approved by the Committee and take necessary steps to bring the measure or matter to a vote.

(2) REQUESTS FOR REPORTING.—The report of the Committee on a measure or matter which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the Clerk of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure or matter. Upon the filing of any such request, the Clerk of the Committee shall transmit immediately to the Chairman of the Committee notice of the filing of that request.

(b) QUORUM; RECORD VOTES.—

(1) QUORUM.—Pursuant to clause 2(h)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, a measure or recommendation may not be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present.

(2) RECORD VOTES.—Pursuant to clause 3(b) of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House, with respect to each record vote on a motion to report a measure or matter of a public nature, and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(i) The Chairman may conduct any record vote by electronic device in accordance with clause 2(n) of Rule XI.

(c) REQUIRED MATTERS.—The report of the Committee on a measure or matter which has been approved by the Committee shall include the items required to be included by the rules and orders of the House applicable in the One Hundred Eighteenth Congress.

(d) ADDITIONAL VIEWS.—If, at the time of approval of any measure or matter by the Committee, any member of the Committee gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, all members shall be entitled to not less than two additional calendar days after the day of such notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, except when the House is in session on such a day) in which to file such written and signed views in accordance with clause 2(l) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(e) ACTIVITIES REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 2nd of each odd numbered year, the Committee shall submit to the House a report on the activities of the Committee.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

(A) separate sections summarizing the legislative and oversight activities of the Committee under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House during the Congress;

(B) a summary of the oversight plan submitted by the Committee under clause 2(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House;

(C) a summary of the actions taken and recommendations made with respect to the oversight plan specified in subdivision (B);

(D) a summary of any additional oversight activities undertaken by the Committee and any recommendations made or actions taken thereon; and

(E) a delineation of any hearings held pursuant to clauses 2(n), (o), or (p) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) FILING.—After an adjournment sine die of the last regular session of a Congress, or after December 15 of an even numbered year, whichever occurs first, the Chairman may file the report described in subparagraph (1) with the Clerk of the House at any time and without approval of the Committee, provided that—

(A) a copy of the report has been available to each member of the Committee for at least seven calendar days; and

(B) the report includes any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a member of the Committee.

(f) OTHER COMMITTEE MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All Committee and subcommittee prints, reports, documents, or other materials, not otherwise provided for under this rule, that purport to express publicly the views of the Committee or any of its subcommittees or members of the Committee or its subcommittees shall be approved by the Committee or the subcommittee prior to printing and distribution and any member shall be given an opportunity to have views included as part of such material prior to printing, release, and distribution in accordance with paragraph (d) of this rule.

(2) DOCUMENTS CONTAINING VIEWS OTHER THAN MEMBER VIEWS.—A Committee or subcommittee document containing views other than those of members of the Committee or subcommittee shall not be published without approval of the Committee or subcommittee.

(3) DISCLAIMER.—All Committee or subcommittee reports printed pursuant to legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report: "This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (or pertinent subcommittee thereof) and may not therefore necessarily reflect the views of its members."

(g) AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS.—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form to the maximum extent feasible.

#### RULE VI. QUORUMS AND RECORD VOTES; POSTPONEMENT OF VOTES

(a) WORKING QUORUM.—One-third of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action other than the closing of a meeting pursuant to clauses 2(g) and 2(k)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the authorizing of a subpoena pursuant to paragraph (d) of Committee Rule XII, the reporting of a measure or recommendation pursuant to paragraph (b)(1) of Committee Rule V, and the actions described in paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of this rule.

(b) QUORUM FOR REPORTING.—A majority of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting of a measure or recommendation.

(c) APPROVAL OF CERTAIN MATTERS.—A majority of the members of the Committee or a subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for approval of a resolution concerning any of the following actions:

(1) A prospectus for construction, alteration, purchase or acquisition of a public building or the lease of space as required by section 3307 of title 40, United States Code.

(2) Survey investigation of a proposed project for navigation, flood control, and other purposes by the Corps of Engineers (section 4 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 4, 1913, 33 U.S.C. 542).

(3) Construction of a water resources development project by the Corps of Engineers with an estimated Federal cost not exceeding \$15,000,000 (section 201 of the Flood Control Act of 1965).

(4) Deletion of water quality storage in a Federal reservoir project where the benefits attributable to water quality are 15 percent or more but not greater than 25 percent of the total project benefits (section 65 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974).

(5) Authorization of a Natural Resources Conservation Service watershed project involving any single structure of more than 4,000 acre feet of total capacity (section 2 of P.L. 566, 83rd Congress).

(d) QUORUM FOR TAKING TESTIMONY.—Two members of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

(e) RECORD VOTES.—A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present.

(f) POSTPONEMENT OF VOTES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with clause 2(h)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee or a subcommittee, after consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee or subcommittee, may—

(A) postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment; and

(B) resume proceedings on a postponed question at any time after reasonable notice.

(2) RESUMPTION OF PROCEEDINGS.—When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(g) AVAILABILITY OF RECORD VOTES IN ELECTRONIC FORM.—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(1)(B)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman shall make the result of any record vote publicly available in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote.

#### RULE VII. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEES; SIZE AND PARTY RATIOS

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be six standing subcommittees. These subcommittees, with the following sizes (including delegates) and majority/minority ratios, are:

(1) Subcommittee on Aviation (41 Members: 22 Majority and 19 Minority).

(2) Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation (15 Members: 8 Majority and 7 Minority).

(3) Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management (17 Members: 9 Majority and 8 Minority).

(4) Subcommittee on Highways and Transit (55 Members: 29 Majority and 26 Minority).

(5) Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials (33 Members: 18 Majority and 15 Minority).

(6) Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment (35 Members: 19 Majority and 16 Minority).

(b) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee shall serve as ex officio voting members on each subcommittee.

(c) RATIOS.—On each subcommittee there shall be a ratio of majority party members to minority party members which shall be no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio for the Full Committee. In calculating the ratio of majority party members to minority party members, there shall be included the ex officio members of the subcommittees.

#### RULE VIII. POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) AUTHORITY TO SIT.—Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the Full Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction. Subcommittee Chair shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman and other subcommittee chairs with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Full Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

(b) CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE.—Each bill, resolution, or other matter favorably reported by a subcommittee shall automatically be placed upon the agenda of the Committee. Any such matter reported by a subcommittee shall not be considered by the Committee unless it has been delivered to the offices of all members of the Committee at least 48 hours before the meeting, unless the Chairman determines that the matter is of such urgency that it should be given early consideration.

#### RULE IX. REFERRAL OF LEGISLATION TO SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) GENERAL REQUIREMENT.—Except where the Chairman of the Committee determines, in consultation with the majority members of the Committee, that consideration is to be by the Full Committee, each bill, resolution, investigation, or other matter which relates to a subject listed under the jurisdiction of any subcommittee established in Committee Rule VII referred to or initiated by the Full Committee shall be referred by the Chairman to all subcommittees of appropriate jurisdiction within two weeks. All bills shall be referred to the subcommittee of proper jurisdiction without regard to whether the author is or is not a member of the subcommittee.

(b) RECALL FROM SUBCOMMITTEE.—A bill, resolution, or other matter referred to a subcommittee in accordance with this rule may be recalled therefrom at any time by a vote of a majority of the members of the Committee voting, a quorum being present, for the Committee's direct consideration or for reference to another subcommittee.

(c) MULTIPLE REFERRALS.—In carrying out this rule with respect to any matter, the Chairman may refer the matter simultaneously to two or more subcommittees for concurrent consideration or for consideration in sequence (subject to appropriate time limitations in the case of any subcommittee after the first), or divide the matter into two or more parts (reflecting different subjects and jurisdictions) and refer each such part to a different subcommittee, or make such other provisions as he or she considers appropriate.

#### RULE X. RECOMMENDATION OF CONFEREES

The Chairman of the Committee shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees the names of those members (1) of the majority party selected by the Chairman, and (2) of the minority party selected by the ranking minority member of the Committee. Recommendations of conferees to the Speaker

shall provide a ratio of majority party members to minority party members which shall be no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio for the Committee.

#### RULE XI. OVERSIGHT

(a) PURPOSE.—The Committee shall carry out oversight responsibilities as provided in this rule in order to assist the House in—

(1) its analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of—

(A) the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of the laws enacted by the Congress; or

(B) conditions and circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation; and

(2) its formulation, consideration, and enactment of such modifications or changes in those laws, and of such additional legislation, as may be necessary or appropriate.

(b) AUTHORIZATION AND OVERSIGHT PLAN.—Not later than March 1st of the first session of each Congress, the Chairman shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on House Administration its authorization and oversight plan for that Congress in accordance with clause 2(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House.

(c) REVIEW OF LAWS AND PROGRAMS.—The Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of the Committee, and the organization and operation of the Federal agencies and entities having responsibilities in or for the administration and execution thereof, in order to determine whether such laws and the programs thereunder are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the Congress and whether such programs should be continued, curtailed, or eliminated. In addition, the Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study any conditions or circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation within the jurisdiction of the Committee (whether or not any bill or resolution has been introduced with respect thereto), and shall on a continuing basis undertake future research and forecasting on matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

(d) REVIEW OF TAX POLICIES.—The Committee and the appropriate subcommittees shall cooperatively review and study on a continuing basis the impact or probable impact of tax policies affecting subjects within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

#### RULE XII. POWER TO SIT AND ACT; POWER TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS; OATHS; SUBPOENA POWER

(a) AUTHORITY TO SIT AND ACT.—For the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and duties under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee and each of its subcommittees, is authorized (subject to paragraph (d)(1))—

(1) to sit and act at such times and places within the United States whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned and to hold such hearings; and

(2) to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memorandums, papers, and documents, as it deems necessary.

(b) AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee is authorized at any time to conduct such investigations and studies as it may consider necessary or appropriate in the exercise of its responsibilities under Rule X of the Rules of

the House and (subject to the adoption of expense resolutions as required by Rule X, clause 6 of the Rules of the House) to incur expenses (including travel expenses) in connection therewith.

(c) OATHS.—The Chairman, or any member designated by the Chairman, may administer oaths to any witness.

(d) ISSUANCE OF SUBPOENAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A subpoena may be issued by the Committee or subcommittee under paragraph (a)(2) in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present. Such authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman of the Committee or by any member designated by the Committee. If a specific request for a subpoena has not been previously rejected by either the Committee or subcommittee, the Chairman of the Committee, after consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee, may authorize and issue a subpoena under paragraph (a)(2) in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, and such subpoena shall for all purposes be deemed a subpoena issued by the Committee. As soon as practicable after a subpoena is issued under this rule, the Chairman shall notify all members of the Committee of such action.

(2) ENFORCEMENT.—Compliance with any subpoena issued by the Committee or subcommittee under paragraph (a)(2) may be enforced only as authorized or directed by the House.

(e) EXPENSES OF SUBPOENAED WITNESSES.—Each witness who has been subpoenaed, upon the completion of the witness' testimony before the Committee or any subcommittee, may report to the offices of the Committee, and there sign appropriate vouchers for travel allowances and attendance fees. If hearings are held in cities other than Washington, D.C., the witness or the witness' representative may contact the counsel of the Committee, before leaving the hearing room.

(f) DEPOSITION AUTHORITY.—Pursuant to section 3(t) of House Resolution 5 and subject to the regulations issued by the Chairman of the Committee on Rules and printed in the Congressional Record, the Chairman of the Committee, upon consultation with the ranking minority member, may order the taking of depositions, including pursuant to a subpoena, by a member or counsel of such committee.

#### RULE XIII. REVIEW OF CONTINUING PROGRAMS; BUDGET ACT PROVISIONS

(a) ENSURING ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS.—The Committee shall, in its consideration of all bills and joint resolutions of a public character within its jurisdiction, ensure that appropriations for continuing programs and activities of the Federal government and the District of Columbia government will be made annually to the maximum extent feasible and consistent with the nature, requirements, and objectives of the programs and activities involved.

(b) REVIEW OF MULTI-YEAR APPROPRIATIONS.—The Committee shall review, from time to time, each continuing program within its jurisdiction for which appropriations are not made annually in order to ascertain whether such program could be modified so that appropriations therefore would be made annually.

(c) VIEWS AND ESTIMATES.—In accordance with clause 4(f)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall submit to the Committee on the Budget—

(1) its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year which are within its jurisdiction or functions; and

(2) an estimate of the total amount of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction which it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

(d) BUDGET ALLOCATIONS.—As soon as practicable after a concurrent resolution on the budget for any fiscal year is agreed to, the Committee (after consulting with the appropriate committee or committees of the Senate) shall subdivide any allocations made to it in the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on such resolution, and promptly report such subdivisions to the House, in the manner provided by section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(e) RECONCILIATION.—Whenever the Committee is directed in a concurrent resolution on the budget to determine and recommend changes in laws, bills, or resolutions under the reconciliation process, it shall promptly make such determination and recommendations, and report a reconciliation bill or resolution (or both) to the House or submit such recommendations to the Committee on the Budget, in accordance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

#### RULE XIV. RECORDS

(a) KEEPING OF RECORDS.—The Committee shall keep a complete record of all Committee action which shall include—

(1) in the case of any meeting or hearing transcripts, a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved; and

(2) a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is taken.

(b) PUBLIC INSPECTION.—Pursuant to clause 2(e) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the result of each such record vote shall be made publicly available by the Committee in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote. Information so available shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition and the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members present but not voting.

(c) PROPERTY OF THE HOUSE.—All Committee records (including hearings, data, charts, and files) shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the member serving as Chairman of the Committee; and such records shall be the property of the House and all members of the House shall have access thereto.

(d) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVED RECORDS.—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman shall notify the ranking minority member of the Committee of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of such rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

(e) AUTHORITY TO PRINT.—The Committee is authorized to have printed and bound testimony and other data presented at hearings held by the Committee. All costs of stenographic services and transcripts in connection with any meeting or hearing of the Committee shall be paid as provided in clause 1(c) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

#### RULE XV. COMMITTEE BUDGETS

(a) BIENNIAL BUDGET.—The Chairman, in consultation with the Chairman of each sub-

committee, the majority members of the Committee, and the minority members of the Committee, shall, for each Congress, prepare a consolidated Committee budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee.

(b) ADDITIONAL EXPENSES.—Authorization for the payment of additional or unforeseen Committee expenses may be procured by one or more additional expense resolutions processed in the same manner as set out herein.

(c) TRAVEL REQUESTS.—The Chairman or any Chairman of a subcommittee may initiate necessary travel requests as provided in Committee Rule XVII within the limits of the consolidated Committee budget as approved by the House and the Chairman may execute necessary vouchers thereof.

(d) MONTHLY REPORTS.—Once monthly, the Chairman shall submit to the Committee on House Administration, in writing, a full and detailed accounting of all expenditures made during the period since the last such accounting from the amount budgeted to the Committee. Such report shall show the amount and purpose of such expenditure and the budget to which such expenditure is attributed. A copy of such monthly report shall be available in the Committee office for review by members of the Committee.

#### RULE XVI. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) APPOINTMENT BY CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the employees of the Committee not assigned to the minority. The staff of the Committee not assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of such staff members and delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate.

(b) APPOINTMENT BY RANKING MINORITY MEMBER.—The ranking minority member of the Committee shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the staff assigned to the minority within the budget approved for such purposes. The staff assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the ranking minority member of the Committee who may delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate.

(c) INTENTION REGARDING STAFF.—It is intended that the skills and experience of all members of the Committee staff shall be available to all members of the Committee.

#### RULE XVII. TRAVEL OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

(a) APPROVAL.—Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolutions as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern travel of Committee members and staff. Travel to be reimbursed from funds set aside for the Committee for any member or any staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chairman. Travel shall be authorized by the Chairman for any member and any staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee and meetings, conferences, and investigations which involve activities or subject matter under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chairman in writing the following:

- (1) The purpose of the travel;
- (2) The dates during which the travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the travel is being made;
- (3) The location of the event for which the travel is to be made; and
- (4) The names of members and staff seeking authorization.

(b) **SUBCOMMITTEE TRAVEL.**—In the case of travel of members and staff of a subcommittee to hearings, meetings, conferences, and investigations involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of such subcommittee, prior authorization must be obtained from the subcommittee Chairman and the Chairman. Such prior authorization shall be given by the Chairman only upon the representation by the Chairman of such subcommittee in writing setting forth those items enumerated in subparagraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) of paragraph (a) and that there has been compliance where applicable with Committee Rule IV.

(c) **TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.**—  
(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of travel outside the United States of members and staff of the Committee or subcommittee for the purpose of conducting hearings, investigations, studies, or attending meetings and conferences involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of the Committee or pertinent subcommittee, prior authorization must be obtained from the Chairman, or, in the case of a subcommittee from the subcommittee Chairman and the Chairman. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chairman, in writing, a request for such authorization. Each request, which shall be filed in a manner that allows for a reasonable period of time for review before such travel is scheduled to begin, shall include the following:

(A) The purpose of the travel;  
(B) The dates during which the travel will occur;

(C) The names of the countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each;

(D) An agenda of anticipated activities for each country for which travel is authorized together with a description of the purpose to be served and the areas of Committee jurisdiction involved; and

(E) The names of members and staff for whom authorization is sought.

(2) **INITIATION OF REQUESTS.**—Requests for travel outside the United States may be initiated by the Chairman or a subcommittee Chairman (except that individuals may submit a request to the Chairman for the purpose of attending a conference or meeting) and shall be limited to members and permanent employees of the Committee.

(d) **REPORTS BY MEMBERS AND STAFF.**—Within 15 legislative days from the conclusion of any hearing, investigation, study, meeting, or conference for which travel has been authorized pursuant to this rule, each member and staff member involved in such travel shall submit a written report to the Chairman covering the activities and other pertinent observations or information gained as a result of such travel.

(e) **APPLICABILITY OF LAWS, RULES, POLICIES.**—Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, or regulations of the House and of the Committees on House Administration and Ethics pertaining to such travel, and by the travel policy of the Committee.

#### RULE XVIII. COMMITTEE PANELS

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—In accordance with clause 5(b)(2)(C) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the Committee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, may designate a panel of the Committee consisting of members of the Committee to inquire into and take testimony on a matter or matters that fall within the jurisdiction of more than one subcommittee and to report to the Committee.

(b) **DURATION.**—No panel designated under paragraph

(a) shall continue in existence for more than six months after the date of the designation.

(c) **PARTY RATIOS AND APPOINTMENT.**—The ratio of majority members to minority members on a panel designated under paragraph

(a) shall be as close as practicable to the ratio of the Full Committee. All majority members of the panels shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee, and all minority members shall be appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee shall choose one of the majority members so appointed to serve as Chairman of the panel. The ranking minority member of the Committee shall similarly choose the ranking minority member of the panel.

(d) **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.**—The Chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee may serve as ex officio members of a panel designated under paragraph (a). The Chairman and minority member are authorized to vote on matters that arise before the panel and shall be counted to satisfy the quorum requirement for any purpose.

(e) **JURISDICTION.**—No panel designated under paragraph

(a) shall have legislative jurisdiction.

(f) **APPLICABILITY OF COMMITTEE RULES.**—A panel designated under paragraph

(a) shall be subject to all Committee Rules herein.

#### SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 5.—An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The **SPEAKER pro tempore.** Pursuant to clause 13 of rule I, the House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 6 o'clock and 26 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 24, 2025, at 9 a.m.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-99. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Community Planning and Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — **HOME Investment Partnerships Program: Program Updates and Streamlining** [Docket No.: FR-6144-F-03] (RIN: 2506-AC50) received January 22, 2025, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-100. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — **Wireless Emergency Alerts** [PS Docket No.: 15-91] Amendments to Part 11 of the Commis-

sion's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System [PS Docket No.: 15-94] received January 22, 2025, 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-101. A letter from the Deputy Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — **Addition of Entities to and Revision of Entry on the Entity List** [Docket No.: 250108-0010] (RIN: 0694-AJ76) received January 22, 2025, 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-102. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-641, "Closing of Public Streets and Alleys Adjacent to Squares 3039, 2040, and 3043 Clarification Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-103. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-642, "Illegal Dumping Enforcement Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-104. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-643, "Great Streets Program Expansion Neighborhood Retail Priority Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-105. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-644, "Radiation Protection Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-106. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-645, "Child Behavioral Health Services Dashboard Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-107. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-646, "Local Rent Supplement Program Eligibility Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-108. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-625, "Comprehensive Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Access, Readiness, and Sustainability Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-109. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-623, "Office of District Waterways Management Establishment Temporary Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-110. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-624, "CRIAC Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-111. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-626, "DC Circulator Transition Temporary Amendment Act of 2024", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.



EC-112. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-647, “Seizure Safe Schools Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-113. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-648, “Retired Firefighter and Police Officer Redeployment Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-114. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-649, “Automatic Voter Registration Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-115. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-650, “Rulemaking Public Comment Modernization Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-116. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-651, “Notarial Acts Clarification Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-117. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-640, “Residential Tranquility Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-118. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-559, “Female Genital Mutilation Prohibition Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-119. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-652, “Ranked Choice Voting and Open the Primary Elections to Independent Voters Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-120. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-681, “DMPED Grantmaking Authority Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-121. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-682, “Entertainment Establishment Employee Safety Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-122. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-683, “Streatery Program Endorsement Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-123. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-637, “Early Childhood Educator Pay Scales Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-124. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting

DC Act 25-638, “Cherry Blossom Festival Grant Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-125. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-639, “Department of Energy and Environment Rulemaking Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-126. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-663, “Certificate of Assurance Moratorium Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-127. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-664, “Review of Agency Action Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-128. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-665, “Department of Energy and Environment Definitions Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-129. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-686, “Insurance Database Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-130. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-687, “Electrical and Gas Utility Underground Work Wage Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-131. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-654, “Uniform Powers of Appointment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-132. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-655, “Uniform Trust Decanting Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-133. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-656, “Sign Regulations Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-134. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-657, “Uniform Civil Remedies for Unauthorized Disclosure of Intimate Images Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-135. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-658, “Uniform Commercial Real Estate Receivership Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-136. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-659, “Uniform Community Property Disposition at Death Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87

Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-137. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-660, “Bruce Monroe Extension of Disposition Authority Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-138. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-661, “Ballpark Budget and Maintenance Amendment Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-139. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting DC Act 25-662, “Evanti Court Designation Act of 2024”, pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 813); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-140. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department’s Major final rule — Buy America Requirements for Manufactured Products [Docket No.: FHWA-2023-0037] (RIN: 2125-AG13) received January 15, 2025, 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-141. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Section, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service’s Major final rule — Section 45Y Clean Electricity Production Credit and Section 48E Clean Electricity Investment Credit [TD 10024] (RIN: 1545-BR17) received January 22, 2025, 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.

## 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. McCLELLAN (for herself, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. SORENSEN, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. SCHOLTEN):

H.R. 641. A bill to establish an interagency committee on soil carbon sequestration research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Natural Resources, 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. STEUBE (for himself and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H.R. 642. A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the portion of the Myakka River lying within Sarasota County, Florida as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DOWNING (for himself, Mr. CLINE, Mr. HARIDOPOLOS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. OGLES, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. SCHMIDT, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. KENNEDY of Utah):

H.R. 643. A bill to eliminate the Federal Insurance Office of the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio):

H.R. 644. A bill to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms,

and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. MASSIE (for himself, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. BIGGS of Arizona, Mr. BRECHEEN, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. CLINE, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. CRANE, Mr. GOSAR, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mr. HARRIS of Maryland, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mrs. LUNA, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. MORAN, Mr. OGLES, Mr. ROSE, Mr. ROY, Mr. SELF, Mrs. SPARTZ, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WIED, Mr. GILL of Texas, and Mr. HARRIGAN):

H.R. 645. A bill to enforce the rights protected by the Second and Fourteenth Amendments against the States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Ms. TITUS, Ms. BARRAGAN, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. PANETTA, Mrs. McIVER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. McGOVERN, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. SALINAS, Ms. BYNUM, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. KEATING, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Ms. JACOBS, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. TOKUDA, Ms. McCLELLAN, Ms. ROSS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LANDSMAN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, and Ms. DEXTER):

H.R. 646. A bill to establish a grant program to address the crises in accessing affordable housing and child care through the co-location of housing and child care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on 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. YAKYM (for himself and Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina):

H.R. 647. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the provision of certain additional burial benefits for individuals for whom an urn or plaque is furnished, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. VAN ORDEN (for himself, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. BACON, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MESSMER, Mr. STEIL, Mr. BISHOP, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. CLYDE, Mrs. LUNA, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. SELF, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. FINSTAD, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. OGLES, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. DOWNING, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. MEUSER, and Mrs. CAMMACK):

H.R. 648. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to provide fluid or powdered milk to members of the Armed Forces at dining facilities on military installations; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania (for himself, Ms. SCHRIER, Mr. FINSTAD, Ms. CRAIG, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. ESTES, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. DE LA CRUZ, Mr. BOST, Mr. MANN, Ms.

TENNEY, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. BACON, Mr. OWENS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. PERRY, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. MACKENZIE, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. BRESNAHAN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. HARDER of California, Mr. STEEL, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. BARR, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. RYAN, Mr. VASQUEZ, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. ROSE, Mr. MESSMER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. WIED, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mrs. HINSON, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. SORENSEN, Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina, Mr. TONKO, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. GUEST):

H.R. 649. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to allow schools that participate in the school lunch program under such Act to serve whole milk; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Ms. FOXX (for herself, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ROSE, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. McCORMICK, and Mr. HARIDOPOLOS):

H.R. 650. A bill to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as a fundamental right; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALLEN:

H.R. 651. A bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to auction spectrum in the band between 1.3 gigahertz and 13.2 gigahertz, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ARRINGTON:

H.R. 652. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction under section 199A to apply to qualified BDC interest dividends in the same manner as qualified REIT dividends; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BABIN (for himself and Mr. McCORMICK):

H.R. 653. A bill to protect children from medical malpractice in the form of gender transition procedures; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Education and Workforce, Natural Resources, 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. BARR:

H.R. 654. A bill to change the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection into an independent agency named the Consumer Financial Empowerment Agency, to transition the Agency to the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BENTZ:

H.R. 655. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain Federal land to the City of The Dalles, Oregon; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BICE (for herself and Ms. HOULAHAN):

H.R. 656. A bill to improve parental leave for members of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. BROWNLEY (for herself, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Ms. TLAIB, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois):

H.R. 657. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reimbursement of continuing professional education expenses for health care professionals of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 658. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish qualifications for the appointment of a person as a marriage and family therapist, qualified to provide clinical supervision, in the Veterans Health Administration; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BROWNLEY (for herself and Mr. GRJUALVA):

H.R. 659. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Chairman of the Board of Veterans' Appeals to give priority to individuals with certain professional experience in recommending such individuals to serve as members of the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BROWNLEY (for herself, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Ms. OMAR):

H.R. 660. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to carry out programs to provide to certain veterans who are women a compensation benefit and an upgrade to the discharge status of such veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, 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. BUCHANAN (for himself, Mr. SOTO, and Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS):

H.R. 661. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Council for Technology and Innovation of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, to carry out a program to facilitate and coordinate efforts between the United States and Israel to expand and enhance collaboration on the development and delivery of health care products and services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CAREY (for himself, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. RULLI, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. HERN of Oklahoma, Ms. TENNEY, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. HUNT, Mr. MANN, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mr. COLE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. McDOWELL, Mr. FALLON, Ms. VAN DUYN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. BABIN, Mr. EVANS of Colorado, Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas, and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS):

H.R. 662. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow intangible drilling and development costs to be taken into account when computing adjusted financial statement income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CASE (for himself, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. TLAIB):

H.R. 663. A bill to oppose the permitting of deep seabed mining and exploration for deep seabed mining, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CASE (for himself, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. TLAIB):

H.R. 664. A bill to prohibit certain mining activities on the deep seabed and Outer Continental Shelf, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASE (for himself and Mr. MOYLAN):

H.R. 665. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to exempt certain noncontiguous trade from the coastwise laws; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CASE (for himself and Mr. MOYLAN):

H.R. 666. A bill to provide a definition of reasonable rate for noncontiguous domestic ocean trade, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CASE (for himself and Mr. MOYLAN):

H.R. 667. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to allow transportation of merchandise in noncontiguous trade on foreign-flag vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Workforce, 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. CISCOMANI (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, and Mr. TURNER of Ohio):

H.R. 668. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to coordinate, navigate, and manage care and benefits for veterans enrolled in both the Medicare program and the system of annual patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LIEU (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BEYER, Mr. COHEN, Ms. MENG, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. CHU, Mr. AMO, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 669. A bill to restrict the first-use strike of nuclear weapons; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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. CONNOLLY (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. OMAR, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mr. BEYER):

H.R. 670. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for a minimum number of refugees who may be admitted in any fiscal year after fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. ANSARI):

H.R. 671. A bill to establish an interagency task force to increase vital documents access for unaccompanied homeless youth; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, 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. DIAZ-BALART (for himself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. STEIL, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. HAGEMAN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Ms. PETTERSEN, and Ms. BOEBERT):

H.R. 672. A bill to establish new ZIP Codes for certain communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GARCIA of California:

H.R. 673. A bill to transfer Homeland Security Investigations from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, redesignate U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement as U.S. Immigration Compliance Enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, 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. GOLDEN of Maine (for himself and Mr. VAN DREW):

H.R. 674. A bill to prohibit commercial offshore wind energy development in Lobster Management Area 1 in the Gulf of Maine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 675. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security, to establish a program of entering into partnerships with eligible domestic manufacturers to ensure the availability of qualified personal protective equipment to prepare for and respond to national health or other emergencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 676. A bill to exempt Federal actions related to energy and mineral activities on certain Federal lands from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 677. A bill to establish a process to expedite the review of appeals of certain decisions by the Department of the Interior; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 678. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to improve the assessment of expression of interest fees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. HARSHBARGER (for herself, Mr. HERN of Oklahoma, Mr. BOST, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. YAKYM, Mr. BIGGS of Arizona, Mr. PALMER, and Mr. GUEST):

H.R. 679. A bill to nullify the modifications made by the Food and Drug Administration in January 2023 to the risk evaluation and mitigation strategy for the abortion pill mifepristone, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. HAYES (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 680. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and to expand eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation paid to certain survivors of certain veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 681. 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 held in trust for the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. ESTES, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. EZELL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FALLON, Mr. CRANE, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. BOST, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. MANN, and Mr. GUEST):

H.R. 682. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit abortion in cases where a fetal heartbeat is detectable; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. KIM (for herself, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CISCOMANI, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. LAWLER, and Mr. CISNEROS):

H.R. 683. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program to permit certain members of the Armed Forces to pre-enroll in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KUSTOFF:

H.R. 684. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on repurchase of corporate stock; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BRECHEEN, Mr. STRONG, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. FLOOD, Mr. MANN, Mr. HARRIS of Maryland, Mr. FONG, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. OGLES, Mr. GUEST, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. PALMER, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. SHREVE, and Mr. LAHOOD):

H.R. 685. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the approval of new abortion drugs, to prohibit investigational use exemptions for abortion drugs, and to impose additional regulatory requirements with respect to previously approved abortion drugs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. HARRIS of Maryland, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 686. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the unlawful disposal of fetal remains; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK (for himself, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. HOUCIN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. OWENS, Mr. COLLINS, Mrs. LUNA, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. MANN, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. BABIN, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. STEUBE, and Mr. BURCHETT):

H.R. 687. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for an alternative removal for performance or misconduct for Federal employees; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. MACE:

H.R. 688. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to furnish tailored information to expecting mothers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MALOY (for herself, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. STAUBER, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. MOYLAN, Mr. YAKYM, Mr. FONG, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FULCHER, and Mr. KENNEDY of Utah):

H.R. 689. A bill to require each agency to evaluate the permitting system of the agency, to consider whether permitting by rule could replace that system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MANN (for himself and Mr. WOMACK):

H.R. 690. A bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds to implement Salmonella framework for raw poultry products; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. MCDOWELL (for himself, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. GILL of Texas, Mr. MOORE of West Virginia, and Mr. JACK):

H.R. 691. A bill to designate the Washington Dulles International Airport in Virginia as the "Donald J. Trump International Airport"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MEUSER (for himself, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Ms. LEE of Nevada, Ms. DE LA CRUZ, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. MESSMER):

H.R. 692. A bill to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY):

H.R. 693. A bill to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to modify the authority of the Office of National Drug Control Policy with respect to the World Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 694. A bill to suspend normal trade relations with the People's Republic of China and to increase the rates of duty applicable with respect to articles imported from the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Armed Services, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy and Commerce, 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. NEHLS (for himself, Mr. PAPPAS, Ms. BOEBERT, and Ms. DE LA CRUZ):

H.R. 695. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the rate of the special pension payable to Medal of Honor recipients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. NEHLS (for himself, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. SCHMIDT, Mr. BIGGS of Arizona, and Mr. VAN DREW):

H.R. 696. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to reform temporary protected status, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Homeland Security, and Transportation and Infrastructure,

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. OGLES:

H.R. 697. A bill to establish Schedule Policy/Career (commonly referred to as "Schedule F") in the excepted service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ROUZER (for himself, Ms. FOXX, Mr. BALDERSON, and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS):

H.R. 698. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permanently bar aliens who are ordered removed after failing to appear at a removal proceeding, absent exceptional circumstances, from becoming permanent residents of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROY (for himself, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. GUEST, Mr. OGLES, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. BIGGS of Arizona, and Mr. CRENSHAW):

H.R. 699. A bill to prohibit United States contributions to the United Nations Population Fund; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SELF:

H.R. 700. 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 Ms. SHERRILL (for herself and Mr. HAYES):

H.R. 701. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for the establishment and operation of small food retail businesses in areas with high food retail concentration and low levels of competition; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SHERRILL:

H.R. 702. A bill to modify the measure and use of the poverty line issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to more accurately account for the basic needs of families and regional costs of living; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on 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. SMUCKER (for himself, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. VAN DUYN, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BOST, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. ROUZER, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. CLINE, Mr. FONG, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. RULLI, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Ms. FOXX, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. GREEN of Tennessee, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mrs. BICE, Mr. STRONG, Mr. GUEST, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. KEAN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. NUNN of Iowa, Mr. MORAN, Mr. FALLON, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. MOORE of West Virginia, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. HERN of Oklahoma, Mr. ESTES, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. KUSTOFF, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. CAREY, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mrs. KIM, Mr. LALOTA, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ZINKE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. FULCHER,

Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. KILEY of California, Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. BARRETT, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. EZELL, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Ms. MALOY, Ms. LETLOW, Mrs. HINSON, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. BACON, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. AMODEI of Nevada, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. OWENS, Mr. STEIL, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BARR, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Ms. MACE, Mr. MACKENZIE, Mrs. HOUCHIN, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Ms. TENNEY, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Ms. HAGEMAN, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. GILL of Texas, Mr. SCHMIDT, Ms. DE LA CRUZ, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. MCDOWELL, Mr. BRESNAHAN, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. YAKYM, Mr. GOODEN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. BEAN of Florida, Mr. TIMMONS, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. WIED, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mr. DOWNING, Mr. CRANK, Mr. GIMENEZ, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. LUTTRELL, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. COMER, Mr. EMMER, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. JACK, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. FRY, Mr. COLE, Mr. HILL of Arkansas, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. MILLS, and Mr. MCGUIRE):

H.R. 703. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified business income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SOTO:

H.R. 704. A bill to provide for the issuance of a Manatee Semipostal Stamp; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. STRICKLAND (for herself and Mr. LAWLER):

H.R. 705. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to establish a compensation fund for military firefighters exposed to PFAS; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. STRONG (for himself and Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana):

H.R. 706. A bill to improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. STRONG:

H.R. 707. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make unlawful voting an aggravated felony; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STRONG (for himself, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. GREEN of Tennessee, Mr. GUEST, Mr. LUTTRELL, and Mr. EVANS of Colorado):

H.R. 708. A bill to establish in the Department of Homeland Security a working group relating to countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Financial Services, 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. STRONG:

H.R. 709. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, to establish counter-UAS system training and require the Attorney General and Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to establish related standards for initial and recurrent training programs or certifications for individuals seeking to operate counter-UAS detection and mitigation systems, equipment, or technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. TAYLOR (for himself, Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina, Mr. RULLI, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona, Mr. WIED, and Mr. GILL of Texas):

H.R. 710. A bill to require agencies to repeal ten existing regulations before issuing a new regulation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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 Mr. TIFFANY (for himself, Mr. OWENS, Ms. TENNEY, Ms. HAGEMAN, Mr. OGLES, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. MOORE of Alabama):

H.R. 711. A bill to provide for equal protection of the law and to prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, or national origin in Federal actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, Education and Workforce, and House Administration, 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. VAN DREW (for himself and Ms. BROWNLEY):

H.R. 712. A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to include data on animal abuse in the national clearinghouse for information relating to child abuse and neglect; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Ms. VAN DUYNE:

H.R. 713. A bill to impose a financial penalty on certain institutions of higher education with high percentages of students who default or make insufficient payments on Federal student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on 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 Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 714. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to create a pilot program to award grants to units of general local government and community-based organizations to create jobs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. WOMACK (for himself, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 715. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income the basic needs allowance of members of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 716. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to ensure full pool levels of Flathead Lake in Montana in accordance with certain requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ZINKE (for himself and Mr. BEYER):

H.R. 717. A bill to establish the Wildlife Movement and Movement Area Grant Program and the State and Tribal Migration Research Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ZINKE (for himself and Mr. VASQUEZ):

H.R. 718. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from transferring certain Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. OGLES:

H.J. Res. 29. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to provide that no person shall be elected to the office of the President more than three times; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BALDERSON (for himself, Mr. PFLUGER, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. MEUSER):

H. Res. 57. A resolution recognizing the benefits of natural gas to the United States economy and environment, and recognizing natural gas as an affordable and "green" energy; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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:

H. Res. 58. A resolution congratulating the University of Vermont men's soccer team on winning the 2024 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I men's soccer national championship; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. BRECHEEN (for himself, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. BURLISON, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina, Mrs. BICE, Mrs. LUNA, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. OGLES, Ms. GREENE of Georgia, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BABIN, Mrs. HOUCHIN, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. BAIRD, Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina, Ms. BOEBERT, and Mr. GRIFFITH):

H. Res. 59. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the sermon given by the Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde at the National Prayer Service on January 21st, 2025, at the National Cathedral was a display of political activism and condemning its distorted message; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. BROWNLEY (for herself and Ms. NORTON):

H. Res. 60. A resolution expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the naming of new or undedicated facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs after women veterans and minority veterans in order to reflect the diversity of all who have

served in the Armed Forces of the United States; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CARSON (for himself, Ms. OMAR, Ms. SIMON, and Ms. TLAB):

H. Res. 61. A resolution expressing support for the recognition of January as "Muslim-American Heritage Month" and celebrating the heritage and culture of Muslim Americans in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ESPAILLAT:

H. Res. 62. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a Juan Pablo Duarte Day; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BEAN of Florida, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. STRONG, Mr. ISSA, Mr. MOORE of West Virginia, Mr. OWENS, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. BERGMAN, Ms. MACE, Ms. LETLOW, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. DUNN of Florida, Mr. GREEN of Tennessee, Mr. BARRETT, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. JAMES, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. MILLS, and Mr. MCGUIRE):

H. Res. 63. A resolution expressing support for the designation of the week of January 26 through February 1, 2025, as "National School Choice Week"; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. SUOZZI:

H. Res. 64. A resolution affirming the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. McCLELLAN:

H.R. 641.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, U.S. Constitution

By Mr. STEUBE:

H.R. 642.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. DOWNING:

H.R. 643.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 644.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. MASSIE:

H.R. 645.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

2nd Amendment

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 646.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution  
By Mr. YAKYM:

H.R. 647.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. VAN ORDEN:

H.R. 648.

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 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 649.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution in that the legislation exercises legislative powers granted to Congress by that clause "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."

By Ms. FOXX:

H.R. 650.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the 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 in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. ALLEN:

H.R. 651.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ARRINGTON:

H.R. 652.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. BABIN:

H.R. 653.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 654.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BENTZ:

H.R. 655.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mrs. BICE:

H.R. 656.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

Clause 13: to provide and maintain a Navy  
Clause 14: to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces

Clause 16: to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service in the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress

Clause 18: to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the

Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 657.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 658.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 659.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Ms. BROWNLEY:

H.R. 660.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 661.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8.

By Mr. CAREY:

H.R. 662.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8

By Mr. CASE:

H.R. 663.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. CASE:

H.R. 664.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. CASE:

H.R. 665.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. CASE:

H.R. 666.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. CASE:

H.R. 667.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. CISCOMANI:

H.R. 668.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. LIEU:

H.R. 669.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 670.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 671.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. DIAZ-BALART:

H.R. 672.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GARCIA of California:

H.R. 673.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. GOLDEN of Maine:

H.R. 674.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 675.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution as well as Amendment XVI

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 676.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 677.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Ms. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 678.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mrs. HARSHBARGER:

H.R. 679.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Sec. 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. HAYES:

H.R. 680.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 681.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 682.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has authority to extend protection to unborn children with a detectable heartbeat under the Constitution's grants of powers to Congress under the Equal Protection, Due Process, and Enforcement Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment

By Mrs. KIM:

H.R. 683.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, which states "[t]he Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States"

By Mr. KUSTOFF:

H.R. 684.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, which states "[t]he Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States"

By Mr. KUSTOFF:

H.R. 684.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article 1, Section 8, the Necessary and Proper Clause. Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing powers and all Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 685.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitution grants of powers to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To

make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 686.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Supreme Court's Commerce Clause precedents and under the Constitution's grants of powers to Congress under the Equal Protection, Due Process, and Enforcement Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK:

H.R. 687.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. MACE:

H.R. 688.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Ms. MALOY:

H.R. 689.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. MANN:

H.R. 690.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following—Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. McDOWELL:

H.R. 691.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. MEUSER:

H.R. 692.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR:

H.R. 693.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. MOOLENAAR:

H.R. 694.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. NEHLS:

H.R. 695.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. NEHLS:

H.R. 696.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 1; Article 1, section 8, clause 18.

By Mr. OGLES:

H.R. 697.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROUZER:

H.R. 698.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII of the Constitution

By Mr. ROY:

H.R. 699.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SELF:

H.R. 700.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Ms. SHERRILL:

H.R. 701.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Ms. SHERRILL:

H.R. 702.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 703.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SOTO:

H.R. 704.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution. Directs the USPS to create a semipostal stamp to help fund manatee saving programs.

By Ms. STRICKLAND:

H.R. 705.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. STRONG:

H.R. 706.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. STRONG:

H.R. 707.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. STRONG:

H.R. 708.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. STRONG:

H.R. 709.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. TAYLOR:

H.R. 710.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. TIFFANY:

H.R. 711.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment XIV

By Mr. VAN DREW:

H.R. 712.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Ms. VAN DUYNE:

H.R. 713.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 714.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. WOMACK:

H.R. 715.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States, but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States:

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 716.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 717.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. ZINKE:

H.R. 718.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. OGLES:

H.J. Res. 29.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution of the United States

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 21: Mr. BENTZ, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. GIMENEZ, and Mr. ROY.

H.R. 24: Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona.

H.R. 31: Mr. LALOTA.

H.R. 32: Mr. STAUBER.

H.R. 45: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SCHMIDT, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. COMER, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 137: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. FALLON, Mr. MOORE of Utah, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MOORE of North Carolina, Mr. FINSTAD, and Mr. TIMMONS.

H.R. 151: Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina.

H.R. 163: Mr. COMER.

H.R. 224: Mr. STAUBER.

H.R. 232: Ms. SHERRILL.

H.R. 247: Ms. CRAIG.

H.R. 262: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 271: Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 273: Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 309: Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. FIELDS.

H.R. 323: Mr. LALOTA.

H.R. 350: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 378: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 389: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 404: Ms. BOEBERT.

H.R. 425: Mr. COMER, Mr. PALMER, Mr. BACON, and Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 429: Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. NORCROSS, and Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 430: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 431: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 469: Mr. OWENS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN DREW, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 470: Mr. MILLS and Mr. STEUBE.

H.R. 471: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 472: Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina.

H.R. 478: Mr. SCOTT Franklin of Florida, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. KNOTT, and Mr. TIMMONS.

H.R. 482: Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 484: Ms. TITUS and Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.

- H.R. 485: Mr. GARAMENDI.  
 H.R. 486: Mr. KEATING.  
 H.R. 499: Mr. TURNER of Texas, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, and Mrs. FLETCHER.  
 H.R. 500: Mr. LAWLER.  
 H.R. 520: Mr. RUTHERFORD.  
 H.R. 522: Mr. FALLON.  
 H.R. 530: Mr. LALOTA.  
 H.R. 539: Mr. SOTO, Mr. SCOTT Franklin of Florida, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. NEHLS, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, Mr. GOODEN, Mr. HERN of Oklahoma, Mr. BURLISON, Ms. TLAIB, and Mr. COMER.  
 H.R. 569: Mr. RUTHERFORD, Ms. HAGEMAN, Mr. FALLON, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. GUEST, and Mr. HARIDOPOLOS.  
 H.R. 573: Mr. MANN.  
 H.R. 574: Mr. FALLON and Mr. MOORE of Utah.
- H.R. 576: Ms. OMAR, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.  
 H.R. 584: Mr. VAN ORDEN.  
 H.R. 589: Mr. RUTHERFORD, Ms. BOEBERT, and Mr. CLINE.  
 H.R. 599: Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. GUEST.  
 H.R. 600: Mrs. LUNA.  
 H.R. 606: Mr. GOSAR and Ms. BOEBERT.  
 H.R. 608: Ms. CROCKETT.  
 H.R. 609: Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, and Ms. TITUS.  
 H.R. 610: Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, and Ms. TITUS.  
 H.R. 618: Mr. AMODEI of Nevada.  
 H.R. 624: Mr. CLINE, Mr. FALLON, and Mr. LANGWORTHY.  
 H.R. 629: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. EZELL.
- H.R. 630: Mr. PANETTA.  
 H.R. 632: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. MANN.  
 H.J. Res. 24: Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota.  
 H.J. Res. 28: Mr. MCDOWELL.  
 H. Res. 23: Mr. MCGARVEY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. LATIMER, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. FROST, Mr. IVEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mrs. MCIVER, Mr. SOTO, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, Mr. BERA, Mr. POCAN, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. DELUZIO, and Mrs. HAYES.  
 H. Res. 29: Ms. MENG.  
 H. Res. 52: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.





United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 171

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

No. 14

## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Divine Master, You are our stronghold and the pioneer of our future. Teach us to work with greater faithfulness. May pleasing You become our primary focus as You place a song in our hearts for each burden on our shoulders.

Guide our lawmakers today. Lead them to Your fortress of love, patience, and kindness. Lord, remind them that any success alien to Your way is worse than failure and that any failure in Your Spirit is better than gold.

And, Lord, please be with our faithful pages as they prepare for tomorrow's graduation. In all of their tomorrows, do for them more than they can ask or imagine.

We pray in Your wonderful 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). The Senator from Iowa.

### CHINA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today marks 5 years since the Robinson family of Iowa City, IA, has been matched with their adoptive child way over in China. Sadly, this is not a celebratory anniversary of that date, as the Robinson family, along with 300 other American families, have yet to be unified with their adoptive children, many with unique medical needs.

You see, in August of 2024, China very abruptly ended its intercountry adoption program without even clarifying what that would mean for the families already matched with their child.

The Chinese Embassy cited that cross-border adoption has fulfilled its mission for the country, as now many more Chinese families have stronger will and capacity to adopt the orphans in China. While that is good news for those orphans, the country has made a commitment to American families that is not being kept. China still hasn't given a straight answer on whether these matched cases will be completed.

I have been told that families from other countries have been invited to travel to complete their adoptions but not Americans. Why not Americans?

It has been 5 years since families like the Robinsons have prepared their homes to welcome these adoptive children, 5 years of a developed familiar relationship.

I hope that President Trump and the incoming administration see that these matched adoption cases be completed. President Trump talks about wanting to meet with Xi, have more friendly relationships with President Xi. Hopefully this is an environment that can bring the Robinsons and their child together.

China made a commitment, and I think and everybody thinks China ought to honor its commitment. China ought to do that for no reason other than they want the respect of the world. They seem to be working to get that respect, and when people question that respect, they get very uptight about it.

### 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on another issue, I want to talk about the 30-year anniversary of a piece of legislation that I have been involved with.

A lot has happened during the first week of the second Trump administration. Within just 3 days in the White House, President Trump has put the pedal to the metal, delivering on the mandate voters expected when they went to the polls on November 5.

Now, thinking of history, it brings to mind a message the voters delivered 30 years ago. Some of my colleagues will remember what is called the Contract with America. That was a platform, if you remember, engineered by former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich that led to what was called the Republican Revolution of 1994. In fact, it was so much of a revolution that I remember that in President Clinton's State of the Union Message, he said and opened his statement with these few words:

The era of big government is over.

That is how much the Gingrich contract rattled Washington, DC.

So the American people expressed that they were fed up with government-knows-best and a Washington mindset that applied rules for thee but not for me. Sounds familiar, doesn't it, 30 years later with the Trump mandate?

So I come to the Senate floor today to talk about one particular issue that still comes up at my county meetings. For years, Iowans have asked me something like this: Why doesn't Congress have to follow the same laws as we have to follow? That used to be true until we passed the Congressional Accountability Act. In fact, that law became law, law of the land, 30 years ago today.

Prior to 1995, Congress was exempt from about a dozen workplace laws that applied to the private sector but not to us in the Congress. I want to revisit how it came about.

In 1994, the American people delivered a landslide victory to Republicans. We gained majority control of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. It was an epic victory considering that Democrats had run 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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S305

House of Representatives for all but 4 years going way back to 1931.

The best approach to good leadership is to keep an ear to the ground and a finger to the pulse of the American people, much like our 45th and 47th President has done since 2017. Throughout my public service, that is how this U.S. Senator has worked to represent Iowans. By listening, by keeping in touch, and by going home every chance I get, I hold myself accountable to the people. This year, I will start my 45th consecutive year holding meetings with Iowans, holding Q&A meetings in each of Iowa's 99 counties.

Now, for a basis for keeping in touch and keeping government responsible, let's look at Federalist 57. In that Federalist Paper, James Madison wrote about the vital need for what he called "communion of interests" between the people and their leaders, "without which every government degenerates into tyranny." In the 21st century, you could call that having skin in the game.

Back to this 30th anniversary of the Congressional Accountability Act, during the period of Congress having exemption from some workplace rules, Iowa's small businesses and Main Street civic leaders hit the nail on the head. They said to me and other Members of Congress: What is good for the goose ought to be good for the gander.

So some of us rolled up our sleeves and got to work. I teamed up with former Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut here in the Senate. Like many legislative efforts, it took years to build a bipartisan coalition to have these laws applied to the Congress of the United States. The 1994 electoral victory was the boost that we needed to get across the finish line.

On January 4, 1995, I reintroduced the Congressional Accountability Act. My good friend and former Senate majority leader Bob Dole summed up the reason for this legislation better than anybody else. I quote Senator Dole:

Many of our citizens have begun to view the Senate and House of Representatives not as a people's body, but as an "imperial Congress," as an institution that considers itself above the law and without accountability.

That double standard had to end. We had to restore confidence with the American people. That is why I championed the Congressional Accountability Act—to inject common sense into lawmaking.

This Federal law would provide that lawmakers walk in the shoes of our constituents, abiding by the same workplace rights and worker protection laws, including civil rights, age discrimination, disability, overtime pay, and occupational safety and health laws.

One of my opponents during those years of trying to get this legislation passed was Senator Stevens of Alaska. I remember as this bill passed the U.S. Senate and I was victorious, he came up to me and poked his finger in my chest and said: I hope you are the first

Senator to get sued because of this legislation.

Well, I haven't been sued, and I don't think anybody has been sued.

The first bill that we sent to the President's desk in the 104th Congress was the Congressional Accountability Act. President Clinton signed it, as I mentioned earlier, 30 years ago today, on January 23, 1995.

Since then, I have led reforms to expand whistleblower protections to employees in the legislative and executive branches. In 2018, President Trump signed into law reforms to the law's reporting and resolution process for workplace harassment claims.

Although the ink has long dried on the Congressional Accountability Act, we all still need to be fighting every day to keep a reality check here in Washington, DC.

I am going to finish with this ironic statement. Even though this legislation was passed 30 years ago and even though I have heard about its need for a long time before that, I still—as I say, ironically—hear at my town meetings some constituents say to me: Why don't you have to live under the same laws that we live under? Then I have an opportunity to tell them about the Congressional Accountability Act.

I yield the floor.

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#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

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#### FILIBUSTER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I think we all remember the situation just a few short months ago in the lead-up to the election. Democrat Senators and Senate candidates were declaring their commitment to eliminating the filibuster or creating carve-outs that would render it meaningless. The Democratic leader himself made it very clear that the days of the filibuster were numbered, telling a crowd at the Democratic National Convention that his party would be changing the rules to pass the Democrats' Federal takeover of elections. The filibuster, it seemed, was on its way out.

Fast-forward to yesterday. Yesterday, it seems there was a sudden change of heart because yesterday every Senate Democrat—the Demo-

cratic leader, new Democratic Senators, long-serving Democratic Senators who had expressed their desire to get rid of the filibuster—joined together and filibustered a bill. That is right. Every Democratic Senator participated in a filibuster of yesterday's legislation.

I will leave aside the disturbing fact that Democrats chose to unite to block a bill to protect living, breathing, newborn children born alive after an attempted abortion.

What I want to talk about today is Democrats' apparent belief that there should be one rule for Democrats and another rule for everyone else. Back in 2017, during President Trump's first term, when Republicans controlled the Senate, 32 Senate Democrats—many of whom, I might add, are still serving today—joined a letter to Senate leadership asking for preservation of the legislative filibuster. Then Democrats took power, and all of a sudden Democrats started to find the legislative filibuster a major inconvenience. They wanted to pass highly partisan legislation like their Federal takeover of elections, and they discovered the filibuster was getting in the way.

Now, Republicans are in power again, and it seems Democrats are back to supporting the filibuster. And the only thing I can gather from that is that Democrats think they should be free to pass any legislation they choose when they are in power but the Republicans should not; that the rules should apply when they serve the aims of the Democratic Party and that the rules should be abolished whenever they interfere with Democrats' far-left agenda; in short, that one party, the Democratic Party, should be making decisions in this country.

That is not a very democratic attitude. It also betrays an elitism, a disdain for half of the electorate that perhaps had something to do with Democrats' electoral defeat in November.

Now, there is no doubt that the filibuster can sometimes be frustrating. I am frustrated that we couldn't pass legislation yesterday to uphold basic human decency by requiring that babies born alive after an attempted abortion receive appropriate medical care. But the filibuster serves a crucial purpose.

The Founders intended the Senate to be a counterbalance to the House. It was designed to be a more stable, thoughtful, more deliberative legislative body to check ill-considered or intemperate legislation or tyranny by the majority. And as time has gone on, the legislative filibuster is the Senate rule that has had perhaps the greatest impact in preserving the Founders' vision of the Senate.

The filibuster acts as a check on imprudent or ill-considered legislation. It forces discussion and compromise, and, critically, it ensures that Americans whose party is not in power also have a

voice in Congress. Preserving the filibuster is crucial to preserving the Senate's checks and balances role in our system of government.

I expect that Democrats will continue to display a renewed enthusiasm for the filibuster during this Congress. And while I may strongly disagree with their choice of when to use it, I will continue to defend their right to do so. Keeping the Senate the Senate and ensuring it continues to fill the role envisioned for it by the Founders is more important than temporary political gain. I hope that when the day comes that Democrats retake the Senate, their time in the minority will have reminded them of the crucial role the filibuster plays and that they will carry their newfound enthusiasm for the filibuster with them when they again find themselves in our shoes.

#### NOMINATION OF SEAN DUFFY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I will be filing cloture on former Congressman SEAN DUFFY's nomination to be Secretary of Transportation here shortly.

Yesterday, the Commerce Committee favorably reported Congressman DUFFY's nomination in a 28-to-0 vote—in other words, unanimously—and I hope we will be able to move this nominee quickly, as we did with Secretary Rubio, who was also unanimously reported out of committee.

Congressman DUFFY is highly qualified for this position. He served five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. As the cochair of the Great Lakes Task Force, he played a role in advancing a number of transportation and infrastructure projects. At his hearing last week, he demonstrated his knowledge of the issues that will be his responsibility in this role. Our colleague Senator BALDWIN said that he is "the right person for this job."

There is no reason to delay this uncontroversial and qualified nominee. If Democrats want to spend their nights and weekends taking votes on uncontroversial nominees, we can do it that way, but one way or the other, these nominees will be confirmed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 6.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of SEAN DUFFY, of Wisconsin, to be Secretary of Transportation.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 6, Sean Duffy, of Wisconsin, to be Secretary of Transportation.

John Thune, Shelley Moore Capito, Jon Husted, Tom Cotton, Mike Rounds, Jim Justice, Mike Crapo, Ted Budd, James Lankford, Dan Sullivan, Todd Young, Cynthia M. Lummis, Katie Britt, John R. Curtis, Rick Scott of Florida, Thom Tillis, Ron Johnson.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### ILLEGITIMATE COURT COUNTER-ACTION ACT—Motion To Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 3, H.R. 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to Proceed to Calendar No. 3, H.R. 23, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 3, H.R. 23, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies.

John Thune, Tom Cotton, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Pete Ricketts, Shelley Moore Capito, Deb Fischer, Markwayne Mullin, Rick Scott of Florida, Tim Sheehy, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Boozman, Marsha Blackburn, Mike Rounds, James Lankford, Ted Budd, John R. Curtis, Tommy Tuberville.

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the Senate will hold votes on two piv-

otal Cabinet nominees. First, we will vote to advance the nomination of John Ratcliffe to serve as CIA Director. I will respectfully vote no, not because of our political difference, which, of course, exists, but because I am deeply worried that Mr. Ratcliffe will be unable to stand up to people like Donald Trump and Tulsi Gabbard, who are known to falsify intelligence.

As CIA Director, Mr. Ratcliffe will have to make decisions based on intelligence and fact. There may be no Agency more important than the CIA that has to be fact based. Sometimes, these facts will lead to inconvenient conclusions for his superiors and the President. It is in those cases where truth—not fiction, not ideology—must prevail, and I have my doubts that Mr. Ratcliffe will be able to hold firm.

Most troubling about Mr. Ratcliffe were the answers I got from him about Tulsi Gabbard, President Trump's nominee to serve as Director of National Intelligence. If confirmed, Ms. Gabbard would oversee the CIA and our entire intelligence community, and I think she would be colossally disruptive for American security.

If there is anyone who hasn't been fact based as you have listened to her statements over the years, it is Tulsi Gabbard. She seems to make things up out of thin air. No one could be worse in a position of DNI than someone who doesn't believe in facts.

So I told Mr. Ratcliffe he should urge President Trump to drop her nomination. If he really cares about the CIA and its integrity, he couldn't report to somebody like Tulsi Gabbard in good conscience. She is simply too risky.

Ms. Gabbard has a whole history of spreading falsities, cheering America's adversaries, and, if confirmed, I am worried she will push false intelligence for political ends. Those are precisely the moments Mr. Ratcliffe will have to hold firm, reject what she says, and go to the President and speak truth to power.

His answers to my questions about that were unsatisfying. So I am voting no because it is such an important position.

Now, on the Hegseth vote, today the Senate will vote to advance one of the most unqualified, erratic nominees for a major position we have ever seen in America. No position in the Cabinet carries the weight, the responsibility of Secretary of Defense.

The Secretary of Defense is in charge of keeping us safe and keeping the men and women in our Armed Forces and the civilians safe. So you need someone who has a steady hand. You need someone who has had experience in this kind of stuff. You need someone who, when he shows up to a meeting, you are sure that he knows all the facts and is going to be able to conduct himself properly.

If there is any Cabinet that should be universally trusted and uncontroversial, it is the Secretary of Defense. Unfortunately, Mr. Hegseth is

neither. He is neither trusted nor free of controversy, and I will strongly vote no.

I want my colleagues to think about how absurd it is that this nominee has even made it to the floor. It is a shame that that has happened. We are being tasked to trust our Armed Forces to a man with a history of erratic behavior. One of the kindest words that might be used to describe Mr. Hegseth is “erratic,” and that is a quality you don’t want as head of DOD.

He has a history of excessive drinking, of alleged domestic abuse, and zero experience leading a large organization of any kind.

The new allegations that came out yesterday are even more troubling. And people say: Well, how do we know they are true? Well, first, the person who did it has no strike against her; but, second, it just corroborates in an even worse way of what we have known about Hegseth in the past. He has a clear problem of judgment, as you have seen by his statements. It is like saying your heart surgeon has twitchy hands, but I will let him do surgery on me. No one would do that.

How on Earth can America entrust our safety and security to a man who has allegedly shown up to work and other events inebriated? What if he shows up inebriated during a crisis? What is going to happen? This is dangerous.

If confirmed, he would be in charge of a workforce of over 3 million people, a budget of 850 billion. Where in his history does it show he is capable of doing that? And what if his erratic behavior spills over to his job at the Pentagon, a high-pressure job? And when people are having this behavior, usually high-pressure jobs make them more, not less, erratic.

What mystifies me so much about Mr. Hegseth’s nomination is that there are so many other conservative defense leaders that President Trump could have nominated—people I wouldn’t agree with, maybe, ideologically, on some of the issues that affect Secretary of Defense but people who would be capable of running the department. I know there are plenty of Republican Senators who would instantly make a better option than Mr. Hegseth.

Is Pete Hegseth really the best the Republicans have to offer? How low—how low—has this party come in making him the nominee? I don’t believe he is the best. I don’t believe he is close to the best. I would be voting, with complete conviction, no. Given his history confirming Mr. Hegseth is, simply put, a risky roll of the dice that Americans cannot afford, especially in such an important position.

Another of these pantheon of just awful nominees—not all of them are awful at all, but some are, too many are—is Russell Vought. With his nomination to be OMB Director, Donald Trump has made it official: Project 2025 is coming to the White House. The man who was the chief cook and bottle

washer for 2025, who pushed it, who endorsed it, is now in one of the most powerful and sensitive positions in the government, OMB, which has a say over all government programs.

Golden age? It is sure not going to be a golden age for the American people if Mr. Vought becomes the head of OMB. It is one of the most important Agencies in the government. They oversee every Federal Agency, every town, every locality. Every family is going to be affected. You want to get your drug prices lowered? Vought doesn’t like that; look at 2025. You want to feed hungry kids? Vought doesn’t like that; look at 2025. You want to preserve and expand \$35 insulin? Vought doesn’t like that. You want to make the tax system fairer and not have tax cuts for the very wealthy but help the middle class with tax breaks? Vought doesn’t like that. He wants it to go to the wealthy.

I asked him—he was in my office yesterday—I asked him: What part of 2025 would he disagree with? He couldn’t point to a single one. In this panoply of awful proposals, he couldn’t name a single one he didn’t like.

He is also a proponent of impoundment of funds. It may be unconstitutional, but it could cause real damages as the cases would go through the courts when he sued for it. And that means he can pick what he doesn’t like and just end it, even if Congress has lawfully voted for it in a bipartisan way.

So this man would be devastating to the families of America if he got into office. I hope my Republican colleagues will look at his record and vote against him. Nobody can claim to be pro-worker and then vote for Russell Vought.

#### EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Mr. President, on the EOs and the GOP agenda, the more people look at President Trump’s Executive orders, the more obvious it becomes that no golden age is coming to America, unless, of course, you are very rich, well-connected, or own a drug or oil company. With the ferocity of a bulldozer, Donald Trump has spent his first few days in office dismantling decades of progress that help working people, help middle-class families, help people afford healthcare.

There are many Executive orders signed by the President that have flown under the radar but, nonetheless, also have proved devastating.

He has halted, for one, leasing for wind energy projects in the outer continental shelf, putting at risk billions of dollars of investments and killing good paying jobs in the United States, in my State of New York out on Long Island, particularly.

He thinks he can cut them off. Of course, we are going to fight that, and people will fight it in the courts. But President Trump yesterday was out there touting a new program, a new proposal, by some foreign investor to create more energy because we need it. But in his EOs he says: No clean energy, no offshore wind. Is that ridiculous?

It is robbing Peter to pay Paul. It is talking out of both sides of your mouth. It is one hand doing one thing, and another hand doing the opposite. It is devastating—devastating—and we are going to fight that proposal tooth and nail because it is so important to New York, to Long Island, to America.

He has repealed the Biden-era policies that make it easier for Americans to enroll in the ACA; 20 million Americans pay less for healthcare. That is in the Executive orders; get rid of it.

And in his first week in office, he has killed policies that provide a year of postpartum care for low-income moms in Medicaid. How is that the idea of a golden age?

Here in Congress, it is the same story with our congressional Republicans. They continue to dedicate the lion’s share of their energy into fighting the best ways to pass their multitrillion-dollar tax cuts for the ultrarich.

But I want to leave my Republican colleagues, who are now talking about budget and debt ceiling and all of that, with a thought, food for thought. All this planning and agonizing about one bill or two bills is a side show. Eventually, it is going to be clear they can’t pass anything without Democratic help. Republicans have spent their entire time talking among themselves about tax breaks and radical budget cuts when they should be spending more time with Democrats talking about bipartisan policies that do not prioritize the ultrawealthy. Thus far, at least, Republicans haven’t even pretended to be bipartisan.

Instead of indulging their hard-right ideology of tax cuts for the ultrawealthy, Republicans should put the needs of ordinary Americans first. Make it a golden era indeed, but for the middle class and working people, not for the powerful and privileged. We look forward to them coming and working with us on these issues.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. First, I ask unanimous consent that Senator DURBIN and I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes each prior to the scheduled roll-call vote.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent also that the mandatory quorum call in relation to the Ratcliffe nomination be waived.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today this Senate will confirm John Ratcliffe to be the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. This is a win for our national security. Frankly, this should have been done 2 day ago, but Democrats unnecessarily delayed this important vote.

John Ratcliffe is undeniably qualified for the job. He is going to lead the

CIA without bias and with the safety of the American people being his top priority.

Once the Senate confirms John Ratcliffe, we will move to consider the nomination of Pete Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense. America needs a strong, intimidating, and lethal military. Our men and women in uniform, they want to serve in that kind of a military. They didn't join to be joining a safe space or a faculty lounge. They volunteered to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces, the greatest fighting force in human history.

Our Nation is counting on President Trump and our military to defend America and to restore peace through strength. The problem is our servicemembers are trapped in a broken system with misguided values.

Today, we face the most serious significant recruiting and morale crisis since the creation of the all-volunteer military. The military, in 2023, missed its recruiting goals by almost 40,000 people. The Pentagon says that they met their goals in 2024. You know how they did that? They conveniently lowered the goals from the 2023 number. Easy to make the mark when you lower the bar.

According to the Department of Defense, more than half of all young Americans say they have never ever thought of serving in our Nation's military.

In addition to the recruiting problem and the morale problem, we also, at the Pentagon today, have an accountability problem. The Department of Defense last month failed its seventh audit in a row. We need to change course at the Pentagon. We need to get the Pentagon back on track, and President Trump has selected Pete Hegseth to do just that.

As Pete said at his hearing last week: We don't need more bureaucracy at the top. We need more warfighters empowered at the bottom.

As a decorated combat veteran, Pete brings a fresh set of eyes to the Pentagon. He is confident. He is knowledgeable, and he is courageous. He knows the cost of war, and he knows the price of weakness. He clearly loves our Nation. He loves this country. He is a champion for our servicemembers and their families, and he wants to continue serving the country.

That is why I believe Pete Hegseth is the right choice to lead our military.

At the Senate Armed Services Committee, Pete answered hard questions with clarity and with resolve. Pete was clear about our mission and his mission. It is, as he said, to make the Pentagon "laser-focused on lethality, meritocracy, warfighting, accountability and readiness."

Ultimately, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted in favor of Pete's nomination. Unfortunately, that wasn't enough for the Democrats. No, no, they decided to then run their desperate playbook of distract and delay so that they could try to search and destroy.

Senate Republicans are not going to be stopped by Democrats' political games. We are moving forward.

Perhaps no other Cabinet position is more important to the safety and security of our Nation than the Secretary of Defense. The American people deserve to have a Secretary of Defense in place and on the job.

Now, Mr. President, on a related matter, on confirmation here, our work in confirmation continues and it will continue later today. Senate Republicans are readying votes on more of President Trump's nominees, and it is a strong roster.

Kristi Noem is the nominee to be Secretary of Homeland Security. She will secure our borders.

Scott Bessent is the nominee to be Secretary of the Treasury. He will strengthen our economy and stop the Democrats' \$4 trillion tax increase.

Sean Duffy is the nominee to be Secretary of Transportation. He will build our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. The Commerce Committee was unanimous in support of his nomination.

In fact, all of these well-qualified nominees received bipartisan support in committees. The Senate has an obligation to confirm them quickly. To deny a President his Cabinet is wrong, especially when we are talking about the national security team. Any delay denies our Nation a Homeland Security Secretary when open borders endanger every community in America. It denies the country a Treasury Secretary at a time when painfully high prices are hurting families and hurting small businesses. It denies the country a Secretary of Transportation when our ports and our airlines need urgent attention.

The President deserves to have his team in place, and Senate Republicans will overcome the roadblocks, and we will confirm them. The choice for Democrats is simple: the easy way or the hard way.

Mr. President, we are going to get them confirmed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

#### NOMINATION OF PETER HEGSETH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the United States continues to face a host of serious challenges around the world that demand serious leaders. This is recognized by members of both political parties, where country rises above party politics. In fact, over the last three decades alone, every single Senate-confirmed Secretary of Defense, but one, has received broad bipartisan support.

I would like to take a moment to share my reservations about the nomination of Pete Hegseth to serve as our next Secretary of Defense. From the outset, he has failed to position himself as someone with a strategic plan to face the threats of our Nation, to equip our warfighters with the technologies of the future, or to support them and their families with the benefits they have earned and deserve.

Aside from serving in the National Guard for some years, Mr. Hegseth lacks the necessary qualifications to lead the Department of Defense.

Imagine the size of that responsibility: more than 3.5 million servicemembers and civilian employees, a budget of \$900 billion a year, and hundreds of thousands of platforms and assets.

He has, over the years and even during his confirmation hearing, disparaged women serving in the military and questioned their right to adequate healthcare. He advocated for pardons for war criminals and questioned the rules of engagement that are designed to protect civilians from harm. And he exhibited a stunning lack of basic knowledge on the threats our country faces.

This is to say nothing of the numerous, troubling personal allegations against him relating to the use of alcohol, personal misconduct, financial mismanagement, and more—all of which raises questions about his fitness and vulnerability to serve in this high position.

This is an unusual situation. I would say the Armed Services Committee and the Department of Defense are two of the most bipartisan efforts I have seen in my time in Washington. It is customary to have both political parties in lockstep together working for the defense of this Nation, as they should.

But for some reason, Mr. Hegseth has decided that he would break with tradition and not meet with the Democratic members of the Armed Services Committee, aside from the ranking member, JACK REED of the State of Rhode Island. That is unfortunate. The bipartisanship should be honored, even if it is difficult and challenging. Unfortunately, Mr. Hegseth did not agree with that position.

It is for these reasons that every Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee voted against advancing his nomination, and I will oppose him on the floor.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 229 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). Pursuant to rule XXII of the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1, John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Mike Crapo, Tim Sheehy, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted

Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO: The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN: I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 12 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Alsbrooks	Gillibrand	Moran
Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Bennet	Hassan	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hawley	Paul
Booker	Hickenlooper	Peters
Boozman	Hoeven	Ricketts
Britt	Husted	Risch
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Capito	Johnson	Rounds
Cassidy	Justice	Schmitt
Collins	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Coons	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cotton	Kim	Sheehy
Cramer	King	Slotkin
Crapo	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cruz	Lankford	Thune
Curtis	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Lummis	Tuberville
Durbin	Marshall	Warner
Ernst	McConnell	Whitehouse
Fischer	McCormick	Wicker
Gallego	Moody	Young

NAYS—26

Baldwin	Markey	Schiff
Blumenthal	Merkley	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Murphy	Smith
Cantwell	Murray	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Ossoff	Warnock
Duckworth	Padilla	Warren
Heinrich	Reed	Welch
Hirono	Sanders	Wyden
Lujan	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—2

Fetterman Hagerty

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 72, the nays are 26.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

FIRST AMENDMENT

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, there is no right that is more sacred to Ameri-

cans than the First Amendment right to liberty of conscience, to liberty of worship, to liberty of free expression. These rights are more than words that are written on a piece of parchment; these rights are solemn commitments that Americans make to one another, commitments that undergird our society; that establish its moral foundation and basis; that testify to the world that we are a society built on liberty, we are a society built on conscience, we are a society built on the right of individuals to follow the call of God on their lives, to respond to that call as they feel led and as they see fit within, of course, the bounds of the law.

These rights—this foundational right to the liberty of conscience, the freedom of religious worship, the freedom to follow and respond to God—this is what establishes us most fundamentally as a free nation. This is what gives us our moral character as a nation, and it is what has defined us as a nation—the largest Christian Nation in the world—since our founding.

But I have to say, no administration in the history of this country has assaulted these rights more deliberately, more fervently, more grotesquely than the Biden administration. For 4 long years, this administration carried out one persecution after another against people of faith. It started during the COVID era with their shutdowns and lockdowns, when they targeted religious communities—evangelicals and Catholics and Orthodox Jews. It continued with their use of statutes to go after Christians and other religious believers who objected to abortion.

Mr. President, I want to draw attention today—I want to draw the attention of this body today, to draw the attention of the American people today—to the plight of just a few Americans, 20 or more Americans who are imprisoned even now because of the persecution of the Biden administration, because of their choice to violate that solemn pledge that Americans make to one another, because of their choice to target the First Amendment rights of law-abiding, freedom-loving, peaceful Americans.

I am talking about people like Mark Houck, Mark Houck from Pennsylvania—here he is with his family at mass—a man of faith, a man of family, a man of work and commitment and responsibility, whose crime—whose crime—according to the last administration, was to take one of his young sons to an abortion clinic and there to stand peacefully, to pray, to sing, to engage with those who wanted to talk about the alternatives to abortion.

What did Mark Houck do when a pro-abortionist came and shoved his young son? Mark Houck defended his son. For this, the Biden administration sent a SWAT team—an FBI SWAT team—to his door in the early morning hours. Why? Well, just to terrorize him, to terrorize these children, to send a message to religious believers and pro-lifers all over this country: Don't you

dare exercise your First Amendment rights. Don't you dare speak up in favor of life. Don't you dare take a stand.

They took his case all the way to trial, where, I am glad to report, he was swiftly acquitted, completely exonerated.

But other Americans have not been so fortunate. I think of Bevelyn Williams. Bevelyn is 33 years old. She is from Tennessee originally. She has a remarkable life story. She started a ministry that specializes in care for the homeless and for those who are living rough on America's streets. This follows from her own incredible personal transformation.

She dropped out of high school when she was just 15 years old. She had two abortions herself and was later arrested for money laundering. Then she met Jesus Christ, became a Christian, changed her life, decided to dedicate her life to the service of others, to dedicate her life to those like the homeless, who have nowhere to turn, to those on the streets who have nowhere to go, and, yes, to those mothers who, like she did at a young age, struggled with an unexpected pregnancy, those mothers who felt, as she did at a young age, that there was no hope.

So Bevelyn founded ministries that would reach out to these young women, that would serve these young women. And what did the Biden administration do to her because she had the temerity to exercise her First Amendment rights, because she went to an abortion clinic and there sang and prayed and worshipped, because she there told women who were coming into the clinic that there really were alternatives, that life didn't have to be this way? Because she told her own personal story, she was prosecuted—prosecuted—by a Federal court and sentenced to 41 months in prison. And what was her supposed crime? She leaned on a doorway in a manner that hurt the hand of a staff member. Let me say that again. She leaned on a doorway in a manner that hurt the hand of a staff member. For this, this amazing African-American woman was sentenced to 41 months in prison—41 months.

I think of Lauren Handy. She is 31 years old. She is from Alexandria, VA. Lauren was one of two individuals who, in 2022, discovered a box of 115 fetal remains here in Washington, DC, 115 pieces of remains of aborted babies, a number of them late-term abortions—not permitted to happen under Federal law—babies who had come to term and had been killed and whose remains had then been put into boxes and then discarded like so much common trash. They came to be known as the DC Five. Lauren helped discover them.

Lauren also dedicated her life, at even her young age, to serving mothers in need, to helping those who had no hope. And what was she given in return?

In August of 2023, she was prosecuted under the so-called FACE Act. She was

sentenced to 57 months in Federal prison—57 months, the longest prison sentence of anyone under this Federal statute ever.

I think of Jean Marshall, 77 years old, nurse, lifelong nurse from Boston, MA. In her thirties, she began a ministry using her nursing skills of reaching out to mothers who were dealing with unexpected pregnancies who did not know where to turn. She took to sidewalk counseling, going and volunteering her time, standing along the sidewalks outside of abortion clinics, peacefully talking to mothers who wanted to talk, helping them find resources, helping them find alternative medical care. She was prosecuted by this last administration for exercising her First Amendment rights for nothing more than trying to save the lives of unborn children, for calling out, for fulfilling her duty as a nurse to help those in need, for doing what she had been doing for 40 long years. This administration, the Biden administration, took her to court, prosecuted her, and sentenced her to 24 months in prison—24 months.

There is Jonathan Darnel, 42 years old, from Kentucky. He is a former U.S. Army officer. He is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He started out with a computer science degree and with a promising career in front of him where he could have made a lot of money, but he decided instead to go and wear the uniform of the United States and serve this country.

And when he was finished with his service honorably, he decided to go and try to provide resources for those in need, for those experiencing crisis, to try to rescue the innocent unborn and to help their mothers who were in a period of crisis, in need, and for this, for his service to this country, for his love for the innocent unborn and the helpless in our society, he was sentenced to 34 months in prison.

There is James Zastrow from my home State of Missouri, Columbia, MO. He is 27 years old. He was protesting peacefully outside of a Nashville clinic, alongside his sister and alongside others, again, offering the women who were there alternatives, asking them if they could help in any way. He was given 3 months in prison followed by 3 years of house arrest and probation.

And then there is Eva Edl. Eva is 89 years old. She is a survivor of a concentration camp in Eastern Europe. Her mother was kidnapped by the Soviets right after the Second World War, and then she and her siblings were sent to a communist concentration camp in Yugoslavia.

Amazingly, they endured, and the hope and faith that she found in that time led her to come to this country. It led her, once here, to begin to minister to women who were in crisis. It gave her a passion for the voiceless, a passion for the innocent, a passion for those who had no one to defend them, and none more than the innocent unborn.

And so she began years and years of faithful witness to the value of life, to the hope of life, and faithful work in trying to provide for mothers in crisis help and alternatives and medical care.

Here is what she was doing when she was arrested. She was singing hymns in a clinic hallway from a wheelchair. That is right, she was arrested for singing hymns in a clinic hallway from a wheelchair.

This concentration camp survivor, 89 years old, immigrant to this country, was put in prison—Federal prison—by the last administration because she sang hymns from a wheelchair.

I cannot begin to express—words do not capture the injustice of what this administration has done. And when you consider who the Biden administration saw fit—saw fit—to pardon while they were prosecuting and persecuting these good Americans, Joe Biden on his final days in office commuted the death sentence of one Jorge Avila Torrez, who was convicted of strangling a naval officer in her barracks while he was serving as a marine in Arlington. He pled guilty later to sexual assault and murder of Laura Hobbs age 8, of Krystal Tobias, age 9.

This is whom Joe Biden saw fit to give pardon to; this is whom he saw fit to waive the rule of law for; or there is Kaboni Savage, a Philadelphia drug lord, who was convicted of killing 12 people, including 4 children.

When you look at the disparity between those this last administration chose to reward and those it chose to persecute, it is hard not to feel anger. To be honest, it is hard not to feel rage. This is a grotesque abuse of the conscience of this country. This is a grotesque assault on the principles of this country, and that is why I have urged President Donald Trump to pardon all of these pro-life prisoners, unjustly persecuted, unjustly targeted, unjustly imprisoned by the corrupt Biden administration, and I do mean corrupt.

From a man who used his power illegitimately to pardon his own family, to pardon his own son, to excuse his own kin of wrongful, willful illegalities, who protected drug lords and killers and murderers and kingpins and yet sent concentration camp survivors to prison because they spoke up for life, it does not get morally worse than that, morally debased any more than that.

And so this is a time to turn the page. More than that, this is a time to right a wrong. President Trump can turn the chapter on this dark period of our history. He can write the wrongs this last administration perpetrated. He can begin to restore the requirements that the conscience of our country puts in front of us.

He can, again, renew the commitment that is found right there in our Constitution, that commitment to honor liberty of conscience, to honor the right to follow God, to live out our faith peaceably, which is exactly what these pro-life prisoners, still prisoners, were doing.

And so I urge him, I urge President Trump now from this floor to pardon these Americans unjustly persecuted, unjustly prosecuted, unjustly condemned. I urge him to pardon and to provide, once again, the moral clarity and moral leadership for which this country is known and to revive that moral clarity and moral leadership without which we cannot hope to lead the free world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Texas.

#### CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it seems like a long time ago that we had the general election on November 5. It seems like a lot of water under the bridge, over the transom, whatever your metaphor might be, but we do know with clarity that this election was a referendum on the policies of the Biden administration and on the direction that they had chosen for the country.

And the vast majority of Americans believed, according to public opinion polls, that the country was heading in the wrong direction. And so if you think about it, one of the great strengths of democracy in our great Republic is when people feel like the country is heading in the wrong direction, they have the power to change it, and, indeed, they did by electing President Trump and Republican majorities in the House and Senate on November 5.

Over the last 4 years, we know that people in my State of Texas and across the country have been living under the burden of high prices and high interest rates, almost exclusively caused by reckless, excessive spending by the Federal Government.

I had a chance to question Russ Vought who will be the next Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and he confirmed what Milton Friedman told us a long time ago; that inflation is almost exclusively the consequence of excess Federal spending.

And when you think about the gasoline that the Biden administration poured on the fire of inflation and what it did to decrease the standard of living for people in my State and across the country, it is a tragedy.

And then the Federal Reserve, of course, doing their job, trying to figure out how do you damp down inflation using the tools that they have. They raise interest rates, and, of course, everything became more expensive from home mortgage to buying a car. If you are a farmer or rancher, the cost of the inputs into your next crop are higher because of the cost of borrowing.

So I couldn't be more excited about President Trump's administration and this new direction for the country, what he called a new golden age of prosperity.

So I was thrilled also to happen to meet with and get to know some of the people that I did not know in his Cabinet. Fortunately, the President wisely

chose three Texans in his Cabinet, people I know well. I had the opportunity to introduce Brooke Rollins as Secretary of Agriculture this morning before the Agriculture Committee, but I didn't know all of the people that will serve in President Trump's Cabinet, so it was great to get to know them and a little bit about their background. People like Scott Bessent, nominated to head up his team at the Department of Treasury, a very important Cabinet post; Howard Lutnick as Secretary of Commerce; and Russ Vought, who I mentioned a moment ago, who will lead for the second time the Office of Management and Budget.

These three gentlemen bring a wealth of experience and expertise, and I have no doubt that America will be better off with them at the helm assisting President Trump during his administration.

As I mentioned, Howard Lutnick was one of the individuals I got to know a little bit better who has been tapped for Secretary of Commerce, and, of course, Mr. Lutnick is well-known in financial circles, having been a fabulously successful businessman and investor. He has successfully led organizations in the financial service industries for decades.

And at first glance, people may assume, well, this is just another rich guy serving in the Trump Cabinet, but there is much more to the story about Howard Lutnick than initially meets the eye, and I just want to tell that story just briefly.

Howard and his wife have four children, and he, quite literally, would not be with us today if it weren't for his family. On September 11, 2001, in New York, where they live, it was the first day of school—of kindergarten for his son, Kyle. And Howard, like a good father, decided he was going to take his son to school.

And so he was planning to go a little bit late to his office at Cantor Fitzgerald. Cantor Fitzgerald, his business, his company, was located in the World Trade Center, and we all remember the tragic story of 9/11, what happened that day. More than two-thirds of Cantor Fitzgerald's employees—Howard Lutnick's company—including his own brother, were killed that day.

Howard told me in my office, he said: These were my friends. He said:

I have always made a point of hiring people, working with people who I know personally and can trust.

And so his friends, his employees, two-thirds of them, including his brother, were killed that day. It is hard to fathom what a profound loss that must be.

As anybody can imagine, this company, now having lost two-thirds of its employees, was in a vulnerable state, and many people expected it to close shop.

Yet in the midst of this personal tragedy, with the future uncertain, Howard picked up the pieces and rebuilt Cantor Fitzgerald. This is a man

unlike most men, a person of heroic character. There is no doubt in my mind that Howard Lutnick will be well-suited to help rebuild the American economy and help put the country back on track.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Lutnick basically gave a significant portion of Cantor Fitzgerald to his employees, something he was not obligated to do, in order to get them back on the right track.

In addition to Mr. Lutnick, President Trump has tapped other impressive individuals to lead his economic agenda. Last week, I had the pleasure of speaking with Scott Bessent in the Senate Finance Committee in which I serve. One of the issues we discussed during the hearing was something we all care about, which is the threat of the Chinese Communist Party.

Mr. Bessent named China as one of America's biggest challenges, which should come as no surprise to anyone here in the Senate. We all know, for example, that Chinese fentanyl is the No. 1 cause of death for young people in America between the age of 18 and 45. We all know that China is conducting joint military operations with Russia and continues to assert excessive and illegal maritime boundary claims in the South China Sea, threatening a regional conflict that may not be confined to a region.

President Xi, the President of the People's Republic of China and the head of the Chinese Communist Party, has signaled his plans to invade Taiwan by 2027. That is just 2 years away.

And, of course, one of the reasons China has been able to become such a threat economically and from a military standpoint to the United States is U.S. investments in that country.

Mr. Bessent rightly noted last week that China has one of the most unbalanced economies in the history of the world, and they are using their surpluses to fund their military machine to modernize and threaten the peace, not only in the Indo-Pacific but more broadly. I am glad Mr. Bessent shares this very serious concern of mine. It shouldn't be a secret to anybody in the Senate that I have been working on this issue for some time now.

Back in 2023, the Senate voted 91 to 6 to adopt my amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would have required transparency for outbound investments; that is, American investors investing in China. But then, unfortunately, that provision did not make its way into the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act. We came very close to passing provisions to address outbound investment in the continuing resolution at the end of the year, but, of course, that continuing resolution was loaded down with a whole lot of other last-minute provisions and collapsed under its own weight. So I am hopeful—and I am actually optimistic—we will get it done this year. But the fact of the matter is we are running out of time.

It is unfathomable to me that the U.S. Government, including our intelligence Agencies and our military, would be blind to the economic threat and the military threat of massive U.S. investment into China.

We know China does not respect any firewall or dividing line between the military and businesses. They actually have a law, a military-civilian fusion law, which requires companies in China to share their technology, their data, with the People's Liberation Army and the Chinese Communist Party. It is unfathomable to me that the United States would continue this process without regard to what the potential consequences might be. It is no exaggeration to say that it could well be investments from the United States into the People's Republic of China that allow them not only to build their economy but their military as well and threaten regional and world peace.

And as one of our colleagues, a former U.S. Marine, said: And end up nose to nose, gun to gun, with Marines when President Xi decides to invade Taiwan, if that day occurs.

So I was very pleased that Mr. Bessent agreed with me about the necessity of transparency for policymakers to understand exactly what is going on, especially in industries like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advanced semiconductors.

Mr. Bessent is going to be a great partner because he understands how the economy works and how it is intertwined with our national security.

Finally, I had the pleasure of speaking once again to Russ Vought, who was formerly the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, a job he held previously under President Trump during his first administration. Mr. Vought led the OMB then, and so he has had extensive experience to build on in President Trump's second term.

At yesterday's hearing, we had a chance to talk about the government's spending problem. We have approaching a \$37 trillion debt. The Federal Government spends roughly \$6.75 trillion a year. And while we talk about it on a regular basis, Congress has yet to do anything significant to deal with that mounting debt. And right now, we are paying more for interest on the national debt than we are on our own defense and national security. It is unsustainable.

Years ago, ADM Mike Mullen, who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said "the biggest threat to our national security is our debt." At the time I thought, Well, that is kind of an interesting comment. But what he said then has become actually true. We can't spend more as we need to do on our national security to reestablish deterrence, to prevent us from having to fight in wars—which is the goal of our military strength—if we can't afford it. And with the mounting demands of interest on the national debt, this is simply unsustainable.

I believe we have a historic opportunity with President Trump's second



term and with Republicans in the majority in the House and the Senate to look at mandatory spending programs. Unfortunately, without bipartisan support—which we are, frankly, not going to get—we can't look at salvaging or saving Medicare and Social Security, but we can look at the hundreds of billions of dollars in mandatory spending programs that are on autopilot and that have been growing at 5, 6, 7, 8 percent a year. And surely we can find some savings on those mandatory spending programs.

Just like most families and most businesses, if you think about how much money you have coming in the door, you say: Well, we have got certain things that we need, we must have—food, shelter, and the like. You have other things, maybe, that you would like—maybe a new TV, a new car, whatever. And then you have things that you simply can't afford. That is what every family in America has to do. That is what every business has to do, but not the Federal Government. Well, it is about time that we do exactly that.

And, it is also important to get spending under control to ease the historically high inflation, which has robbed every man, woman, and child in America with a hidden tax, reducing their standard of living. That comes, in large part, from excessive Federal Government spending.

And then we talked about common-sense things, which I am really happy that Elon Musk and the Department of Government Efficiency and President Trump have talked about, things like getting Federal employees back in the office in person. What a novel concept.

And, of course, reinstating work requirements for able-bodied adults to get them back in the workforce. We have a lot of means-tested programs, that means based on your income. But if you have an able-bodied individual who is capable of working and providing for their family, why should the taxpayers have to pick up the tab? So getting able-bodied men and women back in the workforce and off of these means-tested programs is really important.

There is no secret that the American people were profoundly disappointed at the Biden administration's handling of the U.S. economy, but I have no doubt that with President Trump, Howard Lutnick, Scott Bessent, and Russ Vought on President Trump's team, we will be in good shape to get the economy and our national security back on track and usher in not only a new age of American prosperity, but also to reestablish the sort of deterrence that will prevent the young men and women in this country from ever having to fight wars that could simply be prevented by reestablishing that deterrence.

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.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF PETER HEGSETH

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to address some of my concerns about the qualifications of the President's nominee to lead the Department of Defense, Mr. Pete Hegseth.

Like many of my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee, I left Mr. Hegseth's hearing, last week, with a number of unanswered questions and some real concerns about his qualifications and abilities to serve in the role of Secretary of Defense. Now, every single nominee for Secretary of Defense, from both Democrat and Republican administrations, has met with me and other members on both sides of the aisle on the committee before their confirmation hearings, and I voted for every one of those nominees, from both Democrat and Republican administrations—Secretaries Panetta, Hagel, Carter, Mattis, Esper, and Austin. I didn't always agree with their views or their policies, but I thought they all had the qualifications and the temperament to be the Secretary of Defense. So I supported their nominations.

But Mr. Hegseth chose not to meet with me or with any other Senate Democrat except the ranking member, JACK REED, and he broke with strong, longstanding tradition to ensure that our work on national security remains free from partisanship. And I think that is the important point. We are stronger as Senators, as a Congress, and as a nation if we are acting together. The committee, unfortunately, was not afforded the opportunity to ask a number of rounds of questions. So there were a number of questions about his views, particularly regarding foreign policy and military policy, that we did not get an answer to.

I have become the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee. So I am very concerned about the role of the United States in the world. I think the American people expect transparency regarding Mr. Hegseth's ability to stand by our allies and partners, to uphold international agreements, to abide by rules of engagement, and—the bottom line—to support the men and women in the military in a way that not only keeps us safe but that protects them as well. The almost 3 million men and women who serve our Nation in uniform deserve a Secretary of Defense who will not needlessly throw them in harm's way or seek to divide them with partisan politics.

So I would like to address a few issues now that we were not able to get to at the hearing because we were not able to ask more than one round of questions. I want to start with the role that our alliances and that our allies

and partners play in our own national security.

I believe—and we have seen it many times from the start of this Nation—that we are stronger and safer when we lead together with our allies, and we are fortunate because we have strong allies and partners. We don't see that coming from Vladimir Putin or from Xi in China, and we don't see it from the North Koreans or the Iranians. But the United States has strong allies who can stand with us.

The most important security agreement we have had, I think, any time in our Nation's history has been with NATO. NATO is a critical, indispensable part of our national security. Yet the President's nominee for Secretary of Defense wrote in his book "American Crusade" that NATO is a "relic" and that it "should be scrapped." Since his nomination, Mr. Hegseth has tried to walk back his opposition to one of our key international alliances, to NATO, and in advance policy questions from the committee, he calls NATO a "vital U.S. interest in defending Europe and American interests from Russia and Vladimir Putin." This sudden reversal is welcomed because I think it is very important that our Secretary of Defense understands how critical NATO is and that it is stronger now than it has been at any time since it was formed, probably.

We now have 32 members of NATO, but Mr. Hegseth's eleventh hour conversion to understanding the importance of our allies and partners raises questions about what he really believes. We asked in our questions for the record about NATO, and we didn't get much of a response.

Now, if I had had the opportunity, I would have also brought up Ukraine and Mr. Hegseth's head-spinning contradictions on this matter. Just as America's national security interests are not to be trifled with, neither should be our commitment to defending democracy and the international world order. Any inconsistency in that commitment—let me start that again because this is really important. Any inconsistency in our commitment to support our allies and partners, to support democracy around the world, to support the international world order is going to be seen and exploited by our adversaries.

So, again, I am puzzled as to how I should think about Mr. Hegseth's contradictory positions on a variety of national security and foreign policy issues.

For example, he was critical of the Biden administration, as have many of us been on both sides of the aisle in this Chamber, for not moving fast enough to aid Ukraine, but then he questioned the wisdom of sending any U.S. assistance to Ukraine at all.

In 2022, Mr. Hegseth called Vladimir Putin a "war criminal" and called for faster U.S. aid to Ukraine. Now he says the idea of Russia's launching a nuclear war is "overinflated" and plays

down the severity of the conflict as merely being Putin's "give me my shit back" war." Well, I don't think that our NATO allies—those in the Baltics and Poland and Eastern Europe—think about Vladimir Putin's nuclear ambitions as overinflated. They know the threat he poses to their countries and the world. To be flippant about the threat of nuclear war, I think, is beneath the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which will have to engage with our partners on a regular basis.

Now, I agree with President Trump that the American people want to see a resolution to this yearslong war, and I am sure that is true of the Ukrainians as well. But Mr. Hegseth has not, either in his hearing or in response to the questions that we submitted to him for the record, expanded on what the Department of Defense's role should be with respect to Ukraine, even though we have already invested \$66 billion in military assistance.

Again, I think it is very important that we stand by our ally Ukraine because of the message it sends not just to the Russians and Vladimir Putin but because of the message it sends to Xi in China, to the Iranians, to the North Koreans, and to anyone who is an adversary of the United States. If they think we are going to walk away from our allies, they are going to do everything they can to divide us.

On Afghanistan, Mr. Hegseth has also been inconsistent in his views of the President's foreign policy. Actually, he has been inconsistent in general on the President's foreign policies.

In the lead-up to the 2016 election, Mr. Hegseth was highly critical of then-Candidate Trump's foreign policy stances, particularly on Iraq and Afghanistan. Mr. Hegseth called Mr. Trump, who was a candidate at the time, "all bluster, very little substance" and an "armchair tough guy." He criticized then-Candidate Trump in 2015 for advocating for the withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan, but then he took the criticism back. He sharply criticized the 2021 Afghanistan withdrawal as did I, but he has failed to publicly comment on President Trump's 2020 deal with the Taliban, which is what set the date certain for withdrawal in 2021 that then the Biden administration was actually tied to.

Now, I agree. I agree that that withdrawal was not what I wanted to see—I didn't support it—but they were terms that President Trump, in his first term, set with the Taliban—terms that I thought gave away the store to the Taliban because there were no concessions from them on what we were to get for the United States. The Government of Afghanistan was not at the table when the terms were negotiated, and now we are seeing the fallout from that.

I know that no one is watching for gaps in U.S. national security policy more closely than President Xi and the People's Republic of China. Mr. Hegseth identifies China as our peer

competitor—something that I think all of us on the Armed Services Committee and probably everyone in this Chamber agrees with. But if Mr. Hegseth is so concerned about China, then he should realize that nothing will encourage President Xi's aggression more than seeing America abandon our allies and partners. Mr. Hegseth sees China's ambitions as a "fait accompli." Yet he doesn't seem to recognize that his own inconsistencies on all of these foreign policy positions could contribute to this.

A question I would like Mr. Hegseth to attempt to answer is, What message would it send to our adversaries if the United States ceases its support not just for Ukraine but for the international rules and norms that underpin the global order?

I am also concerned about that with respect to the conduct of conflict. In his book "The War on Warriors," Mr. Hegseth argued:

Our boys should not fight by rules written by dignified men in mahogany rooms 80 years ago. America should fight by its own rules.

Well, the rules that he is talking about are the Geneva Conventions, which established bare minimum protections against violence, torture, and inhumane treatment. They don't just protect those people who are fighting on the battlefield. They protect American soldiers.

During his hearing, Mr. Hegseth doubled down to say "restrictive rules of engagement have made it more difficult to defeat our enemies" and that it would be his priority that "lawyers aren't getting in the way."

Well, unfortunately and dangerously, this appears to be one of the few issues that Mr. Hegseth is consistent on. He has a documented history of supporting individuals who have violated military and international law by committing war crimes. These are individuals who were turned in not by our enemies but by members of their own units. They were convicted of crimes by our own military juries—individuals for whom Mr. Hegseth lobbied to get pardons.

I don't think we can afford to entrust the safety and success of our men and women in uniform to a man who would himself disregard the laws of armed conflict and leave American credibility and moral authority in tatters on the world stage.

While embracing officers convicted of war crimes, Mr. Hegseth has stated it is his intent to review all general officers currently serving in the Department of Defense. When asked if he would remove the current chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mr. Hegseth responded on the record that "all senior officers will be reviewed."

Let's just think about what that means. Subjecting our general officers and our military that is not politicized to a political litmus test is not only unprecedented; it is dangerous. It will convey to the American public that their leadership is political.

One of the most important roles of the Secretary of Defense is to seek out and consider open, honest, and direct military advice from the senior officers in charge of our forces. I don't know how Mr. Hegseth expects to receive open and honest advice from his commanders when he is advocating for a purge of anyone who disagrees with him.

I am also deeply troubled by the idea that Mr. Hegseth would act as a yes-man himself, putting his own personal political interests above the well-being of our military men and women.

At Mr. Hegseth's confirmation hearing, when asked what he would do if he received orders from President Trump that he knew to be illegal or unconstitutional, Mr. Hegseth wouldn't give a straight answer. All he could do was deny that President Trump was capable of giving an illegal order. And just for the record, to be clear, in his first term, President Trump did give an illegal order that then-Secretary Esper refused to follow, and for that, Secretary Esper was fired by the President.

So I am very concerned that Mr. Hegseth lacks the consistency and the moral clarity to lead the most combat-credible military in the world, and I am very disappointed that this body would put a nominee on the floor without the due process of advice and consent that the position of the Secretary of Defense deserves. Our men and women in uniform deserve better. Therefore, for the first time since I was elected to represent the people of New Hampshire in the U.S. Senate, I plan to vote against this nominee for Secretary of Defense.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGERTY). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I want to commend Senator SHAHEEN for a typically thoughtful and compelling speech concerning the proposed nomination of Mr. Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense. I will follow by rising to express my opposition to Mr. Pete Hegseth's nomination to be Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Hegseth is the ninth Defense Secretary nominee I have considered as a member of the Armed Services Committee. I have voted in favor of all of his predecessors, including those in the first Trump administration. While some former Secretaries and I have disagreed politically, there was always an understanding that partisanship has no place when it comes to providing for our men and women in uniform.

Indeed, the weight of this position—Secretary of Defense—is enormous. The Secretary is responsible for leading a Department of 3½ million servicemembers and civilians; an annual budget of nearly \$900 billion; and hundreds of thousands of aircraft, ships, submarines, combat vehicles, satellites, and our nuclear arsenal. They also play a powerful role with allies, partners, and adversaries abroad, having to

meet, communicate, and coordinate with a whole range of individuals from many different ethnic groups and many different religious groups. That is part of the role of Secretary of Defense.

At a bare minimum, former Secretaries of Defense have had the experience, wisdom, and character to do that job. Mr. Hegseth, however, is simply not qualified to meet the overwhelming demands to be Secretary of Defense.

Last week, the Armed Services Committee held a nomination hearing for Mr. Hegseth. During the hearing, my colleagues and I raised a number of concerns regarding reports about him. A variety of sources, including his own writings, implicate him with disregarding the laws of war, financial mismanagement, racist and sexist remarks about men and women in uniform, alcohol abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other troubling issues.

Instead of addressing these reports, many of which are documented and on the record, he dodged and deferred. He did not attempt to alleviate the fears my colleagues and I have that there is blackmail material and a pattern of abuse in his personal history that could be used by adversaries to try to influence him, to try to deflect him from his sworn obligations and duties to the United States, and, frankly, to embarrass him as Secretary of Defense.

These reports are unlike anything we have seen for a nominee of this importance, and if they are confirmed, they would undermine his ability to be an effective leader.

As I have said for months, it is critical that the FBI and the Trump transition team carry out an exhaustive background investigation on Mr. Hegseth. In that regard, I must say that I am extremely disappointed by the investigation process.

Before Mr. Hegseth's hearing, I was briefed by the transition team on the findings of the background check. I was alarmed that investigators had neglected to contact critical witnesses and whistleblowers, and I urged them to reopen the investigation.

During my experience on the Armed Services Committee, it is unprecedented that the FBI has returned to my office two more times—as recently as last night—to provide additional information on a nominee. Frankly, I still do not believe the background investigation is complete.

Last week, after the hearing, I was made aware that an individual with disturbing information about Mr. Hegseth has been interviewed by the FBI in December as part of the background investigation. However, their testimony was not adequately included in the briefing provided by the Trump transition team. As such, I asked this individual to recount to me directly the testimony that she had provided to the FBI. I was disturbed by what I received.

Earlier this week, the Armed Services Committee received a sworn affi-

davit from Pete Hegseth's former sister-in-law that alleges specific incidents of Mr. Hegseth's alcohol abuse, threatening and abusive behavior toward his second wife, and a repeated pattern of offensive public misconduct. The affidavit was signed and sworn under penalty of perjury, and it has been made available to all Senators to review, and I hope they do. I will share a few examples from her sworn testimony, which she gave to FBI investigators.

Once, while drunk in uniform—which is a violation of military law—Mr. Hegseth was so inebriated that his brother had to carry him out of a Minneapolis strip club. This occurred during a drill weekend with the Minnesota National Guard.

The FBI was also told that Mr. Hegseth's second wife had an escape plan that involved texting a "safe word" to her friends and family to urgently request help without putting herself in more danger. This escape plan was executed on at least one occasion. On at least one occasion, his second wife hid in her closet out of fear.

In many detailed examples, the FBI was told that Mr. Hegseth regularly became so drunk that he passed out, vomited, and had to be carried out of family events and public settings, sometimes shouting sexually and racially offensive comments.

My point is this: We know that Pete Hegseth's former sister-in-law testified to the FBI about his history of abuse, alcoholism, and disgraceful public behavior; however, we know now that her testimony was not adequately included in the Trump transition team's background briefing to the Senate. This begs the question, what else is missing from the FBI report?

The Senate is not considering a low-level appointee right now; we are advising and consenting on a nominee for Secretary of Defense. We cannot risk installing a leader who may have a history that is exploitable by our adversaries, nor can we risk confirming a Secretary of Defense who has shown that he is incapable of being responsible, accountable, and law-abiding 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, as that job requires.

In addition to Mr. Hegseth's troubling personal conduct, I also have grave concerns about actions he would take as Secretary of Defense.

During his nomination hearing, I asked Mr. Hegseth about disturbing efforts underway within the Department of Defense to intimidate military personnel and their families and reports that the Trump administration may implement a so-called purge board to screen senior military officers for "unfitness" to lead. This raises the chilling possibility that the Trump administration may fire officers who are deemed to have the wrong political view. I believe that the Tuesday firing of U.S. Coast Guard Commandant ADM Linda Fagan, who by all objective accounts was an admirable leader, proves that the purge is underway.

Unfortunately, Mr. Hegseth would not categorically condemn those efforts during his hearing and instead talked about "meritocracy" and "restoring accountability" within the senior ranks of the military.

If the Senate confirms Mr. Hegseth this week, who will be fired at the Department of Defense next week? I doubt very seriously it will be based upon merit or anything else other than a political agenda. That would be the beginning of the unraveling of the core element of our military. It is not political. It serves neither party nor person. It protects and defends the Constitution of the United States. If we lose that, we will have lost something that is, I think, the key to our success not only as a military force but as a nation.

Despite Mr. Hegseth's comment, the U.S. military is already one of the finest meritocracies in the world. Every member of the military is in their position because of their ability. They are chosen by boards of other senior officers who evaluate their performance, who look closely at what they have done, and render their best professional opinion of the capability of that person to move on and assume a particular job.

Every member of the military is in their position because of their ability. When there is always a possibility that you need to count on the person next to you to save your life, there is no other choice but meritocracy and value. There is no other choice that you must or can make other than to pick someone whose focus, whose heart, and whose spirit is to protect their fellow soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, guardians—not to exploit them, to make a judgment about their colleagues not based on their political affiliations but on the fact that they are a fellow soldier, sailor, or airman.

I see a dangerous, dangerous point at which we will divert from this historic and compelling approach and become a political organization. We have seen it happen in other places around the world, where militaries are undermined and subjected by political leaders who have a particular political point of view and passion, and they become essentially not an army but an extension of the political aspirations of the great leader. We can't see that here in America.

Our present servicemembers can and should be confident that with hard work and skill and character, they will be successful in their military careers. That is the key criteria.

Indeed, this very meritocracy would prevent a person like Mr. Hegseth from rising higher in the ranks of the military. The totality of his own writings and conduct would disqualify any servicemember from holding any leadership position in the military, much less being confirmed as the Secretary of Defense.

If there was evidence that a serving officer in the military was drunk in

uniform, in a strip club, if there was evidence that a senior military officer was engaged in sexual relations while married to another woman, having just fathered a child from another woman, I can guarantee you that officer's career would end swiftly, either by resignation or by court martial.

Moreover, our servicemembers, since the birth of this country 249 years ago, have taken an oath to the Constitution. Their mission is to protect the country and all of its citizens and the ideals this country was founded on, which should endure no matter who is President or what political party is in power. Mr. Hegseth's idea of meritocracy, however, seems to be that servicemembers should pledge fealty to a President who will be in power for only 4 years and fit the ideas of a party that only half of this Nation supports. There is no faster way to undermine the lethality and morale of our Nation's military—and support of the Nation's citizens for it—than to inject politics into the system. Mr. Hegseth, if confirmed, will not improve our military but destabilize it and weaken the institution.

Further, during his hearing, Mr. Hegseth failed to convince me and many of my colleagues that he is capable of running any organization remotely as complex as the Department of Defense. Mr. Hegseth has been the head of two separate veterans organizations. From 2008 through 2010, he led the organization Veterans for Freedom, which had an annual budget of less than \$10 million. Each year he was in charge, outlays exceeded revenues, until the organization verged on bankruptcy and had to be merged with another group.

From 2011 until 2016, Mr. Hegseth ran the organization Concerned Veterans for America. During each of those 5 years, tax records show that the organization spent more than it raised.

If this is how Mr. Hegseth manages organizations with a comparatively small staff and budget, how can anyone have confidence that he will be able to effectively manage an organization with hundreds of multi-million- and multi-billion-dollar contracts that literally drive the economy of many parts of this country?

If confirmed, Mr. Hegseth would be the leader of millions of men and women of every race, religion, and political belief. He can only be an effective leader of an effective fighting force if he has respect for those he leads, and they trust he supports them. Unfortunately, Mr. Hegseth has shown disdain and outright hostility for many he would lead. His writings and his speeches make clear his opposition to diversity issues. He has said:

Diversity is not our strength. Unity is.

On a recent podcast, he said:

I'm straight up just saying we should not have women in combat roles.

Mr. Hegseth has also written:

The other side, the left, is not our friend. We are not esteemed colleagues, nor mere

political opponents. We are foes. Either we win or they win. We agree on nothing else.

That is not the spirit to bring to lead the men and women of our military forces.

When I joined the Army as a young officer in the 1970s, the U.S. military was rife with racial tension, women were prohibited from serving in most roles, gay servicemembers were banned, and we relied on a national draft to fill our ranks. The soldiers I served with were proud to do so, but it was certainly not the Nation's most capable military by any standard.

We have made great progress since then. Today, the Department of Defense is fully integrated, every race and religion is accepted, women serve in all combat roles and leadership positions, sexual orientation is irrelevant to service, and the All-Volunteer Force visibly reflects the Nation it protects.

Our military is more diverse than it has ever been, but, more importantly, it is more lethal than it has ever been. This is not a coincidence. This diversity and nonpartisanship is the bedrock of our military power. But Mr. Hegseth seeks to destroy that.

One other strength of the U.S. military which has made us respected around the world is the adherence to the rule of law and clear standards on the battlefield to protect civilians and treat prisoners with humanity. Once again, this nominee for Secretary of Defense, if confirmed, will put that principle in doubt. Mr. Hegseth has championed the pardoning of military members who were turned in by their fellow soldiers and SEALs as well as military contractors convicted of killing 14 Iraqi civilians without cause. He has advocated for the reinstatement of interrogation methods like waterboarding that have been defined as torture and has belittled the advice and counsel of the Judge Advocates General while on deployment.

In his book "The War on Warriors," he wrote:

Should we follow the Geneva Conventions? If our warriors are forced to follow rules arbitrarily and asked to sacrifice more lives so that international tribunals feel better about themselves, aren't we just better off in winning our wars according to our own rules?!

How can our military personnel trust each other and the partners and allies we need in this dangerous world trust the United States if such rules and conventions are tossed aside? What a bounty this would give our adversaries.

And how would we have the moral authority to criticize the North Vietnamese, for example, who tortured pilots like our colleague John McCain if our Secretary of Defense is saying waterboarding is perfectly fine?

We wouldn't. In fact, I think our pilots would be very much concerned if they felt there are no rules of the game and that, if they went down behind enemy lines, they would be just brutalized, tortured, et cetera, and we don't even have a moral objection to it.

Finally, my top priority as a U.S. Senator has always been national security, and my colleagues, I hope, know this. I don't seek partisan wins or the political spotlight. I want to do right by our men and women in uniform, and I refuse to compromise or cut corners on national security issues.

The greatest privilege I have had in my life is to lead soldiers, to understand and respect them, to do my best by example and leadership so that they would have confidence that their best interest was my sole interest. That is not what I heard from Mr. Hegseth, and that is not what he would bring to the Department of Defense.

Process is important for a nomination of this sort. Other than me, Mr. Hegseth refused to meet with any of my Democratic colleagues on the committee—an unprecedented act, a signal that he is not trying to be a non-partisan Secretary. He is, in fact, going to be very partisan—again, injecting politics into the Department of Defense, which is, in my view, fatal.

The committee was denied a second round of questioning of Mr. Hegseth, although we needed it at that time. And I should point out, historically, when Secretary Hagel was here, we had three rounds of questioning; when Secretary Carter was here, we had two rounds of questioning. So the precedent was strongly in favor of an additional round. So we have essentially been denied the kind of access that would have revealed more of Mr. Hegseth's qualities, conduct, and thoughts. And that is not appropriate.

And as I said previously, the FBI background check was inadequate—again, the first time I have ever had a background check supplemented by two additional addendums of background check. That is not the way I have experienced this.

So I would hope my colleagues are a bit alarmed and are asking themselves: Does this individual have the character and the competence and the composure to be Secretary of Defense? I, frankly, am not convinced and am stunned, in many respects, at the lack of scrutiny which too many of my colleagues are using to consider this nomination.

The lives of thousands and thousands of men and women in uniform, the security of our Nation—and, indeed, the world—is at stake. I hope we will all take time to reflect on whether we are ready to confirm Mr. Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense.

I will personally urge my colleagues to vote against this nominee.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Mississippi.

**MR. WICKER.** Mr. President, in a few moments, the Senate will vote on the confirmation of our next CIA Director, and then immediately following there will be a vote on cloture on the nomination of Mr. Peter Brian Hegseth, President Donald Trump's nominee for Secretary of Defense. I am going to

vote yes for cloture, and I expect that a majority of our Senators will do so.

Three months ago, 77 million Americans voted for change in the United States, and they sent President Trump back to the White House. It was a decisive victory and a clear mandate to focus this Nation on prosperity and peace. That work begins at the Pentagon, where we must return to a policy of peace through strength.

We are facing the most complex and dangerous global security environment since World War II. The next few years will shape the direction for the remainder of the 21st century. It could be led by the United States, a future which would lead to freedom and prosperity for all Americans and the absence of armed conflict, or it could be led by despots.

The Chinese Communist Party is working against us. Its dictator, Xi Jinping, uses military force and economic coercion to try to reshape the world order with the help of his junior partner Kim Jong-Un of North Korea. At the same time, the despot Vladimir Putin remains intent on territorial expansion. Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and their like continue to attack Israel and the United States, and ISIS remains set on killing Americans every day—every day.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration wasted precious time and significant resources pursuing divisive social policies at DOD. For instance, we just spent months organizing with the administration over whether the Defense Department should pay for hormone therapies or puberty blockers for minors out of taxpayer dollars. Seventy-one percent of Americans oppose that policy, including more than half of Democrats, so I am glad we are going to abandon that type of policy. I could go on, but let me now turn to focusing on the future.

Together, Congress and the President have a lot to do, and we don't have much time to do it. We have a broken shipbuilding industrial base to fix. We have defense manufacturing jobs to build up and munitions lines to expand. We have an ossified budgeting system to update, and we have got an audit to finish for the first time in decades. And we have a resourcing problem that needs attention.

On his way out the door, Secretary Austin now tells us we need to spend a lot more on national security. Well, thank you, Secretary Austin; it is an admission 4 years too late. We are simply falling behind our adversaries in too many ways.

So President Trump seeks to reverse this trend and bring much needed change to the Pentagon, and he has chosen a man to lead the Pentagon. His choice to spearhead these efforts is Pete Hegseth, a retired major and combat veteran in the Army National Guard.

Admittedly, this nomination is unconventional. The nominee himself is unconventional, just like that New

York developer who rode down the escalator in 2015 to announce his candidacy for President. That may be what makes Mr. Hegseth a good choice. He is not beholden to the status quo, and he is open to new ideas.

He is intent on lethality and readiness, and shouldn't we all be? His experience in the line of fire and his servicemember advocacy make at least one thing clear: Pete Hegseth will put the men and women of our military first.

Congress has often seen defense secretaries delay and evade Congressional oversight. I think Pete Hegseth will be willing and eager to partner with us in that regard.

Last week, the Senate Armed Services Committee convened to consider Mr. Hegseth's nomination. In testimony lasting nearly 4 hours, he addressed three key audiences: our committee, the U.S. Senate as a whole, and the American people.

I think the American people liked what they saw; I know I did. He showed each of us why President Trump chose him to be the next Secretary of Defense.

First of all, he articulated a clear vision of the Pentagon, and it is clear to anyone who listened that he is going to bring energy and fresh ideas to shake up the Department's stagnant bureaucracy.

He will restore a warfighting ethos and relentlessly focus on the military's core mission: to defer conflict and, if necessary, to win a war.

Mr. Hegseth is committed to bringing a swift end to the corrosive social policies that serve to divide our servicemembers rather than unite them. And as I have pointed out earlier, the American people are behind him in this regard overwhelmingly.

He correctly stated that we need to change the way the Pentagon does business. He will restore a culture of accountability by cutting redtape, incentivizing innovation, and rebuilding the defense industrial base.

He affirmed his intent to tackle the hardest systemic problems that plague the Pentagon, challenges that previous secretaries have proven unable to fix. And I mentioned that audit. I sincerely believe we will get an audit done under his oversight.

And, importantly, he agreed that maintaining the inadequate Biden-era defense budget levels would be dangerous to our national security. And we hear, as I said, the outgoing secretary admitting that very thing.

In his testimony before our committee, Mr. Hegseth said this:

My only special interest is—the warfighter. Detering wars, and if called upon, winning wars, by ensuring our warriors never enter a fair fight. We let them win and then bring them home.

Well put, Major Hegseth. I am confident Mr. Hegseth, supported by a team of experienced top officials, will do exactly that. Pete and his family have endured numerous smears and false news stories. Less reported is the

outpouring of support this nominee has received.

Pete Hegseth has devoted his career to fighting for his fellow soldiers, and his fellow soldiers—men and women—are now speaking out on his behalf. In the past few months, a host of flag officers signed an open letter enthusiastically commending Mr. Hegseth. I thank these generals and admirals for doing so.

The Armed Services Committee has received letters from female soldiers who support Pete. We received messages from those who served alongside him on the battlefield, including a moving statement from a Medal of Honor recipient who backs Pete Hegseth to the hilt.

These men and women uniformly vouch for Pete Hegseth's leadership, tenacity, and passion for supporting the warfighter. On the day of his hearing, 100 Navy Seals marched from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to the Senate office buildings. They marched together that distance, and rows of Mr. Hegseth's fellow soldiers sat behind him in solidarity for the entire 4-hour-long hearing. These patriotic Americans were willing to step forward and declare their support for Mr. Hegseth publicly—in stark contrast, I might add, to the anonymous attacks we have heard about.

In this critical moment for our national security, I believe we have the right man for the job.

I urge my colleagues to continue in their support of Mr. Hegseth's nomination to be our next Secretary of Defense.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOICE ON RATCLIFFE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ratcliffe nomination?

Mr. WICKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN: I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 74, nays 25, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 13 Ex.]

YEAS—74

Alsobrooks	Britt	Cotton
Banks	Budd	Cramer
Barrasso	Capito	Crapo
Bennet	Cassidy	Cruz
Blackburn	Collins	Curtis
Booker	Coons	Daines
Boozman	Cornyn	Durbin

Ernst	Kim	Rosen
Fischer	King	Rounds
Galleo	Klobuchar	Schmitt
Gillibrand	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Graham	Lee	Scott (SC)
Grassley	Lummis	Shaheen
Hagerty	Marshall	Sheehy
Hassan	McConnell	Slotkin
Hawley	McCormick	Sullivan
Hickenlooper	Moody	Thune
Hoeven	Moran	Tillis
Husted	Moreno	Tuberville
Hyde-Smith	Mullin	Warner
Johnson	Murkowski	Welch
Justice	Paul	Whitehouse
Kaine	Peters	Wicker
Kelly	Ricketts	Young
Kennedy	Risch	

## NAYS—25

Baldwin	Markey	Schiff
Blumenthal	Merkley	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Murphy	Smith
Cantwell	Murray	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Ossoff	Warnock
Duckworth	Padilla	Warren
Heinrich	Reed	Wyden
Hirono	Sanders	
Lujan	Schatz	

## NOT VOTING—1

Fetterman

The nomination was confirmed.  
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Ratcliffe nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.  
The Democratic leader.

## NOMINATION OF PETER HEGSETH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if there was one word—one word—that should never, ever describe a Secretary of Defense, it is "erratic," but that is the one word that describes Mr. Hegseth best. Advancing a Secretary of Defense is one of the most important votes Senators are going to take all year. This man has lives in his hands—the lives of citizens, the lives of people of the world, and the lives of the brave men and women in our Armed Forces.

So I want my colleagues to think carefully. Of all of the people we could have as Secretary of Defense, is Pete Hegseth really the best one we have got? Come on. You know he isn't. You know he is not even close.

Is this the best man we have to lead the greatest military in the world? Is this man with a known history of excessive drinking the guy you want at the other end of the phone at 2 a.m., in a crisis, in control of the nuclear codes? Who are we kidding? Who are we kidding?

Is this the man—with a mile-long list of allegations of abusing, degrading, and harassing women—you want to be leading our men and women in battle?

Is this the man, with a track record of erratic behavior, the best you think the members of our military deserve as a leader?

Is this the man, with a truly horrific and devastating lack of judgment, the best you think our country and our fighting men and women deserve?

Pete Hegseth has proven to lack the necessary morality, sense, judgment. So I plead—I plead—with some of my Republican colleagues just to answer me this: Do you think this is the best person for the job? Do you think this is the best person we have to lead the best military in the world?

I yield the floor.

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 3, Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Mike Crapo, Tim Sheehy, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

## QUORUM CALL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair now directs the clerk to call the roll and ascertain the presence of a quorum.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll, and the following Senators entered the Chamber and answered to their names.

## [Quorum No. 2]

Alsobrooks	Justice	Rounds
Baldwin	Kaine	Sanders
Barrasso	Kennedy	Schatz
Bennet	Kim	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	King	Scott (FL)
Budd	Lee	Scott (SC)
Cantwell	Lummis	Shaheen
Collins	Marshall	Sheehy
Cotton	McCormick	Slotkin
Crapo	Moody	Sullivan
Cruz	Moran	Thune
Curtis	Moreno	Tillis
Daines	Mullin	Tuberville
Fischer	Murkowski	Warnock
Galleo	Murray	Warren
Graham	Ossoff	Welch
Hawley	Peters	Whitehouse
Hickenlooper	Reed	Wicker
Husted	Ricketts	Wyden
Hyde-Smith	Risch	Young

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is present.

## VOTE ON CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be the Secretary of Defense, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 14 Ex.]

## YEAS—51

Banks	Graham	Moran
Barrasso	Grassley	Moreno
Blackburn	Hagerty	Mullin
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Cornyn	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lankford	Sheehy
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Lummis	Thune
Curtis	Marshall	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	McCormick	Wicker
Fischer	Moody	Young

## NAYS—49

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Kaine	Schatz
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Schumer
Booker	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Galleo	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 49.

The motion is passed.

The motion was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

## NOMINATION OF PETER HEGSETH

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the confirmation of my constituent and friend Pete Hegseth.

Last week, during his 4½ hour confirmation hearing, America saw exactly why President Trump nominated Pete Hegseth to be our next Secretary of Defense. Pete is patriotic, smart. He is an energetic leader. His priorities are our warfighters and having their backs by focusing the Department of Defense on lethality and competence rather than extraneous political and social issues. He is the type of leader that can inspire, recruit, and retain the absolute best talent America has to offer.

Despite Pete's qualifications, the mainstream media, desperate to derail President Trump and his nominees, has gone after Pete's character by airing false and unsubstantiated claims. Take, for example, the article published Tuesday, just this week, by the New York Times. Despite the salacious and misleading headline in this paper, buried beneath 13 paragraphs of slanderous allegations, the Times actually disclaims the entire story with a direct quote from the supposed victim herself

denying the allegations against Pete, saying:

There was no physical abuse in my marriage.

Yet, look at this headline—“Hegseth’s Ex-in-Law Claims He Was Abusive to Second Wife”—even though, in the same article, the second wife disclaims all of this. This isn’t journalism. Take a moment to think about this. This is a hit job. The New York Times intentionally ran with the salacious and debunked account, buried the truth, and distorted the lead simply to undermine President Trump and his nominee.

The New York Times is not alone, unfortunately; NBC News, The Hill, Politico, and even the Associated Press all chose to run the same salacious false headline instead of the facts.

Unfortunately, I am not surprised. This is the type of misleading—and often unequivocally false—reporting that we have learned to expect from the left-leaning media.

The American people remember that the New York Times is the same publication that denied and suppressed the Hunter Biden laptop story leading up to the 2020 election. It is the same paper that endorsed Joe Biden in 2020. The same paper that endorsed Kamala Harris in 2024.

The American people are sick and tired of the deception stemming from this alliance between the Democrat Party and the so-called mainstream media. This is yet another example of a story published with an aim to do harm and despite evidence to the contrary. It is why media has lost much of its credibility with the American people who see this article for what it is, a desperate, last-minute attempt to generate controversy where none exists.

Pete Hegseth is someone who is going to fix the Pentagon and deliver on President Trump’s vision of peace through strength. He is exactly the type of leader that the Pentagon needs in the face of an increasingly complex and escalating security situation that is occurring around the world.

So while I am disappointed, I am not surprised at this 11th hour attempt by the media to raise debunked and completely discredited falsehoods simply with an aim to derail a confirmation.

I urge my colleagues to see through this noise, evaluate Pete’s nomination based on the merits, which is why I plan to vote for Mr. Hegseth.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I want to reiterate what my colleague from Tennessee just talked about, the importance of the vote that we just took just a few minutes ago—our nominee for new Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth.

Now, the procedure is—as we just voted—to close the vote, and now we wait 30 hours from just a few minutes ago and have the final vote on his nomination, which it looks like that he has

the votes of the majority to be appointed or sent to the White House to be confirmed as the next Secretary of Defense.

I am on the Armed Services Committee, and I have watched 4 years of the destruction of the best military in our world—the United States of America.

It is a shame what has happened. The DEI, the woke agenda that is being pushed on the troops in our country, to me, is embarrassing. I am a military brat. My dad died on active duty in the military. Awarded five Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart at age 17, driving a tank across Europe after landing the first day of Normandy.

We have to change course in our military. And we can talk about inflation and pumping gas and the crime and all the things that we are having a lot of problems with, but if you don’t have a strong military to protect our borders and protect the citizens in our country from adversaries all over the world, we have problems. And it has to start there.

Pete Hegseth is the choice, the right choice. I like his age; I like his demeanor; I like the things he brings to our military. He is exciting, and he will energize this military into the next decade. And I am excited about that.

So, hopefully, in about 30 hours, we will vote tomorrow night around 9:00, and we will vote to confirm Pete Hegseth as our new Secretary of Defense.

#### FOREIGN ADVERSARY RISK MANAGEMENT ACT

Now, I would like to turn to national security threats in our Nation’s agriculture sector and food supply chains. I am on the Ag Committee. Over the past few years, the United States has experienced a rapid increase in foreign investment in the agricultural sector, particularly from China.

We have to open our eyes; bad things are happening around us. Growing foreign investment in agriculture and other essential industries, like healthcare and energy, is a direct threat to our country’s national security.

You know, for years now, I have been sounding the alarm about foreign ownership of American farmland and other elements of our food supply chain.

According to the USDA data, from December 2023, foreign investors own approximately 45 million acres of U.S. agricultural land. Now, let me say that again, 45 million acres of our forest and agricultural land in this country has been sold to foreign entities.

Does that not scare us? What did we just see during COVID about our drug supply? We looked around, we looked for healthcare and help after COVID hit our borders, and what happened? We found out that it was all being made in China.

So 45 million acres, this represents over 1.5 million acres in one calendar year. Foreign ownership of U.S. agricultural land increased modestly from 2012 to 2017 at an average increase of 0.6

million acres per year. That is 2012 to 2017.

But since 2017, the number has skyrocketed to an average of 2.6 million acres a year that we are selling our farmland to our adversaries. And this is just not China; it is Russia, it is other entities that don’t wish us well at the end of the day.

So, additionally, between 2010 and 2021, entities or individuals from China increased their ownership of U.S. agricultural land more than twentyfold, from about 14,000 acres to 400,000 acres. This is an unbelievable and unsustainable pace for the United States of America.

Now, Alabama is experiencing—my State—this firsthand. We have the fourth largest amount of foreign-owned agricultural land in the United States at 2.2 million acres, most of which is forestland. It is not really agricultural in terms of growing row crops, it is basically our forest.

I represent over 62,000 farmers in the State of Alabama. I hear from them time and time again about foreign activities in our agricultural communities.

Threats like these are something our States can’t handle all on their own, which is why President Ford established—President Ford—established the Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States, also known in short terms as CFIUS. This was in 1975, and this committee was supposed to keep an eye on foreign investments in our country.

This is the governmental body that oversees the vetting process of foreign investments and acquisition of American companies in the interest of national security.

CFIUS is composed of nine members of the President’s Cabinet, including Secretaries of State, Treasury, Defense, Homeland Security, Commerce, and Energy. The Attorney General, the U.S. Trade Representative, and the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy also sit on this vetting board of industry and land in our country.

Nowhere on that list did you hear me say the Secretary of Agriculture. Now, why is that? Considering the massive increase in foreign investment in our country, we need additional oversight for what is going on in our country. We have our eyes closed.

Which is why, yesterday, I introduced the Foreign Adversary Risk Management Act, called the FARM Act, here on the floor that will accomplish three major things. First, it would add the Secretary of Agriculture as a permanent member of CFIUS; in other words, somebody that is going to help our agriculture people vet land that is being bought by foreign entities; second, it would protect the U.S. agriculture industry from foreign control through transactions, mergers and acquisitions and agreements, or it would also designate agricultural supply chains as critical infrastructures

and critical technologies; third, it would require a report to Congress on current and potential foreign investments in the U.S. agricultural industry.

This legislation, folks, is long overdue. These foreign investments now reach into every aspect of agriculture industry and supply chains—from farming and processing, to packaging and shipping. We cannot—I repeat—we cannot allow our adversaries to have a foot in the door to our critical supply chains.

Food security is national security. We must prioritize increased oversight of foreign investment into our food supply chains, especially those coming from China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. This starts with giving the agriculture community a permanent seat at the table of CFIUS. The FARM Act does just that.

And there is no better person to fill this permanent seat on CFIUS than my good friend who we had a hearing today as a new nominee for Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins.

I have known Brooke for 30 years; I met her while I was coaching at Texas A & M. She was the student body president in 1994. The students saw then what President Trump sees in her today: her strong leadership and her conviction of agriculture.

It will be no different when she becomes the Secretary of Agriculture for the United States of America. Brooke was brought up in a small agriculture community of Glen Rose, TX. She comes from several generations of American farmers.

She participated in all levels of 4-H and FFA. She raised livestock throughout her life. Now, she is a mother, she is involved in the show steer industry with her four children.

She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture Development at A&M, and, later, a law degree from the University of Texas. Later, at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, she was engaged with rural and agriculture communities throughout Texas. She led litigation efforts that focused on the defense of Texas landowners and farmers against Federal interference and regulations.

Next, Brooke went on to serve in several roles in President Trump's White House. She served as the Director of Domestic Policy Council, Assistant to the President for Strategic Initiatives of American Innovation.

In these roles, she helped roll back terrible EPA rules like Waters of the U.S., or WOTUS, that targeted farmers and ranchers. After the White House, she joined the America First Policy Institute where she focused on protecting U.S. farmland from foreign entities, seeking to gain control—especially from the Chinese.

At AFPI, she strove to improve American food security and independence, as well as support measures that defend U.S. agriculture trade. Brooke understands these many challenges. In

short, Brooke is a conservative warrior and will be an excellent Ag Secretary.

I look forward to working with her to secure our farmland from foreign entities and working with her to pass a farm bill that puts American producers first again.

As Alabama's voice on the Senate Ag Committee, I will continue fighting to secure our agriculture supply chain so our agricultural community can continue to put food on the table, and that starts with someone like Brooke Rollins as our Secretary of Agriculture.

She is a terrific nominee, and I look forward to working with her on the committee. I expect her to move easily through the committee vote and here on this floor.

So once she is out of committee, the Senate must vote on her confirmation. She will do great. She is perfect for the job. And I ask that the Senate take up both efforts quickly to defend our agricultural communities, which feed not only the American people but the entire world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGERTY). The Senator from Tennessee.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I concur with the remarks of my colleague from Alabama. We are looking forward to confirming Pete Hegseth. We are looking forward to working every single day until we get this Cabinet completed. And Brooke Rollins over at Agriculture, we know that she is going to do a stellar job. And I do commend the Senator for his FARM Act. I have joined him in cosponsorship on that bill to protect our Nation's farmers and our farmland owners and producers.

This has been an exciting week. On Monday, we started with the inauguration of President Trump, and I will tell you for so many of us in Tennessee and, indeed, across the country, this has been a reason to absolutely rejoice. It is so interesting to me. So many people say they survived the Biden-Harris administration. Isn't that an interesting way to think about it? The inflation, the border, all the issues—it was like survival to get through those 4 years. Because of this, the American people have really given the Trump administration and those of us in Congress a mandate. I refer to it as a to-do list because at the Blackburn household, when there is something that has to be addressed, Chuck and I put it on a to-do list, meaning you don't stop until you get it done.

Well, the good thing is, one of the top things is the southern border and securing that, and indeed we know President Trump has taken Executive action to address this. He cut off that CBP One app and ended these migrant flights from other countries. He has ended catch-and-release. He restored the successful "Remain in Mexico" program. Importantly, he is designating the cartels as "foreign terrorist organizations."

Now, there are other things he is doing. We all know that ICE is conducting raids and doing deportations, and we know that Congress is going to have to work with the Trump administration to make certain that these Executive actions that he is taking—that we pass laws so that this is in Federal statute.

Now, one of those is the CLEAR Act, which is legislation I have had for years, and it ensures that State and local law enforcement officials can help the Federal Government with deporting these criminal illegal aliens. By the way, that legislation requires ICE to reimburse those local law enforcement agencies.

Of course, my CONTAINER Act, which, again, has been here for a while, would empower the border communities, those communities that are right there on that border—farmers, ranchers, communities—those crossing illegally are running through their property. It would allow them to place barriers on Federal land in order to protect their communities.

My Preventing Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act would require illegals convicted of sexual offenses or domestic violence to be deported. These are individuals who have absolutely no business being in this country.

Of course, we are going to have to do more than secure our border, and that means doing mass deportations, and here is the reason why: Under former President Biden, more than 10 million illegal aliens came into this country. Now, those are the ones we know about. On top of this, you have a classification that is called the "got-aways." The "got-aways" are those that the Border Patrol could see on the camera, but they could not get to them to apprehend them.

We know that in this number, you have tens of thousands of criminal illegal aliens. These are not people that are coming for a better way of life; these are people that have committed crimes in their home countries and are looking to come here.

Now, we know this open border has caused far too many tragedies to begin to count, and this is the reason that this body voted in a bipartisan manner for the Laken Riley Act, and that is going to be one of the very first bills that President Trump signs into law.

Because of the American public's overwhelming support for a secure border, for an end to illegal immigration, we are on our way to making this country and making our communities safe again.

Now, we all know that border security is a critical part of national security. Indeed, that southern border is where national security and our foreign affairs actually meet because that border is being overrun by people from about 150 different countries every single year.

Now, we also know that when it comes to national security and how the



world views us, President Trump is showing that strong leadership that is needed, and he was able to secure the release of two Americans that were held by the Taliban within hours of taking office.

I think the American people are realizing that President Trump means business when it comes to our foreign policy and putting the interests of the American people in front of everything else.

Another issue we are focused on for the American people is getting the cost of living back under control. We all know that for the 4 years of the Biden administration, we saw record inflation, we saw reckless spending, and Tennesseans and indeed our citizens all across the country are still reeling from inflation.

You know, to me, it is just so interesting. When people talk about the rate of inflation, they know it is not 2.9 percent, which the Biden administration was touting as they left office. If you go back and look at where prices were in January of 2021, when Joe Biden took office and inflation was at 1.4 percent, and then you look at what has happened month by month, the true rate of inflation and price escalation—the true rate of inflation is north of 20 percent.

Indeed, I looked up what it is costing Tennessee families, and the numbers were astounding. If you look at a basket of goods and services that a Tennessee family would buy in January 2021—if they took that basket of goods and services and bought that same basket of goods and services today, their cost would be \$1,060 more for the exact same basket of goods and services. Think about that—\$1,060 per month. Now, maybe that is a house payment or the equivalent of a car payment. That is a lot of money.

This is why Americans are saying: We want life to be affordable again. It is why President Trump has already signed Executive orders to roll back regulations. It is why he is moving forward with DOGE, the Department of Government Efficiency, which will bring forward ideas of how we root out waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government. It is why he has frozen Federal hiring, done that hiring freeze, which is so essential to being able to cap what the Federal employment rolls are and get going on DOGEing all of these Agencies.

Well, to support these efforts, I filed a series of bills called the DOGE Acts. You know, these are not things that are new; these are bills that I have been pushing for a long time because it is important that we hold government accountable for how they are spending the taxpayers' money. And President Trump is pushing forward with these concepts.

Another area where we are going to see attention in order to get the cost of living down is extending President Trump's tax cuts to ensure that the American people are going to have

more money in their pockets at the end of the month.

You know, there is a gentleman in Tennessee that I ran into one day earlier in the Biden administration, and I asked how he was doing. He said, well, he had been fussing a little bit. What he was fussing about was the high price at the pump and the high prices at the grocery store.

He said: You know, under President Trump, I had some money left at the end of the month, and under Joe Biden, I have too much month left at the end of my money.

People are tired of being broke. They are tired of it, so they are ready to move forward.

Another area where they are wanting to see some action and they are so pleased with the steps President Trump has taken is protecting young women in sports.

It is amazing to me how the left has abandoned our high school and college female athletes.

You know, we have over 3 million young women who participate in sports every single day. They are competing.

Mr. President, you have two beautiful daughters. They are competitive athletes.

These girls work hard, and they deserve to be able to compete and win, but it is as if the Biden-Harris administration waged a war on these incredible young female athletes by destroying fair play and forcing them to compete against biological men, and the results are tragic.

Young women who often dedicate their entire lives to becoming so proficient and skilled at a sport are missing out on scholarships, on career opportunities, and on hard-earned records that they deserve to hold.

This harm, abuse, and unfairness is coming to an end. On Monday, President Trump signed an Executive order that requires the Federal Government to recognize the biological reality of two sexes: male and female.

Last week, I reintroduced legislation that helps to stand up for women and girls in sports. Now, there are two resolutions. One is calling on the NCAA to protect women in sports. They need to rescind their rule that allows biological men to compete against women in NCAA sports. The other is to take October 10 of each and every year and designate this as "American Girls in Sports Day" and celebrate the accomplishments of our female athletes.

I also have the Fair Play for Girls Act. It will require the U.S. Attorney General to submit an analysis of violence against women in athletics, to submit that to Congress as well as policy recommendations to support these young women.

Well, as you can see, the to-do list is long, and I have barely scratched the surface. The American people are looking forward to Republicans delivering on the mandate that they have issued, and they certainly are looking forward to what will be the golden age of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise now for the 296th time to direct our attention to what is coming at us through fossil fuel emissions causing our natural systems to be significantly disturbed.

We are not yet all the way through the first week of the second Trump administration, and already Trump has made his priorities clear: Looters and polluters reign, and their feeding frenzy comes at the expense of the American people. I expect the looting and polluting have only just begun. So we have made a new chart that will surely see the Senate floor again.

When President Trump needed cash for his campaign, he knew just whom to ask. He convened Big Oil CEOs at Mar-a-Lago. He requested that they pony up \$1 billion for his campaign. And he promised them he would immediately reverse dozens of President Biden's environmental rules and policies and stop new ones from being enacted. Giving him \$1 billion, he said, would be a "deal" because of the taxation and regulation they would avoid thanks to him.

Well, he is right about that being a superdeal for polluters. The industry benefits from more than \$700 billion a year in subsidy in the United States alone—\$1 billion to Trump to protect \$700 billion to the industry. That is a pretty good return on investment for fossil fuel.

Well, Trump won and the billionaires who funded Trump's campaign want their payback. Payback began this week with a big score for the leaders and polluters. On his first day, President Trump signed Executive orders to lay the groundwork for weakening vehicle emission standards, raising costs for families—raising costs for families—an average of \$6,000 to \$8,000, while also harming public health from the added emissions, and weakening our American automobile industry's global competitiveness, a major gift to Big Oil at the expense of regular Americans and consumers.

Review EPA's 2009 finding that the greenhouse gases are a danger, even though that finding has been upheld by the Supreme Court. The winners? The polluters driving climate change: dramatically reduce or eliminate the social cost of carbon to protect the fossil fuel free-to-pollute business model, made subsidized fossil fuel winners over domestic clean energy losers.

Do you remember when Republicans used to say government shouldn't pick winners and losers—until it is the fossil fuel industry.

Withdrew from the Paris climate agreement, helping fossil fuel undermine global efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas pollution; stopping offshore wind development, a clean energy competitor to his fossil fuel funders, at the expense of American

consumers, workers, and our own domestic manufacturing base.

Rhode Island, by the way, is home to the Nation's first offshore wind farm and a growing number of good union jobs in the industry.

Would President Trump say to the country that, on his first day in office, it was time to repay his Big Oil donors? Well, that wouldn't have gone over well so he had to pretend all these donor handouts would benefit the public. His first day Executive order on energy begins by stating:

America is blessed with an abundance of energy and natural resources that have historically powered our Nation's economic prosperity. In recent years, burdensome and ideologically motivated regulations have impeded the development of these resources, limited the generation of reliable and affordable electricity, reduced job creation, and inflicted high energy costs upon our citizens. These high energy costs devastate consumers by driving up the cost of transportation, heating, utilities, farming, and manufacturing, while weakening our national security.

Virtually none of that is true.

So let's look at the claims one by one. First, yes, he got this right. America is, indeed, blessed with energy abundance. Where it is particularly abundant is in wind power. We have the third greatest offshore wind power potential of any country in the world. We have the fourth greatest onshore wind potential anywhere in the world. Indeed, wind resources in the Great Plains States alone could supply the United States with 16 times our electricity demand.

That is energy abundance.

Then, as this map from our national labs shows, we have amazing solar energy resource potential, particularly in the Southwest and through the Southeast.

Now, Trump defines energy as "crude oil, natural gas, lease condensates, natural gas liquids, refined petroleum products, uranium, coal, biofuels, geothermal heat, the kinetic movement of flowing water, and critical minerals." Notice anything missing? That is literally every possible iteration of fossil fuel, plus nuclear, geothermal, and hydro; everything except wind and solar, which produced more electricity than coal last year and could power the entire country.

Trump next claims regulations have impeded the development of energy resources. And by that, as we just heard, he means fossil fuels. Well, as he would say, "wrong."

Under President Biden—and, actually, regrettably, from a climate point of view—the United States produced more oil than ever before in the Biden years, indeed, setting monthly records for oil production. So that wasn't true either.

Well, it is foolish to abandon those enormous wind and solar assets—not good for our country or our economy, good only for their fossil fuel competition.

And there is an additional big economic danger if we stick with oil be-

cause the United States is a high-cost oil producer. The average cost to produce a barrel of U.S. crude ranges from \$50 to \$70. In Saudi Arabia, the marginal cost of production is around \$10 a barrel—\$50 to \$70 for us, \$10 for the Saudis. That means our industry will always be vulnerable to cheaper foreign producers. And by the way, it has happened before.

In 2015, the Saudis decided they didn't like America producing so much, so they turned on their spigots, causing a big hit to American oil and gas companies. Once they had tanked American production, they reduced their own back to normal levels and the price of gasoline spiked for our consumers.

They can do that again anytime they want. It is basic business and economic sense not to put all your eggs in an industry where you are the high-cost producer. We have a competitive advantage in wind and solar with those massive resources and continent-straddling range that spans multiple time zones, allowing wind and solar energy to be sent wherever the wind isn't then blowing or wherever the Sun isn't then shining.

We have massive clean energy opportunities.

Trump claims that existing energy policies have reduced job creation. Again, wrong. Oil patch jobs have been reduced, not by regulations but by automation. Where the country has seen a job boom is in the low-carbon energy sectors with more than 400,000 jobs created since the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. Low-carbon energy now employs more people than fossil energy. It is where the jobs are—not that Big Oil cares about that for 1 minute.

Trump claims that renewable energy is driving up energy costs for Americans. Wrong again. Solar and wind have, for some time, been the least expensive forms of energy that there are.

Wind is the bottom blue line, solar panels are the bottom yellow line.

They have been the cheapest since 2015 or, if you go back further, 2013. We have had a solid decade of wind and solar being the least expensive forms of energy for the American public. But Big Oil doesn't care. They just want to sell their dirty product.

What does actually drive up energy costs for Americans? The greed of Big Oil. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, OPEC, the international cartel, jacked up prices and U.S. oil producers rode along to epic profits off of those events. You just have to look at their sworn financial statements filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission about what profits they earned. They earned the biggest profits in the history of the world. In a nutshell, they gouged.

Electricity bills also rose when the price of natural gas spiked after that Russian invasion. Climate change means Americans are spending more to cool their homes because it is hotter than it has ever been. If you are living

in Phoenix or Houston or Tampa, you are likely running your air-conditioner nonstop for months on end, and that is on your electricity bill. That is just going to get worse as Trump's looters and polluters have their way.

Climate change-fueled wildfires are forcing utilities in the West to spend billions burying transmission and distribution lines to avoid sparking more fires. That increases electric bills—another climate cost to consumers.

And, obviously, Trump's decision to let his big LNG donors export more LNG will drive up natural gas prices here at home. When there is less at home because more is going overseas, prices go up. That is supply and demand 101.

Here, again, under Trump, fossil fuel wins, American families lose and Big Oil doesn't care.

The wind and Sun and flowing water and the Earth's heat are all free fuels. Fossil fuels put us at the mercy of foreign petrodictators and predatory cartels. Just from a national security perspective, why not choose the free fuels that no outside actor controls?

And then, of course, come the costs of climate change itself burdening American families with climateflation, from grocery staples to insurance prices, to shipping costs, all rising as the result of climate change, disrupting agriculture, weather, and transit—even all the gas price-gouging by the industry thrown in.

That is just the climateflation.

Then comes the danger to our entire economy. For a look into coming attractions, check out what is happening out in Los Angeles, where raging Santa Ana winds turbocharged wildfires tearing through American families' homes much because of climate change. Climate change is perhaps the biggest systemic financial risk to our economy and, thus, to families' personal finances.

And where is this coming true first? In the insurance markets. Insurance markets are the leading edge of our time of consequences. The L.A. fires, with insured losses in the tens of billions of dollars and total economic losses likely in the hundreds of billions, on top of last fall's hurricanes—which resulted in hundreds of billions in economic losses in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia—are a dangerous blow to tottering insurance markets.

In recent years, millions of Americans had insurance policies canceled due to rising climate risk. Millions more saw skyrocketing premiums, particularly in Florida, that forced families in some cases to drop coverage, leaving their families' most important financial assets—their homes—exposed. Insurers are pulling out of some markets altogether. Insurers are going bankrupt. Insurers are flooding mailboxes with price hikes and notices of cancellation and nonrenewals, and that all hits property values.

So the concern here is cascading failures—cascading failures from the insurance market, to the mortgage market, to a property values collapse, and that ends in economy-wide catastrophe. Along the way, home ownership will move further out of reach for the middle class as homes are burdened with more risk and expense. Property owners will have homes that they aren't able to sell because they can't be insured, so a buyer can't get a mortgage to afford the house. There is a lot of pain before the collapse.

We have been through a long period of climate lies, and now, unfortunately, we are entering the period of climate consequences. To stave off the worst consequences, we must eliminate the carbon pollution that is the root of it all. President Trump's Executive orders do exactly the opposite, exposing us to grave economic dangers, and for the worst of reasons: to reward wealthy special interests who donated to his campaign.

The American people need to watch their wallets. When President Trump says he is fighting for you, think twice. He is actually fighting for the Big Oil donors—the fossil fuel billionaires—who got him elected. The looters and the polluters are looking to get ever richer, and they will loot working families, pollute Mother Nature, and damage our families' futures to do it.

So we fight on.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from North Carolina.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

**Mr. TILLIS.** Mr. President, this weekend, I was thinking about all of the criticism President Trump is receiving right now from some in the liberal media and from some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle as they kind of look down their necks with: I am smarter than you. You are all wrong. You silly person. These sorts of narratives are going on all over the place. As I heard it this weekend, it reminded me of a book that I read back in the nineties about President Reagan. It was a biography—"Ronald Reagan: How an Ordinary Man Became an Extraordinary Leader."

If you will remember back then—I was relatively young, but I remember people saying that Ronald Reagan has got this idea of Star Wars—they called it Star Wars—because he felt he had an obligation to protect the American people by having some sort of a shield against missiles. Now we call that HIMARS, and Israel calls it the Iron Dome. We have technologies deployed in space that are effectively a realization of that vision, but he was a silly actor from California who didn't know anything. What he did know was vision, what he did know were adversaries, and what he did know were other countries that were failing to do their part in defending and protecting democracy.

How does that relate to President Trump? President Trump, over the past

couple of weeks, has said things—and you have to admit, when the President talks, he talks in big, beautiful words. He said something about Canada being the 51st State. He said something about Greenland maybe being a territory of the United States. He said he wants to rename the Gulf of Mexico to the "Gulf of America," which he did through an Executive order, because of his frustration with Mexico. He also talked about the Panama Canal.

Now, if you are a member of the liberal press, you are just going to look down your nose at him and say he is a silly guy and he is just saying dumb things. If you are somebody who lived through those criticisms of Ronald Reagan, I have a little bit different take on it.

Let's start with Canada. Why is President Trump frustrated with Canada?

If you were to total up the shortfall of the Canadian Government's contribution to NATO over the last 24 years, they have fallen short by a third of a trillion dollars. Almost \$300 billion for our mutual defense they have decided not to pay into. Because why? Because they happen to have the world's strongest, greatest enduring democracy right to themselves. They know the United States would prevent anybody from invading Canada, and they are taking it for granted.

President Trump is tired of being taken for granted. I don't care if he uses language like "Trudeau is the next Governor"—whatever gets the Canadian people's attention. It is to let them understand that we have a serious problem with our mutual defense in North America, and Canada needs to pay attention. Canada needs to end their unfair trading practices when it comes to beef, when it comes to milk, and when it comes to the way they benefit from value-added transfers in the automobile industry. All of those are legitimate criticisms by President Trump, and I am glad he has had the courage and the insight to call them to account.

Now let's move to Greenland.

I am going to go back—and by the way, I take this personally because I am the Republican leader of the Senate NATO Observer Group and have been since 2018. I have spent a lot of time with our allies, and I believe that the NATO alliance is the most important treaty that has ever existed, and it is why we have free democracies today in the Western World.

When he is talking about Greenland, he is also trying to say: Folks, wake up. Russia and China, for the first time in history, had joint military exercises in the Arctic. Many people may not know that. We do. China is flexing its muscles, and Russia is flexing their muscles. They are in our space in the Arctic. We should take that seriously.

He is sending a message to Europe to say: Take care of our mutual defense. Project power in the Arctic. Check up against what we have already seen over

the last year between China and Russia.

So, yes, if he wants to use the language that he uses, he is communicating a very important point: We need to project power in the Arctic in a way that we haven't before.

So those are the crazy comments about Canada and Greenland. Now let's go to Mexico.

Mexico currently has, right now, an additional coequal branch of government. They call them the cartels. If you go to the southern border, you will see the cartels in action. They have these things called plazas. So the cartels have decided that they are going to break up the geography on the southern border. They are going to charge people a premium to come across the border illegally—anywhere from \$5,000 to \$50,000. In plain sight, they let China import precursors in their ports. They transport them to factories where cartels manufacture fentanyl that they carry across the border and kill over 100,000 people a year here. The vast majority of that comes from Mexico.

So of course the President should threaten tariffs, and of course the President should say: You should get organized crime out of the decision-making process in Mexico. And if it takes the United States referring to the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America" to get the Mexican Government and the Mexican people's attention, I am fine with that.

They need to work with us on sealing the border. They need to focus on the southern border. They need to wake up because we have a new administration that is going to treat them like adults and not like what arguably sometimes can be petulant children. They have safety and security because of where they are on the globe and in their close proximity to the United States.

We expect both Canada and Mexico to be good partners, and I thank President Trump for taking them to task.

Lastly is the Panama Canal.

When President Carter agreed to transfer ownership of the Panama Canal, we made a mistake—and rest President Carter's soul. But the mistake we made was in not making sure that the governance and the protection of the Panama Canal could never come under the control of a communist nation. Now we know that China has actually business contracts on either end of the Panama Canal with the ports. They basically control the ingress and the egress to the Panama Canal.

Now, people will say: Oh, he is so silly. He said they control the canal. That is just not right. I saw that on CNN.

Here is what they didn't tell you: They control—they have contracts at either end of the Panama Canal, folks. We have to wake up. The President gets it. It is the most strategically important waterway in the world.

So I am going to wind up my remarks so that the Senator from Florida can

speaking, but I believe that President Trump—you can criticize him for his rhetoric, but you can't criticize him for the truth when you tease through that rhetoric. Canada, Europe, Mexico, and Panama all owe in large part their independence and their ability to be democratic nations to the United States. I think it is fair to suggest that they act like partners and treat the United States with respect.

I, for one, appreciate—although I wouldn't necessarily always use the words that President Trump does, I don't disagree with his objective, and I hope he keeps his foot on the accelerator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

#### CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, first, I want to thank my colleague from North Carolina for his comments with regard to Canada, Greenland, Mexico, and the Panama Canal. We have to support the President. He is acting in the best interests of the American public.

On November 5, the American public overwhelmingly elected President Donald Trump with a very clear mandate. Democrats here in Washington don't have to like it, but it is not up to them. That is what the American people decided. Let's remember, we work for the American people. We don't work for the Democrats' special interests or radical ideologies. Democrats need to get over the fact that Donald Trump won to make government work for the American people.

President Trump has put together a great team with the needed qualifications to deliver on that clear mandate. His nominees are fully qualified, and we have the votes to get them confirmed.

Think about this: When Barack Obama got elected in 2009, he had seven nominees confirmed on the first day—seven. How many do we have? One. By day three, President Obama had 12. Today is the fourth day of President Trump's term, and because of the Democrats' obstruction, we have only two of President Trump's Cabinet nominees confirmed. That is wrong.

In 2021, Joe Biden's Defense nominee Lloyd Austin was confirmed 2 days after Biden took office, but here we are on January 23, 2025. It has been 4 days, and President Trump's nominee to lead the Department of Defense has been reported out of committee but still has not gotten a vote.

Now that President Trump has been sworn in, it is time for Democrats to put country before politics and to quit their obstructionist and stall tactics and allow votes to confirm every single Donald Trump nominee.

It is time to get to work for the American people. This starts with voting to confirm Pete Hegseth as Secretary of Defense today—not tomorrow, not the next day; today. This Senate should not go home for the weekend until we vote on his confirmation.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and as a Navy veteran, I have seen clearly that we need a leader in the Pentagon who puts America's national interests above all else.

I have seen how the Biden-Harris administration pushed the Department of Defense to prioritize wokeness over being the most lethal military force in the world. They prioritized diversity quotas and bureaucracy over recruiting strong individuals who are ready to serve and protect our Nation. The Biden administration put our national security and the safety of our troops at risk, and we need someone who understands the mission and is ready to deliver.

The status quo in Washington, DC, has gone unchallenged for too long. The Pentagon, which failed seven consecutive annual financial audits, is the best example of a government that is completely unaccountable to the American taxpayer.

Pete Hegseth is a decorated combat veteran who understands the mission and what is needed to advance President Trump's agenda and reform the Department of Defense to make America's military the world's most lethal fighting force. That is what every American expects. He understands the sacrifice our military members and their families make because he has been to war. He has led his fellow service men and women into combat, and he knows individuals who have lost their lives or have been gravely injured in defending our Nation.

Pete knows how to hold people accountable, how to make sure we promote based on meritocracy, and how to get rid of the broken, woke policies implemented by the Biden administration.

After his Active-Duty service, Pete continued to stand by his fellow servicemembers here at home by leading the Concerned Veterans of America and by demonstrating a commitment to our Nation's fighters rather than to the status quo.

Although leftwing media has fixated on an anonymous whisper campaign in an attempt to discredit and dismiss his achievements during his time at the CVA, those who worked closely with him tell a different story, a positive story.

The policy priorities he championed were ultimately adopted by Congress and the Trump administration and will benefit veterans for generations to come.

The Department of Defense is one of the Federal Government's largest bureaucracies. That requires a leader who understands how to rely on a team, push for accountability, and bring needed reform.

Under President Trump and Pete's strong leadership, the U.S. military will once again become the world's most lethal fighting force that our enemies fear and our allies respect, and I will do everything I can to support their mission.

Americans elected Trump as a mandate for change, and he is building a team to deliver. Pete is the fighter we need and the right person to get the Department of Defense back on track.

We live in a very dangerous world and cannot risk the safety of this Nation any further by not having President Trump's national security nominees in office today.

I would like to encourage my Democratic colleagues to get over their loss—I am sure it is hard—and let these nominees come to the floor for a vote. They can vote however they want, but allow us to vote on these nominees.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from New Jersey.

#### SENATE PAGES

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I appreciate the great Senator from the State of Florida with a haircut that is almost as good as mine. Thank you, sir.

Every year, the pages come through in cycles. I shouldn't say "every year." There are multiple classes of pages. They are usually all extraordinary. This is an extraordinary class of pages. I have some issues with them, which I will air later.

But one of the traditions that we have resurrected in this new Congress is the page poetry contest. And this time, we had just a very small—a paucity of pages participated. That is an alliteration: A paucity of pages participated. And we have a number of them.

KATIE BRITT, in her eminent brilliance, and I have picked our top ones. KATIE has picked one that I will mention, but we want to give these four of the six—I feel bad for the two we have left out. We want to give them our highest honors. But, first, the runner-up in the third position is Kaija.

There you are. You are the No. 3. I would read your poem, but we don't have time. You are articulate. You are eloquent. I teared up when I read your poem. It was so powerful and prodigiously potent.

And then the No. 2—before I read the two winners, the one selected by me and then the one selected by KATIE BRITT, the No. 2 is Holden. Where is Holden? Holden is over here as well.

Holden, your poem, too, brought me to depths—depths and heights.

It was to the nadir and to the zenith. It was very poetic, sir. You have talent as well.

And then the two winners. KATIE BRITT has chosen Jake. Where is Jake? Jake, why are you sitting down?

Why can't I—why are those pages sitting down?

Pages, stand up. Be accounted for yourselves.

Jake, you are now going to forever go into the Senate RECORD. Are you prepared for this, Jake? Your work shall live forever. Here it goes.

Five months I've walked these halls of history,

Where wisdom lingers, woven in the air.

To serve the nation, humble though it be,

I've witnessed duty's weight and leaders' care.

The echoes of debates in chambers vast,  
Where laws are forged and futures shaped  
with might,

Have shown me how the present shapes the past,

And kindled faith in government's light.  
I watched as leaders certified the will,

A testament to voices heard and strong.  
Though times are tense, resolve can guide  
us still,

A steadfast march to right what once was wrong.

This service marks the start of dreams  
anew,

To shape the world with honor's hue.

I am going to pause. This might be  
the first time the Presiding Officer has  
ever cried.

Is the Presiding Officer OK?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I am  
going to make it.

Mr. BOOKER. He is going to make it.

Congratulations. You are one of the  
two poet champions of the U.S. page  
class—the fall page class.

(Applause.)

Yes, yes. Don't get an ego. Don't let  
it go to your head. Don't be like a Sen-  
ator.

OK. The other one, the final cham-  
pion, is Ms. Pallan. Yes.

(Applause.)

Yes. Here is your poem.

We stand on blue, carpeted floors  
From AM to PM we open Senate doors  
Aching heels, and curved backs  
We feel our composure start to crack  
But in walks a Senator, and postures cor-  
rect

Pages come together, all hands on deck  
Excitement overtakes persistent exhaus-  
tion

As we wait to hear debates on legislation  
People of power laugh and joke  
As we watch and realize they're just com-  
mon folk

Against the walls we silently hear  
Colleagues and officials, but most of all—  
friends dear

Within this room, there stands a central  
divide

But there exists no aisle in our hearts or  
minds

That was fantastic.

(Applause.)

I am grateful for the poetic effort. I  
am grateful for our poetry champions,  
who will forever live in the annals of  
Senatorial history.

But there are a lot of people on this  
floor right now who have come to an-  
ticipate how I will proceed to dem-  
onstrate that these page writings are  
good. But now I will show them by re-  
citing my own original poem.

Before I do, let me make at these  
pages an angry poke. Dear God, you all  
have been here for 5 months, and you  
couldn't tell me one good joke? Come  
on. Come on. Painful. You are the  
worst joke tellers. Heaven knows. But I  
am done. I have got my poem to read.  
So here goes.

Pages! With your suits so Navy, Under-  
standing what you signed up for, some might  
think you were crazy. You clearly are the  
opposite of lazy. Up at 5 AM, your teenage  
brains must be hazy, taking a full load of  
classes, English, history, and calculus with  
parabolas so wavy. But that isn't the end of

your days—see. You work full-time on the  
job, on the floor, serving Republican Sen-  
ators like Mitch and Democrats like Mazie.  
You man phones and open doors. You tire-  
lessly do the Senate's unglamorous chores,  
in this job away from your fam, who can  
only see you if they join the 17 other Ameri-  
cans who regularly watch C-SPAN. But yet  
you are vital to this place, I hope you all see.  
In our Federal democracy, some might call  
you the foot soldiers of the Senate's slowly  
making history. And in this place, of some-  
times too many partisan wars, you are this  
powerful, gentle nudge to all of us old din-  
osaurs, that we are here for you, the future of  
our nation. You are a constant reminder of  
our sacred obligation. To put country first,  
you are subtly telling us in this sacred space:  
That we are not individual athletes but actu-  
ally running a relay race. Soon the baton we  
will place, in your hands, the next genera-  
tion, to lead with honor, determination, and  
I pray grace. So Pages! With your suits so  
blue, Serving the Senate tried and true,  
Doing everything we asked you to do. Walk-  
ing around barely awake some days, but you  
still made it through. Here are 3 pieces of ad-  
vice I have for you. First, leap into the un-  
known, even if it seems scary just give it a  
try. Like you found out jumping here, into  
your Senate experience that had to petrify—  
leap. I know that to some of your friends  
that it must have stupefied. Don't play it  
safe, hunkering down just to fortify. Jump at  
tough challenges because in life it is simple:  
If you don't risk great falls, you'll never see  
how high you can fly. Second, Make friends  
with people who think different and with  
whom you don't agree. This is the very idea  
of our democracy. You've witnessed it here  
on the Senate floor. The TV often tells us  
that we should hate those who are different,  
but clearly you now know more. We are so  
much more than a partisan, tribal war. Com-  
promise is essential, our founders forswore. I  
task you to be unifiers, common ground  
builders, defining yourself by not who you  
are against but by who you are for. Take our  
national ideal of E Pluribus Unum and re-  
claim its splendor. Be an indivisible men-  
tor—not just to preserve our democracy, but  
you are tasked with making it soar. And fi-  
nally Pages! With your suits so . . . clean,  
my last piece of advice is to dream bolder  
dreams. I believe it, that for you there is no  
limitation. God, you are already living lives  
way behind your ancestor's greatest imagi-  
nation. Past generations did great things.  
They took humanity to flight, took on the  
most awful wrongs and, incredibly, made  
them right. It's your turn—with grits, guts,  
and gumption—to dream America anew.  
Challenge my generation's limited assump-  
tions. Dream America anew. Don't wait for  
permission. Dream America anew. This is  
your mission. Dream America anew—beyond  
what even your parents can now see. Dream  
an America anew and bring us to new heights  
of freedom, justice, and prosperity. Pages,  
dream America anew. Dream America anew.  
Dream America anew. This is my advice but  
also my prayer for you. Oh, and for all of his-  
tory, I hereby put into the official Senate  
RECORD this truth, not a rumor: This Senate  
class, my friends, was incredible, kind, dedi-  
cated, but you lacked a sense of humor.

Mr. President, I see the extraor-  
dinary colleague here. We read her se-  
lected poem already. But I will tell  
you, there are 99 colleagues, but no-  
body is more the surrogate Senate page  
parent than KATIE BRITT, the Senator  
from Alabama.

I hope that you have learned from  
her the power of simple, everyday  
kindnesses.

Mr. President, I defer to my friend  
and colleague, the Senator from Ala-  
bama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen-  
ator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I walked  
out of a meeting and got to see my  
dear friend and distinguished colleague  
from New Jersey addressing these in-  
credible individuals behind me, in front  
of me, and all around the room. And so,  
in typical fashion, I literally ran out of  
the door to come and be a part of this.

First, I think you know that for my  
distinguished colleague from New Jer-  
sey and I, one of our favorite things  
that we get to do each and every se-  
mester that you are here, is to host  
you—host you for lunch and conversa-  
tion in a way that I think America  
needs to see. We do it across the aisle.  
We have laughs, thanks to this one,  
and we have a good time. And we get to  
dive into who you are and what your  
questions are and what this body is  
about.

Getting to be a part of this distin-  
guished poetry contest that you have,  
that is a new one for me, and it is one  
that I hope I continue to get to do—be-  
cause, guys, you all are incredible.

When I was reading through these, it  
reminded me not only how special it is  
that we get to walk in these doors  
every day, how incredible this body is,  
and the gravity of the jobs that we do;  
but it showed me how phenomenal each  
and every one of you are for giving up  
your time, your energy, and your tal-  
ent to make sure that this institution  
and our Nation are better.

So thank you—thank you, thank  
you—for what you have given to this  
country through your service here the  
last couple of months.

And my distinguished colleague from  
New Jersey has said it best, but just to  
add a couple of pieces of advice on your  
way out the door: Be unafraid to fail.  
Folks, I am not going to lie to you. It  
is not fun to fail. But without your  
willingness to do it, you will never  
achieve what is possible for you and  
what God has in front of you. And look,  
when you do fail, learn from it. Take a  
step back. Figure out what role you  
played in that, what you can do better,  
how you can be better, and how you  
can grow as a result, because I have  
found that everybody knows your  
peaks in life, but it is your valleys that  
actually truly define you and prepare  
you to climb the next hill.

Also—and I hope you have seen this  
on the Senate floor—you do not have  
to agree with someone to show them  
respect. And, in fact, we are counting  
on you to be respectful to those that  
you agree with and disagree with. That  
is what this Nation was founded on: the  
ability to have these conversations—  
challenging conversations—with people  
that you respect and with people you  
have built a relationship with that you  
may not agree with.

We need your generation to help us  
continue to bring that back. I have  
seen that from each and every one of

you, and I am inspired by the way that you have conducted yourselves.

And then, last but not least, get in the arena. Right? Now, everyone's arena is different. Everyone's lane is unique. And that is not just OK; it is necessary. But we need you to be unafraid to jump in and to move this Nation forward because, at the end of the day, we need you to achieve what we need to do for the American people, not only just in your communities and States but truly across the country.

You have all been given a special gift, but it is up to you to utilize that to affect as many people as you possibly can in a positive way and make the world around you better as a result of who you are and the way that you conduct yourself.

And so all of that to say: It has been an honor and a privilege to get to know you. From the bottom of my heart and on behalf of all of our colleagues, we are grateful for you. And I am grateful for my friendship with the Senator from New Jersey, and I hope that our friendship has served as an example for you of what is possible when you maybe put differences aside; you get to know each other as people; you can have tough conversations, find common ground, and move good things forward.

I yield the floor back to my distinguished colleague from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Thank you to KATIE BRITT, the tough-as-nails Senator who will never quit, before I sit—I just can't stop myself. And thanks to Elizabeth, we should have all the poems put into the Senate RECORD.

So with that, I would like to ask unanimous consent that all six participants, including the two I didn't name—Gabriel, where is Gabriel? Solid, solid piece of work. I was splitting hairs, splitting hairs. The only thing that dissed you was:

The Capitol subway is my home.  
It rides underneath the great dome.

I thought it was a lie that the subway is your home. I see you rarely on the subway. So your poetic genius was there; I dinged you because it was not truthful.

And then the other name I want to give is Xavier, where is Xavier? Where is Xavier? Xavier is not here; that is why Xavier did not get—I knew he would not be here. It is terrible. It is terrible.

That's what we pages are meant to observe.

And to learn from others the pride to serve.

I see no pride in his not being here right now. But I will say that they deserve to be in the Senate RECORD.

So, again, all six poems, all six participants will be there.

I ask unanimous consent that all six poems be printed in the RECORD.

KATIE, thank you for your kind words, and we turn the Senate back over to its usual programming. Although I do not think anything that will happen on this floor will be as fun

as the fun that KATIE and I just had. Thank you very much.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

## WATCHING

BY KAIJA LEINONEN

Above watch eyes of those before  
Some fierce and others kinder.  
The hist'ry of our Senate floor,  
Their gaze a stern reminder.  
Above watch eyes of those who trust  
The neighbors, friends, and envoy  
To act in love and do what's just  
When voting for their convoy.  
Above watch eyes of all the world  
Breath baited, holding plans now.  
The lives and loves of boys and girls  
Rest safely in your hands now.  
And with those eyes now watching you  
This job's not a what, but now a who.

BY HOLDEN DEMAIN

It's work and it's school; democracy alive  
It's ambition and passion and wakeups at five  
Doors and water orders—that's what we do  
Check your TV and find us, right on C-SPAN 2!  
Dirksen and roll call; caucus and quorum  
Look at the suits; think back when I wore 'em  
The Rotunda at midnight and English at sunrise  
There's always more; that's where the fun lies  
The challenges we face are both great and are numerous  
Yet we can beat them together: it's me, you, and us  
Being a Page is something worth praising  
I'm sad that it's over; it's honestly crazy  
I've loved you so much, Class of Fall '24  
It's been madness and memories and so, so much more

BY GABRIEL RHODES

As I close my eyes, I feel the whoosh!  
I take a seat and feel it move  
We speed off with a big swoosh  
I am getting in the groove  
The seal is emblazoned on the wall  
The red carpet cushions our shoes  
Just make sure you do not fall!  
When we start moving it quells my blues  
The Capitol subway is my home  
A place to meet and greet  
It rides underneath the great dome  
This is the place to accomplish the great feat

BY XAVIER CARRASCO COOPER

I am often asked what all do I do  
No answer has ever covered it through  
Don't want to be seen as mediocre  
Don't want to lie and look like a joker  
I used to think the government was few  
A small club of people always on view  
Leading our country by virtual decree  
Only the few fought for us to be free  
I have seen how terribly wrong I was  
I've met those who work outside of the buzz  
Without recognition, fame or applause  
Those who take pride in serving a great cause

That's what we Pages are meant to observe  
And to learn from others the pride to serve

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

JANUARY 6 PARDONS

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, in the United States, we believe in the peaceful transfer of power. In the United States, we believe that the people—not elected politicians—decide who is their President.

And both of those principles have served our democracy very well

through thick and thin, through strife and turmoil, for the past 248 years.

Both of those principles were challenged on January 6, 2021. A mob that was incited by then-President Trump attacked the Capitol for the explicit purpose of using violence to overturn the peaceful transfer of power.

They were trying to intimidate elected politicians to substitute their judgment, their preferred candidate for President, instead of acknowledging the will of the people that they represented.

But our democracy endured. That is the very good news. And in testament to that, we just witnessed a renewal of America's commitment to the peaceful transfer of power with the inauguration of Donald Trump as our 47th President.

However, I speak today, sadly, about one of the first actions of President Trump, and that, of course, is pardoning 1,600 people and commuting sentences of 14 very dangerous criminals who were involved in that violent attack on January 6.

Speaking for myself, I condemn that action by President Trump. I was there that day. Many of us were. I was in the Gallery of the House of Representatives. It is a day I won't forget, but America will never forget. It has had a deep impact on our country, the citizens, the folks who work here, and that honorable tradition of the peaceful transfer of power.

You know, I was very amazed and proud to see officers—men and women—who withstood this assault. More than 150 officers from the U.S. Capitol Police and the DC Metropolitan Police Department were injured that day. Five officers died in the aftermath, and there was severe damage to the Senate Chamber, the House Chamber, the office buildings, and the Capitol Rotunda, where we just had another inauguration only a few days ago.

Blood, feces, glass, and other debris from the mob's attack was everywhere at a cost of close to \$3 million.

So how is it that one of the first acts of our President, who wants to be a unifier, was to pardon those people who acted with such violence, such anger, and such contempt?

President Trump has tried to erase this attack and rewrite the history of what happened on January 6, calling the insurrectionists, including those who fought with the police, patriots and hostages. They were neither.

Should the President of the United States pardon a person who was sentenced to 57 months in Federal prison for stealing a police riot shield from an officer and then using it to assault officers?

Should a person who is affiliated with the neo-Nazi group and who was serving a sentence for breaking the law in Charlottesville in 2017 and who quoted Hitler before assaulting law enforcement in the U.S. Capitol, should that person be pardoned? I say no.

Should a President pardon a person who led an organization who orchestrated this riot after being convicted by a jury of impartial citizens and being convicted of seditious conspiracy? I say no.

Should a President pardon a person who was sentenced to more than 6 years for beating the police with a metal whip, assaulting them with bear spray—something that can cause lasting eye damage—should that person be pardoned? I say no.

Should a person who, at his own trial, said he didn't think he was subject to the laws governing the United States and who, before storming the Capitol, bragged that what the British did to DC will be nothing compared to what he does? Should that person be pardoned? I say no.

Should a person who said many of us should be hanged, should that person be pardoned? I say no.

I am very proud of the men and women of our law enforcement community, U.S. Capitol Police and DC Metropolitan Police Department who stood their positions and defended the Capitol and defended the peaceful transfer of power. And I have in mind someone who was standing over me in the Capitol when I was in the Gallery and the mob was trying to break down the doors, breaking the glass of the House Chamber, and this officer was a young man who commuted to work from about an hour away. He had two young children. He had his gun out, and I looked in his face, and I could see the last thing in the world he wanted to do was have to use that weapon. But I saw that he was going to do his job and whatever was required to protect the people who were in that Gallery.

And I just thought to myself, How is it that the people who are attacking could have such disregard for the reality of this person's life and how much it would change his life if he actually had to use that firearm?

And I am proud, too, of Officer Brian Sicknick, who lost his life; Officer Howard Liebengood; Officer Jeffrey Smith; Officer Gunther Hashida; Officer Kyle DeFreytag, all of whom died in the aftermath of January 6th.

These presidential pardons are disrespectful. They are also dangerous. They are disrespectful to the men and women who served, who suffered the violence, and are living with the consequences. And they are dangerous to the men and women of law enforcement who serve us every day. The pardons validate the violence of the mob and dishonor the service of those who protect us.

These unconscionable and appalling actions of January 6 should be repudiated by every Member of Congress. And whatever differences we have, it is vital that those differences be resolved at the ballot box and that the will of the people always be respected.

No citizen, however passionate they may be about their political beliefs, no matter how disappointed they may be

at the outcome of an election, is justified in attacking the men and women of the Capitol Police. Their actions should be condemned by each of us and by our President. Those actions should not be condoned with pardons.

I yield the floor.

(Mr. MORENO assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BRITT). The Senator from Connecticut.

NOMINATION OF PETER HEGSETH

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, we are in the midst of considering Peter Hegseth to be the next Secretary of Defense. I don't think there is a more important office in this country, having power and responsibility for 3.4 million Americans, most of them in uniform, many of them civilians, all of them potentially putting their lives in harm's way.

The President's choice to lead the Department of Defense is not only one of the most significant he will make but is also probably the most unqualified nominee for this position of immense authority and responsibility in recent history.

It is clear that his history of mismanagement—he drove two veterans organizations into the ground financially—makes him patently incapable of the powerfully challenging management task that he will have as Secretary of Defense. This sprawling enterprise has to be directed and guided by someone who has had some significant management responsibility in the past. I hesitate to say how much because the standard and the bar have always been extremely high under both Republican and Democratic administrations, including President Trump's first term when he appointed General Mattis.

I voted for General Mattis. He was obviously a Republican nominee, but he had the experience—not just in combat but also at the Pentagon.

Now, I know the President wants to be a disrupter and a change agent. The Pentagon may be in need of some change and disruption, but not chaos, not financial mismanagement such as characterized Pete Hegseth's service as the head of Vets for Freedom and then Concerned Veterans for America.

What can be said about his service in those two organizations is that year after year, he spent more than he raised. He had deficits year after year—not by a little bit, by hundreds of thousands of dollars. So at the end of his service at Vets for Freedom, the board did an intervention. They had a forensic study done, which showed that there were tens of thousands of dollars in unpaid debt, and they, in fact, ousted him.

He then went to Concerned Veterans for America and same pattern, roughly the same financial failings—deficits year after year, significant in their number and total amount. There again, he left under a cloud, with a nondisclosure agreement, so we don't have, necessarily, the full story.

Just as a management issue, this nomination is fundamentally flawed.

He left those two separate organizations smoldering in ruins after just a few years as their executive director.

We have documents from whistleblowers that detail a toxic workplace environment at those organizations. It was rife with alcohol abuse and sexual harassment under his leadership. Former employees have detailed that Mr. Hegseth routinely used organization funds to pursue personal pleasures, usually involving alcohol and women. His underlings referred to them as “party girls.”

These veterans service organizations ran fiscal surpluses before Mr. Hegseth's tenure, and upon his exit, their budgets were really in flames. In one case, the organization simply ceased to exist. Vets for Freedom was absorbed by another organization.

He testified that he is proud of the work he did while he was at Vets for Freedom and Concerned Veterans for America, but he made a career of advocating for policies that would, in effect, contract and even defund the Veterans' Administration and harm servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

For years, he lambasted veterans who pursued disability compensation, and he advocated for for-profit colleges that make their living preying on servicemembers and veterans. These organizations and the policies he advocated could potentially have done grave harm to our veterans.

During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Hegseth also refused to answer questions regarding the use of Active-Duty military within the borders of the United States.

One of the President's own former Secretaries of Defense stated unequivocally that “the option to use active-duty forces in law enforcement's role should be only used as a matter of last resort and only in the most urgent and dire of situations.” Yet the President is apparently laying down plans to use the Active-Duty military to conduct mass deportations and to quell civil unrest.

Americans don't want the military, our men and women on Active Duty, raiding restaurants and farms, looking for individuals who have overstayed their visas. If the President is unwilling to invest in ICE, it should not be the Department of Defense, the Pentagon, our Active-Duty men and women going into homes, workplaces, schools, churches, hospitals, and in effect performing the raids—the law enforcement duty—that really are specifically prohibited by statute.

Pete Hegseth will be behind these policies. Many of them he has already endorsed. Most of them, unfortunately, were not delved into in any depth in his hearing because so much of it was on the sexual improprieties and alcohol abuse and other personal issues that would be disqualifying.

Let's make no mistake. There is a lot of focus on this latest affidavit. There is significant information—not anonymous smears, significant information—

in that affidavit, but there was already enough on the record, in fact, acknowledged during that hearing by Mr. Hegseth himself, as to information that would be disqualifying if he as a major were up for promotion, if he as a corporal were up for promotion to a sergeant; facts about marital infidelity—open, blatant, matter of public record—that would be disqualifying to him within the military and in fact might even subject him to discipline within the military; other reported instances of drunkenness, of misconduct, all of it in the public record acknowledged by him—at least as to the marital infidelity.

So the focus on those personal aspects of his background took time. And by the way, we had very limited amounts of time because we were not permitted a second round of questioning. We were not given access to the FBI background report. We were not given, in fact, the benefit of a full FBI background investigation—an adequate one—because there were gaps, as shown by the affidavit, as to who was interviewed, and that is in part why that affidavit is important, because it shows that there were, in fact, gaps in the FBI's investigation.

The American people don't want the National Guard or our military reserves or their Active Duty, their own neighbors, on the streets of Des Moines, Cleveland, Hartford, Montgomery—places where they call home—checking their papers, conducting surveillance operations that could sweep vast amounts of their private data. That is our military going into our workplaces and our homes collecting information.

The Founders of this Nation never envisioned our military as a police force, and neither did Congress. That is why we have the Insurrection Act and other measures that forbid that kind of intrusion. In fact, it was that kind of invasion of their homes by the British military that caused them to adopt many of our constitutional guarantees against the use of the military for those kinds of purposes.

Mr. Hegseth declined to state his opposition to such deployments when asked during his hearing. What he said, and I take him at his word, is that he will heed the President's direction as Commander in Chief.

The reason he was chosen for this job obviously is not his experience as a manager; it is not his bona fides as a leader of major organizations; it is his loyalty to the President, to Donald Trump. And more than loyalty, it is fealty. It is that acquiescence, obedience, obsequiousness, blind loyalty that would lead him to take that order and, in turn, order American troops into people's homes.

There is no question that beyond what could happen in America on our soil, his confirmation would also present enormous problems for our allies and partners in the Middle East. I have been working with the senior Sen-

ator from South Carolina for some years to encourage the normalization of relations between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is an enterprise and an effort that I think has occupied many of us in this Chamber. We have visited the region together.

And one of our objectives, in fact, is a treaty or agreement that would bind us closer together—Israel, Saudi Arabia, America, perhaps the UAE—as part of normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and the regional nations and Israel.

Suffice it to say that the recent cease-fire announcement between Israel and Hamas is a historic shift in regional politics. I believe that Mr. Hegseth's personal beliefs would diminish our support of the peace process or derail it entirely because of comments he has made about Islam and Muslim nations. Those comments were explored in some detail in his testimony.

My concern is there have been numerous reports in addition to his own words that appear to convey a hostility on his part—if not outright antagonism—toward Islam and Muslims. A former employee of Concerned Veterans for America alleges that he shouted racist and Islamophobic chants during an official tour in Ohio, well-publicized and well-known, in the region where Muslim Nation and Islam are predominant.

In his book "American Crusade," he expressed concern about Muslim birthrights and said the present moment for Christians is like the time of the Crusades and that Christians must arm themselves metaphorically, intellectually, and physically.

Our fight is not with guns. Yet. [Not with guns. Yet.]

Well, we are not in a time where we need a crusader in the old-fashioned sense of that word and who says that Christians must arm themselves metaphorically, intellectually, physically—physically—for a fight that may be coming.

We are trying to engage those nations in a common purpose toward normalization, peace and stability, an expansion of the Abraham Accords. People in Israel are hoping that progress can be made, that there can be a successful effort to build on the Abraham Accords.

The current cease-fire agreement is the result of both the Trump administration and the Biden administration coming together—the two teams, Brett McGurk and Envoy Witkoff—making sure that peace was the objective, not antagonism or hostility. Ambassador Witkoff, I don't think, would want a Secretary of Defense talking about a crusade against Muslim nations.

I don't think that a more problematic and concerning nominee has been put before this body, and I urge my Republican colleagues to review what Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator COLLINS said when they announced that they were going to oppose this nomination, as they did earlier today.

Senator MURKOWSKI said:

I have met with him and carefully reviewed his writings, various reports, and other pertinent materials. I closely followed his hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee and gathered substantial feedback from organizations, veterans, and Alaskans. After thorough evaluation, I must conclude that I cannot in good conscience support his nomination for Secretary of Defense.

She went onto talk about some of the allegations that have been made against Mr. Hegseth:

Although he has recently revised his statements on women in combat since being nominated, I remain concerned about the message that confirming Mr. Hegseth sends to women currently serving and those aspiring to join. Women have served our nation with distinction, overcoming immense obstacles to excel in combat and leadership roles, and they deserve to know that their leader honors and values their commitment to our nation.

Now, the reason for that comment by Senator MURKOWSKI was statements made by Mr. Hegseth 30 days before his hearing about the lack of value in women serving in the military and the inability, lack of capacity of women to serve in combat. He reversed himself, what one of my colleagues called "nomination conversion" and modified his previous remarks. But he couldn't tell you what caused him to have a different opinion.

And in the course of that hearing, he truly revealed that he continues to have that view of women, which is a problem for recruiting women. They are now 18 percent of our military force. And more than just recruiting women, retaining women, especially when the scourge of sexual assault continues to be so problematic in the military. We fought it for years. A number of us on the Armed Services Committee have supported measures that would provide for more effective prosecution through a system of investigation outside the chain of command. We adopted those reforms, and military leaders have joined us in seeking to combat sexual assault and harassment.

And here we have someone who has been accused, very credibly and plausibly, not just in this affidavit but by others, and the record is replete with them. There are accusations. There are no convictions here. Mr. Hegseth denies them. But, again, simply what he acknowledges having done would disqualify him from a role of command in the military. And that background and record can't help but discourage women from joining and staying in the military.

Senator MURKOWSKI goes onto say:

While the allegations of sexual assault and excessive drinking do nothing to quiet my concerns, the past behaviors Mr. Hegseth has admitted to, including infidelity on multiple occasions, demonstrate a lack of judgment that is unbecoming of someone who would lead our Armed Forces. These behaviors starkly contrast the values and discipline expected of servicemembers. Men and women in uniform are held accountable for such actions, and they deserve leaders who uphold these same standards.



Mr. Hegseth complained in our hearing that the military was lowering its standards for the men and women who serve in uniform. The only standards being lowered here are the standards for the Secretary of Defense if Mr. Hegseth is confirmed. President Trump is, in effect, dumbing down the Department of Defense, and it threatens to do great damage to that powerfully important institution.

Senator MURKOWSKI goes onto say:

Above all, I believe that character is the defining trait required of the Secretary of Defense, and must be prioritized without compromise. The leader of the Department of Defense must demonstrate and model the standards of behavior and character we expect of all servicemembers, and Mr. Hegseth's nomination to the role poses significant concerns that I cannot overlook. Given the global security environment we're operating in, it is critical that we confirm a Secretary of Defense, however, I regret that I am unable to support Mr. Hegseth.

What a powerfully damning statement. Not damning, necessarily, Mr. Hegseth as a human being. I respect his service. I said at the hearing that I was grateful and respectful of his service to our Nation, including leading troops in combat and advocating for veterans. But these concerns about his personal background and about his lack of experience negate that respect for his service as a Secretary of Defense—as a Secretary of Defense.

We are not choosing him to be a colonel to be promoted. We are choosing him to lead the entire U.S. military, to make decisions that will be a matter of life and death.

I was moved, as well, by the statements made by our colleague Senator COLLINS very much along the same lines. And I want to repeat some of what she said, again, in the hope that our colleagues will listen to both of them. She said, as an expert, if I may say, on the global challenges that this country faces now:

[T]he Secretary is going to be facing a number of incredibly complex problems that are going to require highly skilled management ability. I am concerned that Mr. Hegseth does not have the management experience and background that he will need in order to tackle these difficulties.

I am also concerned about multiple statements, including some in the months just before he was nominated, that Mr. Hegseth made about women serving in the military. He and I had a candid conversation in December about his past statements and apparently evolving views. I am not convinced that his position on women serving in combat roles has changed.

That is, in some ways, the nub of the problem: what he has said, how he has failed in past management positions, how he lacks that credibility as a manager and a leader.

Senator COLLINS continues:

Women compromise nearly 18 percent of our Active-Duty military. They continue to make critical and valuable contributions to our national defense. I have long advocated that women who wish to serve in and can meet the rigorous standards of combat roles should be able to do so, and numerous women have proved they can accomplish this

difficult feat. Currently, thousands of women are serving in combat roles, and many others serve in noncombat functions. Their service is essential to the success of our military. Mr. Hegseth also appears to lack a sufficient appreciation for some of the policies that the military is required to follow because they are codified in the laws of the United States of America. While I understand his point on the importance of up-to-date and workable rules of engagement, our prohibitions against torture come from American laws and treaties ratified by the United States, including the Geneva Conventions. Therefore, I will vote against the nomination.

Mr. Hegseth has demeaned and dismissed the importance of the Geneva Conventions. In fact, he has berated the lawyers in the Department of Defense who set standards and guidelines for what can be done.

I will never forget talking to our former colleague—our great colleague, a friend and mentor to me—John McCain, about why he opposed torture and waterboarding—that kind of physical abuse—and why he believed that these laws have to be followed by our military, not just as a matter of humanity but as effective military strategy. Torturing to gain information often produces false information, but it also reduces the quality of our military performance.

Yet Mr. Hegseth seems to dismiss those ideas about the Geneva Conventions, about standards for military conduct, as categorically as he does many other of the standards that should apply.

I hope my colleagues will listen to Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator COLLINS because, in their statements, they say more effectively than I am in this lengthier talk on the floor how important a vote against Mr. Hegseth is to the future of our national defense.

Much has been written about him. I urge my colleagues to review an article that appeared in *The New Yorker*—“Pete Hegseth's Secret History”—by Jane Mayer, which talks about some of these instances, not anonymous smears, as he said so many of them were, but a sourced and substantiated account of the kinds of misconduct that were detailed in a whistleblower report and other documents—again, not an anonymous smear but specific and explicit facts that were claimed. You don't have eyewitness proof in sworn testimony before the Armed Services Committee, but this report is powerful in what it shows.

I hope that my colleagues, in the hours that we have left before we will vote again on Mr. Hegseth's nomination, will reconsider, perhaps, their vote earlier today; that they will recognize they will be responsible if things go wrong, and we hope to God always that nothing goes wrong, especially all of us who have family members who have served—mine in the U.S. Marine Corps. My oldest son is a combat veteran, and my second son, Michael, is a Navy SEAL.

The responsibility of the Secretary of Defense to order men and women into

harm's way is a truly awesome responsibility. Mr. Hegseth is not the person to have that responsibility, and I hope my colleagues will recognize that fact and vote against his nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUSTED). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONGRATULATING THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS BEARS WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2024 NCAA DIVISION III WOMEN'S SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 34, 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. 34) congratulating the Washington University in St. Louis Bears women's soccer team for winning the 2024 NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, 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. 34) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### MORNING BUSINESS

##### REMEMBERING DANIEL LEVIN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, after the Great Fire destroyed much of central London in 1666, the city was rebuilt with even grander and stronger buildings than before. The most majestic building of all in the new London was St. Paul's Cathedral, designed by the great architect Sir Christopher Wren. There is no monument to Wren. But on

the dome of St. Paul's, written in Latin, is an inscription. It says: "If you seek his memorial—look around you."

Daniel Levin was a visionary real estate developer, civic leader, and generous philanthropist who loved Chicago, its neighborhoods, and its people. Sadly, he died earlier this month.

There is no monument to Dan Levin, either. But if you want to see what he meant to Chicago—and what Chicago meant to him—just look around our great city.

Over half a century, Dan Levin's real estate development and management company, the Habitat Company, built structures that redefined Chicago's skyline.

Drive into Chicago on the Kennedy Expressway and you will see the Presidential Towers, four soaring skyscrapers of upscale condos and apartments in the West Loop.

Take a cruise along the Chicago River and you will pass the East Bank Club, one of the finest health and fitness clubs anywhere in America.

Follow the river to where it meets Lake Michigan and you will come to Cityfront Plaza, another tower of apartments and condos surrounded by a bucolic green oasis of a park.

He created other landmark buildings including South Commons, Columbus Plaza, ONE333, and many others.

But Dan Levin didn't build and manage only luxury properties. His faith in Chicago's people and their extraordinary potential led to Habitat's creation of nearly 25,000 rental housing units for people of all incomes.

His "North Star," his family says, was his belief that all people deserve to live in a home and a neighborhood they can be proud of.

He described his business philosophy this way: "No project is only an investment in real estate. It is an investment in the future of the community and the lives of the people who live and work there."

His confidence and his love for Chicago led him to take risks and to invest in parts of the city that others overlooked. And time after time, those risks paid off. His buildings attracted other new investments that transformed once blighted areas into vibrant neighborhoods.

Dan had a rare gift to see potential where others saw only problems. The Presidential Towers, for example, stand on what was once Chicago's Skid Row. The East Bank Club was built on the site of an abandoned railroad yard. In a once-gritty neighborhood that many Chicagoans feared to drive through even during the day, Dan created a world-class fitness club and an outstanding restaurant, where he loved to host Seders every Passover. You never knew who you would see at the East Bank Club. You might find yourself in a Pilates class with Oprah when she was member. Years ago, Dan became friends with a young law professor from the University of Chicago who used to come to the club to play

basketball. That young hoopster-professor went on to become President of the United States, Barack Obama.

Dan Levin was a "social entrepreneur" decades before anyone had ever heard that term. He believed that he could make money and do good, and that is exactly what he did for 50 years. He almost certainly would have made more money if he had concentrated exclusively on upscale buildings. But Dan Levin wasn't in business to make a killing; he wanted to make communities.

Probably his biggest professional challenge came in 1987 when a Federal judge appointed the Habitat Company to serve as a receiver for the then-bankrupt and badly mismanaged Chicago Housing Authority. The job was massive: Manage all of Chicago's public housing, except senior housing, and rehab or replace thousands of dilapidated housing units. The receivership lasted 23 years—23 years. By the time it ended, hundreds of blighted apartment buildings across the city had been torn down, including highrises that had become towers of poverty. With Dan as chairman and Valerie Jarrett as the company's CEO, Habitat replaced the highrises with townhouses, and replaced concrete with green spaces. All told, the company built or rehabbed 4,000 units of public housing. Many developers might have been intimidated by such a massive undertaking. But Dan Levin saw it as a civic responsibility and a chance to give back to a city that had given him so much.

You see, Dan wasn't born in Chicago. He was born and grew up in Detroit, the grandson of Jewish Ukrainian immigrants. His father was a judge. One of his brothers became a Federal judge, and another became a justice on the Michigan Supreme Court. And two of his cousins, whom he thought of almost like his brothers, became distinguished Members of Congress, Senator Carl Levin and Representative Sander Levin.

Dan assumed he would follow in the family footsteps. He graduated from the University of Chicago law school and went to work as legal counsel for a Detroit real estate developer that constructed many buildings and homes designed by Mies van der Rohe, one of the giants of 20th century architecture. In 1960, the founder of that company, Dan's mentor, died in a plane crash. Dan stepped in to finish the project his boss had been overseeing, another van der Rohe building—and he discovered that he loved creating buildings. So he left the law and became a developer. A short time later, he moved to Chicago, the birthplace of skyscrapers and other architectural marvels. His buildings now stand shoulder to shoulder with some of the great architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries.

In addition to his work, Dan loved classical music. He was a devoted supporter and board member of WFMT, Chicago's classical music station. He

was also a trustee of WTTW Public Television, vice chairman of the Environmental Law and Policy Center, and a generous supporter of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and the Harris School of Public Policy at his alma mater, the University of Illinois.

He was kind, modest, and generous with a happy spirit and a twinkle in his eye. He was equally at ease speaking with Uber drivers as with Presidents.

He was devoted to his family: his son Josh Levin; his daughters Jil Deheeger and Betsy Bernardaud; and their spouses; his 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren; and his step-children Alyssa Rapp and Jeffrey Rapp. Most of all, he adored his wife and partner, former Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin. The only time they were separated was when Fay served as U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, and even then, Dan crossed the ocean many times to be by her side.

Loretta and I offer our deep condolences to Fay and all of Dan's family in this sad time.

Daniel Levin was a good man, a visionary leader, and a true mensch. Loretta and I and the people of Chicago will miss him. But, as I said, if we want to see his legacy, all we have to do is look around. We are a better city because Dan Levin lived among us.

#### U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the following printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

[Amended February 11, 2021]

#### RULE 1.—REGULAR MEETING DATE FOR COMMITTEE

The regular meeting day for the Committee to transact its business shall be the last Tuesday in each month that the Senate is in Session; except that if the Committee has met at any time during the month prior to the last Tuesday of the month, the regular meeting of the Committee may be canceled at the discretion of the Chairman.

#### RULE 2.—COMMITTEE

[a] Investigations.—No investigation shall be initiated by the Committee unless the Senate, or the full Committee, or the Chairman and Ranking Member have specifically authorized such investigation.

[b] Hearings.—No hearing of the Committee shall be scheduled outside the District of Columbia except by agreement between the Chairman of the Committee and the Ranking Member of the Committee or by a majority vote of the Committee.

[c] Confidential testimony.—No confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented at an executive session of the Committee or any report of the proceedings of such executive session shall be made public either in whole or in part or by way of summary, unless specifically authorized by the Chairman of the Committee and the Ranking Member of the Committee or by a majority vote of the Committee.

[d] Interrogation of witnesses.—Committee interrogation of a witness shall be conducted only by members of the Committee or such professional staff as is authorized by the Chairman or the Ranking Member of the Committee.

[e] Prior notice of markup sessions.—No session of the Committee or a Subcommittee for marking up any measure shall be held unless [1] each member of the Committee or the Subcommittee, as the case may be, has been notified in writing via electronic mail or paper mail of the date, time, and place of such session and has been furnished a copy of the measure to be considered, in a searchable electronic format, at least 3 business days prior to the commencement of such session, or [2] the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee determines that exigent circumstances exist requiring that the session be held sooner.

[f] Prior notice of first degree amendments.—It shall not be in order for the Committee or a Subcommittee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee or Subcommittee unless fifty written copies of such amendment have been delivered to the office of the Committee at least 2 business days prior to the meeting. It shall be in order, without prior notice, for a Senator to offer a motion to strike a single section of any measure under consideration. Such a motion to strike a section of the measure under consideration by the Committee or Subcommittee shall not be amendable. This section may be waived by a majority of the members of the Committee or Subcommittee voting, or by agreement of the Chairman and Ranking Member. This subsection shall apply only when the conditions of subsection [e][1] have been met.

[g] Cordon rule.—Whenever a bill or joint resolution repealing or amending any statute or part thereof shall be before the Committee or Subcommittee, from initial consideration in hearings through final consideration, the Clerk shall place before each member of the Committee or Subcommittee a print of the statute or the part or section thereof to be amended or repealed showing by stricken-through type, the part or parts to be omitted, and in italics, the matter proposed to be added. In addition, whenever a member of the Committee or Subcommittee offers an amendment to a bill or joint resolution under consideration, those amendments shall be presented to the Committee or Subcommittee in a like form, showing by typographical devices the effect of the proposed amendment on existing law. The requirements of this subsection may be waived when, in the opinion of the Committee or Subcommittee Chairman, it is necessary to expedite the business of the Committee or Subcommittee.

#### RULE 3.—SUBCOMMITTEES

[a] Authorization for.—A Subcommittee of the Committee may be authorized only by the action of a majority of the Committee.

[b] Membership.—No member may be a member of more than three Subcommittees and no member may chair more than one Subcommittee. No member will receive assignment to a second Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all members of the Committee have chosen assignments to one Subcommittee, and no member shall receive assignment to a third Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all members have chosen assignments to two Subcommittees.

[c] Investigations.—No investigation shall be initiated by a Subcommittee unless the Senate or the full Committee has specifically authorized such investigation.

[d] Hearings.—No hearing of a Subcommittee shall be scheduled outside the

District of Columbia without prior consultation with the Chairman and then only by agreement between the Chairman of the Subcommittee and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee or by a majority vote of the Subcommittee.

[e] Confidential testimony.—No confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented at an executive session of the Subcommittee or any report of the proceedings of such executive session shall be made public, either in whole or in part or by way of summary, unless specifically authorized by the Chairman of the Subcommittee and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, or by a majority vote of the Subcommittee.

[f] Interrogation of witnesses.—Subcommittee interrogation of a witness shall be conducted only by members of the Subcommittee or such professional staff as is authorized by the Chairman or the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee.

[g] Special meetings.—If at least three members of a Subcommittee desire that a special meeting of the Subcommittee be called by the Chairman of the Subcommittee, those members may file in the offices of the Committee their written request to the Chairman of the Subcommittee for that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify the Chairman of the Subcommittee of the filing of the request. If, within 3 calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman of the Subcommittee does not call the requested special meeting, to be held within 7 calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Subcommittee may file in the offices of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Subcommittee will be held, specifying the date and hour of that special meeting. The Subcommittee shall meet on that date and hour. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify all members of the Subcommittee that such special meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour. If the Chairman of the Subcommittee is not present at any regular or special meeting of the Subcommittee, the Ranking Member of the majority party on the Subcommittee who is present shall preside at that meeting.

[h] Voting.—No measure or matter shall be recommended from a Subcommittee to the Committee unless a majority of the Subcommittee are actually present. The vote of the Subcommittee to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Subcommittee voting. On Subcommittee matters other than a vote to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee no record vote shall be taken unless a majority of the Subcommittee is actually present. Any absent member of a Subcommittee may affirmatively request that his or her vote to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee or his vote on any such other matters on which a record vote is taken, be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be in writing and shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter and to inform the Subcommittee as to how the member wishes his or her vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman of the Subcommittee any time before the record vote on the measure or matter concerned is taken, the member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies shall be kept in the files of the Committee.

#### RULE 4.—WITNESSES

[a] Filing of statements.—Any witness appearing before the Committee or Subcommittee [including any witness rep-

resenting a Government agency] must file with the Committee or Subcommittee [24 hours preceding his or her appearance] 30 copies of his or her statement to the Committee or Subcommittee, and the statement must include a brief summary of the testimony. In the event that the witness fails to file a written statement and brief summary in accordance with this rule, the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee has the discretion to deny the witness the privilege of testifying before the Committee or Subcommittee until the witness has properly complied with the rule.

[b] Length of statements.—Written statements properly filed with the Committee or Subcommittee may be as lengthy as the witness desires and may contain such documents or other addenda as the witness feels is necessary to present properly his or her views to the Committee or Subcommittee. The brief summary included in the statement must be no more than 3 pages long. It shall be left to the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee as to what portion of the documents presented to the Committee or Subcommittee shall be published in the printed transcript of the hearings.

[c] Five-minute duration. Oral statements of witnesses shall be based upon their filed statements but shall be limited to 5 minutes duration. This period may be limited or extended at the discretion of the Chairman presiding at the hearings.

[d] Subpoena of witnesses.—Witnesses may be subpoenaed by the Chairman of the Committee or a Subcommittee with the agreement of the Ranking Member of the Committee or Subcommittee or by a majority vote of the Committee or Subcommittee.

[e] Counsel permitted.—Any witness subpoenaed by the Committee or Subcommittee to a public or executive hearing may be accompanied by counsel of his or her own choosing who shall be permitted, while the witness is testifying, to advise him or her of his or her legal rights.

[f] Expenses of witnesses.—No witness shall be reimbursed for his or her appearance at a public or executive hearing before the Committee or Subcommittee unless such reimbursement is agreed to by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee.

[g] Limits of questions.—Questioning of a witness by members shall be limited to 5 minutes duration. Members may be permitted further questions of the witness after all members have been given an opportunity to question the witness.

Additional opportunity to question a witness shall be limited to a duration of 5 minutes until all members have been given the opportunity to question the witness for a second time. This 5-minute period per member will be continued until all members have exhausted their questions of the witness.

After a witness has completed his or her testimony before the Committee or Subcommittee, members may submit questions in writing to the Clerk for the record, which shall be due to the Clerk by a date determined by the Chairman, in consultation with the Ranking Member, but such due date shall be no later than 7 calendar days after the witness's appearance before the Committee or Subcommittee. Any such witness shall respond in writing to any such written question for the record no later than 45 calendar days after the witness's date of appearance before the Committee or Subcommittee. For nominees before the Committee, the Chairman shall, in consultation with the Ranking Member, determine the time periods for the submission of member questions and the receipt of responses from nominees.

## RULE 5.—VOTING

[a] Vote to report a measure or matter.—No measure or matter shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present. The vote of the Committee to report a measure or matter shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Committee who are present.

Any absent member may affirmatively request that his or her vote to report a matter be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter, and to inform the Committee as to how the member wishes his vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman any time before the record vote on the measure or matter concerned is taken, any member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies shall be kept in the files of the Committee, along with the record of the rollcall vote of the members present and voting, as an official record of the vote on the measure or matter.

[b] Vote on matters other than to report a measure or matter. On Committee matters other than a vote to report a measure or matter, no record vote shall be taken unless a majority of the Committee are actually present. On any such other matter, a member of the Committee may request that his or her vote may be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be in writing and shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter, and to inform the Committee as to how the member wishes his or her vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman any time before the vote on such other matter is taken, the member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies relating to such other matters shall be kept in the files of the Committee.

## RULE 6.—QUORUM

No executive session of the Committee or a Subcommittee shall be called to order unless a majority of the Committee or Subcommittee, as the case may be, are actually present. Unless the Committee otherwise provides or is required by the Rules of the Senate, one member shall constitute a quorum for the receipt of evidence, the swearing in of witnesses, and the taking of testimony.

## RULE 7.—STAFF PRESENT ON DAIS

Only members and the Clerk of the Committee shall be permitted on the dais during public or executive hearings, except that a member may have one staff person accompany him or her during such public or executive hearing on the dais. If a member desires a second staff person to accompany him or her on the dais he or she must make a request to the Chairman for that purpose.

## RULE 8.—COINAGE LEGISLATION

At least 67 Senators must cosponsor any gold medal or commemorative coin bill or resolution before consideration by the Committee.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

Rule XXV, *Standing Committees*

1. The following standing committees shall be appointed at the commencement of each Congress, and shall continue and have the power to act until their successors are appointed, with leave to report by bill or otherwise on matters within their respective jurisdictions:

\* \* \* \* \*

[d][1] Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, to which committee shall be referred all proposed legislation, messages, petitions, memorials, and other matters relating to the following subjects:

1. Banks, banking, and financial institutions.

2. Control of prices of commodities, rents, and services.

3. Deposit insurance.

4. Economic stabilization and defense production.

5. Export and foreign trade promotion.

6. Export controls.

7. Federal monetary policy, including Federal Reserve System.

8. Financial aid to commerce and industry.

9. Issuance and redemption of notes.

10. Money and credit, including currency and coinage.

11. Nursing home construction.

12. Public and private housing [including veterans' housing].

13. Renegotiation of Government contracts.

14. Urban development and urban mass transit.

[2] Such committee shall also study and review, on a comprehensive basis, matters relating to international economic policy as it affects United States monetary affairs, credit, and financial institutions; economic growth, urban affairs, and credit, and report thereon from time to time.

## COMMITTEE PROCEDURES FOR PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

Procedures formally adopted by the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, February 11, 2021, establish a uniform questionnaire for all Presidential nominees whose confirmation hearings come before this Committee.

In addition, the procedures establish that:

[1] A confirmation hearing shall normally be held at least 5 days after receipt of the completed questionnaire by the Committee unless waived by a majority vote of the Committee.

[2] The Committee shall vote on the confirmation not less than 24 hours after the Committee has received transcripts of the hearing unless waived by unanimous consent.

[3] All nominees routinely shall testify under oath at their confirmation hearings.

This questionnaire shall be made a part of the public record except for financial and other personal information, which shall be kept confidential as indicated on the questionnaire.

Nominees are requested to answer all questions, and to add additional pages where necessary.

## RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARY FRANCES EARLY LECTURE SERIES AND THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARY FRANCIS EARLY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Ms. Mary Frances Early for the 25th anniversary of the Mary Frances Early lecture series at the University of Georgia and the 5th anniversary of the naming of the University of Georgia's College of Education in her honor.

Hailing from Atlanta, GA, where she was born and raised, Mary Frances Early played an invaluable role in supporting music education in Georgia and the desegregation of Georgia universities. After earning a bachelor's degree in music education from Clark College—now Clark Atlanta University—in 1957, Ms. Early began her career with Atlanta Public Schools as a music teacher. While teaching, she worked to expand access to music edu-

cation for all students. In 1961, Ms. Early enrolled at the University of Georgia, helping to desegregate the graduate school. In 1962, Mary Frances Early made history when she became the first African-American to graduate from the University of Georgia, earning her master's degree in music education.

As her career continued, Mary Frances Early became the first Black president of the Georgia Music Educators Association, where she traveled the State to support music organizations and advocate for music education. After dedicating 37 years to public music education, she later taught at Morehouse College and Spelman College and served as head of the music department at Clark Atlanta University.

Ms. Early was also instrumental in creating the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Talent Development Program, a first of its kind program designed to identify, mentor, and develop middle and high school Atlanta musicians from underrepresented groups for careers as professional classical musicians.

In addition to these many accomplishments, the University of Georgia has honored Ms. Early's legacy by awarding her with the President's Medal in 2018, an endowed professorship, and two scholarships.

On the 25th anniversary of the Mary Frances Early lecture series at the University of Georgia and the 5th anniversary of Georgia's College of Education in her honor, I would like to thank Ms. Mary Frances Early for her tremendous contributions to music education and her lasting impact as a trailblazer for civil rights, inspiring generations of students, schools, and communities across our Nation.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## RECOGNIZING THE 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COWBOY POETRY GATHERING

● Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the 40-year anniversary of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering. "The Gathering" is a weeklong coming-together of people rooted in the poetry, music, and arts of cowboy country that takes place every year in the high-desert cowboy town of Elko, NV. The week of January 27 to February 1, 2025, marks the 40th anniversary of this celebration.

Cowboys are often seen as a symbol of the American West. Though popular media has influenced the perception of this symbol as a grizzled figure on the range, cowboys represent the modern resilience of the West. They continue to adapt to their current circumstances, and since the 19th century, cowboy poetry has played an important role in sharing, remembering, and expressing the social, environmental, and political changes the West has experienced.

The Gathering was first produced in 1985 by a small group of folklorists and poets, and after 40 years, it has grown into a national and international weeklong celebration of the cultural expression of the rangeland West. Cowboy poetry is one of the most popular forms of occupational poetry, and in 2000, Congress designated this event as the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

Today, the Gathering brings together thousands of people, ranging from cowboys and saddlemakers to insurance salespersons and plumbers, all of whom share a mutual admiration, respect, and dedication to what the West was, is, and will be. The celebration features more than 40 artists and dozens of events to forge connections and grow knowledge through food, gear, film, discussions, dance, music, verse, and more.

The Gathering is held every year in Elko, which is the largest town in northeastern Nevada and abuts the scenic Ruby Mountains. Elko was founded in 1869 with the Transcontinental Railroad and has a storied tradition of ranching and mining. As the heart of northeast Nevada, Elko is a fitting place to honor the traditions of cowboy poetry.

The event takes place at venues throughout Elko, but the heart of the Gathering is at the Western Folklife Center, headquartered in the historic Pioneer Hotel. The Western Folklife Center was founded in 1980 and provides a platform for rural and urban communities to communicate and exchange new ideas and avenues of expression. They produced the first Cowboy Poetry Gathering in 1985, and it remains their signature event, with programming changing to reflect contemporary realities and issues of the American West.

As a representative of Nevada and the West, I know how important our rural communities are to our State's and country's economy and culture. The National Cowboy Poetry Gathering is so special because it brings together a broad community of different identities, all of whom are deeply connected to the Western life. Charles Greenhaw, a member of the steering committee of the first Gathering, wrote, "If the Gathering can be characterized in a word it's warmth. Why? Who knows. Maybe because when we aren't hemmed-in, we are all cowboys and poets."

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering's 40 years of celebrating, remembering, and passing down the creative richness of the West.●

#### RECOGNIZING THE 40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEVADA NORTHERN RAILWAY MUSEUM

●Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I come forward today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Nevada Northern Railway Museum. Following the

closure of the Nevada Northern Railway in 1983, a group of concerned citizens in Ely, NV, sought to acquire the railroad and open the former site as a tourist operation to offset the economic impact of losing the railway. It was through the power of passionate individuals and generous donations that the Nevada Northern Railway Museum was formed in conjunction with the city of Ely in 1984.

Previously owned by the Nevada Consolidated Copper Company, the Nevada Northern Railway was constructed in 1905-06 to support the growing copper mining industry after massive copper deposits were discovered in White Pine County in the early 1900s. The railway then quickly became a necessity for transporting copper to processing and shipping sites and eventually out for market sale. Creating jobs and promoting growth of critical infrastructure, the Nevada Northern Railway played a significant role in the economic development of the State of Nevada at the time.

The decline of the copper mining industry ultimately led to the closure of the Nevada Northern Railway in 1983, leaving the citizens of Ely with a desire to find a new purpose for the historic buildings. It was then, thanks to local efforts, that the Kennecott Copper Company agreed to transfer the entire line, as well as the railroad's yard and shop facilities, to the White Pine Historical Railroad Foundation. Today, that organization is known as the Nevada Northern Railway Museum and operates as a family friendly tourist destination in the heart of this picturesque rural community. As a heritage railroad, the Nevada Northern Railway Museum offers an immersive experience filled with historical artifacts and the opportunity to experience Nevada's high deserts and some of the darkest skies in the lower 48 States. Visitors are able to experience passenger excursions pulled by historic steam and diesel locomotives, while listening to exhilarating tales about what life was like during the boom of the mining industry. Perhaps their most famous excursion is the Star Train experience, which allows visitors the opportunity to view the Great Basin night sky free of light pollution, using telescopes for stargazing. I have had the pleasure of joining Nevada Northern Railway for an evening of viewing the desert skies and can say from personal experience that it is a ride unlike any other.

With approval from the National Park Service and the support of my predecessor Senator Harry Reid, the Nevada Northern Railway Museum was able to officially designate the East Ely Yard as a National Historic Landmark in 2006. However, many came to know the Nevada Northern Railway Museum when a friendly stray named Dirt the Cat rose to viral fame as the "Boss Shop Cat," keeping watch over daily operations at the railway. Dirt attracted visitors from all over the world who hoped to meet the local ce-

lebrity, and he captured the hearts of many Nevadans in his time. His legacy lives on in a number of shop cats that now call the museum home. Largely considered the best-preserved short line rail in the country, the Nevada Northern Railway Museum has put forth tremendous efforts to preserve the history of Ely and provide family fun to visitors of all ages. It is my honor to recognize their 40th anniversary of official service to our State. As a true pillar of heritage, education, and cultural preservation, I wish them well in continuing their work for many years to come.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 5. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

At 10:17 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 165. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to complete all actions necessary for certain land to be held in restricted fee status by the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Joint Economic Committee: Mr. Schweikert of Arizona and Mr. Beyer of Virginia.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:44 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 5. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 165. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to complete all actions necessary for certain land to be held in restricted fee status by the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

#### ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, January 23, 2025, she had

presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 5. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. SCOTT, of South Carolina, for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

\*Eric Turner, of Texas, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

By Mr. LEE for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

\*Douglas Burgum, of North Dakota, to be Secretary of the Interior.

\*Christopher Wright, of Colorado, to be Secretary of Energy.

By Mrs. CAPITO for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

\*Lee Zeldin, of New York, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

By Mr. MORAN for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

\*Douglas Collins, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

\*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.

#### 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. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. WYDEN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 199. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide special rules for the taxation of certain residents of Taiwan with income from sources within the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORENO:

S. 200. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to modify the eligibility requirements for asylum; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KELLY (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 201. A bill to provide for a study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on the prevalence and mortality of cancer among individuals who served as active duty aircrew in the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 202. A bill to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish a program to allow small business concerns to purchase certain commodities futures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. BANKS):

S. 203. A bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America;

to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 204. A bill to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as a fundamental right; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 205. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit discrimination by abortion against an unborn child on the basis of Down syndrome; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. BANKS, and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. 206. A bill to suspend normal trade relations with the People's Republic of China and to increase the rates of duty applicable with respect to articles imported from the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. HAWLEY, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 207. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal funds to an institution of higher education that hosts or is affiliated with a student-based service site that provides abortion drugs or abortions to students of the institution or to employees of the institution or site, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHMITT (for himself and Mr. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 208. A bill 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.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. BANKS, Mr. SHEEHY, and Mr. MULLIN):

S. 209. A bill to protect children from medical malpractice in the form of gender-transition procedures; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 210. A bill to prohibit agencies from using Federal funds for publicity or propaganda purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 211. A bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to improve the management of grazing permits and leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. JUSTICE, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 212. A bill to make the assault of a law enforcement officer a deportable offense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. RISCH, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. WICKER, Ms. LUMMIS, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr.

LANKFORD, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. JUSTICE, Mr. SHEEHY, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. ERNST, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BUDD, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BANKS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 213. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified business income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 214. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the rate of the special pension payable to Medal of Honor recipients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. TUBERVILLE):

S. 215. 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. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 216. A bill to amend the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act to improve the administration of the Marine Debris Foundation, to amend the Marine Debris Act to improve the administration of the Marine Debris Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 217. A bill to amend the Apex Project, Nevada Land Transfer and Authorization Act of 1989 to include the city of North Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Apex Industrial Park Owners Association, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CURTIS, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 218. A bill to designate the area between the intersections of 16th Street, Northwest and Fuller Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest and Euclid Street, Northwest in Washington, District of Columbia, as "Oswaldo Paya Way"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 219. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to improve the ability of veterans to access medical care in medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs and in the community by providing veterans the ability to choose health care providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. CURTIS):

S. 220. A bill to reserve to Congress the authority to establish or extend a national monument; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. GALLEGO):

S. 221. A bill to extend the customs waters of the United States from 12 nautical miles to 24 nautical miles from the baselines of the United States, consistent with Presidential Proclamation 7219; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs.

GILLIBRAND, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. KING, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, and Ms. ERNST):

S. 222. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to allow schools that participate in the school lunch program to serve whole milk, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. 223. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to repeal prohibitions relating to freedom of access to clinic entrances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANKFORD (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SHEEHY, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 224. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow intangible drilling and development costs to be taken into account when computing adjusted financial statement income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BANKS (for himself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. LEE):

S. 225. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to reform temporary protected status, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SHEEHY:

S. 226. A bill to require a strategy to oppose financial or material support by foreign countries and nongovernmental organizations to the Taliban, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SHEEHY, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 227. A bill to prohibit the use of certain American History and Civics Education program funds for curriculum, or teaching or counseling, that promotes or compels a divisive concept under the priorities noticed in the proposed rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to Proposed Priorities-American History and Civics Education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 228. A bill to amend the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to ensure that producers who rely on acequia systems have access to drought protections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KING, Ms. ERNST, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. TUBERVILLE):

S. 229. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require that direct-to-consumer advertisements for prescription drugs and biological products include an appropriate disclosure of pricing information; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAMER (for himself, Mr. BANKS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 230. A bill to amend part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that child support for unborn children is collected and distributed under the child support enforcement program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 231. A bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to authorize the Federal Crop

Insurance Corporation to carry out research and development on a single index insurance policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LUJÁN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 232. A bill to prevent anticompetitive conduct through the use of pricing algorithms by prohibiting the use of pricing algorithms that can facilitate collusion through the use of nonpublic competitor data, creating an antitrust law enforcement tool, increasing transparency, and enforcing violations through the Sherman Act and Federal Trade Commission Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 233. A bill to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 to modify the authority of the Office of National Drug Control Policy with respect to the World Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 234. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to direct certain prosecutor's offices to annually report to the Attorney General, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 235. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to enter into contracts with industry intermediaries for purposes of promoting the development of and access to apprenticeships and related pre-apprenticeships for secondary school students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 236. 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 Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. JUSTICE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHEEHY, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 237. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide public safety officer benefits for exposure-related cancers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. LUMMIS (for herself, Mr. BUDD, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 238. A bill to require each agency to evaluate the permitting system of the agency, to consider whether permitting by rule could replace that system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SHEEHY, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BANKS, and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S.J. Res. 4. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Energy relating to "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Consumer Gas-fired Instantaneous Water Heaters"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PAUL:

S.J. Res. 5. A joint resolution directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in Ukraine that have not been authorized by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. PAUL:

S.J. Res. 6. A joint resolution directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in Syria that have not been authorized by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

## SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SCHMITT (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. Res. 31. A resolution calling on the Government of Panama to expel officials and interests of the People's Republic of China and terminate Chinese management of key Panamanian ports; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mrs. BRITT, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. Res. 32. A resolution designating January 23, 2025, as "Maternal Health Awareness Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KIM, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WELCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. Res. 33. A resolution expressing support for the recognition of January as "Muslim-American Heritage Month" and celebrating the heritage and culture of Muslim Americans in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHMITT (for himself and Mr. HAWLEY):

S. Res. 34. A resolution congratulating the Washington University in St. Louis Bears women's soccer team for winning the 2024 NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Championship; considered and agreed to.

## ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 40

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 40, a bill to address the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

S. 46

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 46, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand eligibility for the refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan.

S. 74

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 74, a bill to require the Attorney General to submit to Congress a report relating to violence against women in athletics.

S. 106

At the request of Mr. CRAMER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 106, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare coverage for all physicians' services furnished by doctors of chiropractic within the scope of their license, and for other purposes.

S. 107

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 107, a bill to amend the Lumber Act of 1956.

S. 142

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 142, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to wildland firefighters in recognition of their strength, resiliency, sacrifice, and service to protect the forests, grasslands, and communities of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 143

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 143, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to repeal the natural gas tax.

S. 157

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 157, a bill to authorize certain States to take certain actions on certain Federal land to secure an international border of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 179

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 179, a bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to prevent harm and disruption to the United States agriculture industry by protecting against foreign influence over agriculture production and supply chains, and for other purposes.

S. 198

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 198, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to the system of compensation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority that supports acts of terrorism.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. LUMMIS, and Mr. SHEEHY)

S. 211. A bill to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to improve the management of grazing permits and leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

S. 211

*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 "Resiliency for Ranching and Natural Conservation Health Act".

#### SEC. 2. TEMPORARY USE OF VACANT GRAZING ALLOTMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF GRAZING PERMITS OR LEASES DURING EXTREME NATURAL EVENTS AND DISASTERS.

Title IV of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### "SEC. 405. VACANT GRAZING ALLOTMENTS MADE AVAILABLE TO HOLDERS OF GRAZING PERMITS OR LEASES DURING EXTREME NATURAL EVENTS AND DISASTERS.

"(a) DEFINITION OF SECRETARY CONCERNED.—In this section, the term 'Secretary concerned' means—

"(1) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System land; and

"(2) the Secretary, with respect to public lands.

"(b) ALLOTMENTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned may make available to the holder of a grazing permit or lease issued by either Secretary concerned the temporary use of a vacant grazing allotment if—

"(A) 1 or more grazing allotments covered by the grazing permit or lease of the holder of the grazing permit or lease are temporarily unusable, as determined by the Secretary concerned, because of unforeseen natural events or disasters (including an extreme weather event, drought, wildfire, infestation, or blight); and

"(B) the Secretary concerned determines that the vacant grazing allotment is appropriate for temporary grazing use.

"(2) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In establishing the terms and conditions in a permit or lease for the temporary use of a vacant grazing allotment made available pursuant to this subsection, the Secretary concerned—

"(A) shall take into consideration the terms and conditions of the most recent per-

mit or lease that was applicable to the vacant grazing allotment;

"(B) if there are no terms or conditions available for consideration under subparagraph (A), may assign temporary terms or conditions, after considering ecological conditions of, or terms on, adjacent grazing allotments;

"(C) shall base the terms and conditions on local ecological conditions, as determined by the applicable official;

"(D) shall take into consideration other factors, including any prior agency agreement that resolved or sought to resolve a management conflict, including a conflict related to State management of wildlife; and

"(E) may authorize the placement and use of temporary rangeland improvements (including portable corrals, fencing, above-ground pipelines, and water troughs) on the vacant grazing allotment to accommodate the temporary use.

"(3) COORDINATION.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretaries concerned shall coordinate to make available to holders of grazing permits or leases the use of vacant grazing allotments, regardless of agency jurisdiction over vacant grazing allotments, pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2).

"(4) EFFECT.—The temporary use of a vacant grazing allotment under this subsection shall not—

"(A) preclude or otherwise alter other ongoing or future actions or assessments evaluating the potential of the vacant grazing allotment to be used or otherwise assigned; or

"(B) alter—

"(i) the terms and conditions of the original grazing permit or lease of the holder of the grazing permit or lease;

"(ii) the preference or ability of the holder of the grazing permit or lease to return to the original allotment once access to, or the use of, the original allotment is restored; or

"(iii) the animal unit months in future authorizations, or conditions of a permit, of the holder of the grazing permit or lease.

"(c) DURATION.—The Secretary concerned shall determine the duration of the temporary use of a vacant grazing allotment made available pursuant to subsection (b), after considering—

"(1) the condition of the vacant grazing allotment; and

"(2) the period of time necessary for the original allotment of the holder of the grazing permit or lease to return to use.

"(d) GUIDELINES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary concerned shall establish guidelines to expeditiously, efficiently, and effectively carry out activities authorized under this section.

"(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the guidelines under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned may consider—

"(A) criteria for determining whether the vacant grazing allotment is suitable for temporary grazing use;

"(B) eligibility criteria for the holders of grazing permits or leases;

"(C) prioritizing holders of grazing permits or leases in close proximity to a vacant grazing allotment;

"(D) any class or change in class of livestock on the temporary use of a vacant grazing allotment, with consideration given to local ecological conditions, disease, wildlife conflicts, and other factors based on localized conditions;

"(E) processes for coordinating with allotments adjoining or within the vicinity of a vacant grazing allotment; and

"(F) any other processes intended to expedite procedures for making vacant grazing allotments available during emergent circumstances.



“(e) PERIODIC EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary concerned shall periodically evaluate land health conditions of vacant grazing allotments to facilitate the efficient implementation of this section.”.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KING, Mr. ERNST, Ms. SMITH, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. TUBERVILLE):

S. 229. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require that direct-to-consumer advertisements for prescription drugs and biological products include an appropriate disclosure of pricing information; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as President Trump begins his second term, I am concerned about his immigration policy, pardons for violent insurrectionists of January 6, and the grifters seeping into the White House. In each of these areas, I am prepared to fight with every tool at my disposal to stop abuses that harm Americans.

But I also believe we must find areas of agreement where we can, and one of those areas could be addressing the astronomical cost of prescription drugs, a real-life issue facing American families.

Thankfully, last week, President Biden announced 15 new drugs that Medicare will now bargain for, to lower prices for seniors across the America. Remember, those savings are only possible because of the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, which did not receive a single Republican vote.

There is more work to do though. On average, patients in the United States of America pay four times more—four times more—than people in similar countries for the exact same drugs. What is going on here? A drug is made in America and sold at four times the cost in America as is charged by the same companies overseas.

Why is the United States such an outlier? One reason is advertising. Have you noticed any ads for drugs on television lately? If you haven't, you don't have a TV. The United States is one of only two industrialized countries in the world that allows pharmaceutical companies to advertise on television. What is the other country that allows this? New Zealand—the United States and New Zealand.

You know these ads I am talking about—catchy jingles, flashy images; patients rock climbing, swimming, dancing. Big Pharma spends—get this now—\$6 billion every year to flood the airwaves about the latest wonder drug. Why do they spend so darn much money on drug ads? Because it increases their profits. Big Pharma thinks, if they can pummel you with enough ads, not only will you be able to spell Xarelto, but you will be able to tell your doctor this is the blood thinner you have been waiting for.

Don't take my word for it. Here is what the American Medical Association says about these ads we are inundated with every single darn day on our televisions:

Direct-to-consumer advertising inflates demand for new and expensive drugs, even when these drugs may not be appropriate.

So when President Biden announced a list of 15 drugs that will be negotiated for discounts, I imagined most Americans already recognized many of their names: Ozempic, Trelegy, Ibrance, and Otezla.

Manufacturers spend hundreds of millions of dollars encouraging you to just “ask your doctor” about these drugs. The result? Medicare spent \$22 billion last year on those very same four drugs that were heavily advertised medications.

A recent headline in the New York Times read:

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Wants to Ban Drug Ads on TV. It Wouldn't Be Easy.

It discussed the First Amendment challenges Pharma would raise as a result of that.

While I have strong concerns with President Trump's health nominee, I am glad this administration wants to join me to tackle these promotional ads. We already have an incredible strategy on the table.

For the last 8 or 9 years, I have introduced bipartisan legislation to crack down on these drug ads on TV and other places. Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, Republican of Iowa, has been my partner.

When you turn on the evening news—get this—one-third of all commercial time is for prescription drugs. Do you think you are seeing a lot of ads? One-third of all commercial time is for prescription drugs.

Try to avoid it, if you wish. But the average American sees nine drug ads a day. I will bet it is more. It seems like more.

With billions in targeted spending, patients are bombarded with information. All of this information is being tossed at you, most of it at a mile-a-minute gibberish. But they do keep in the darkness one important factor: They never mention the cost, the price of the drug.

In 2023, Illinois company AbbVie spent \$315 million on TV ads for Rinvoq. I have an ad here. Rinvoq is an eczema and arthritis drugs. However, in the commercial, they don't tell you one thing. The cost of this drug is \$6,100 per month. My staff just corrected me before I came to the floor and said: You missed the latest increase. It is now up to \$6,400 a month for Rinvoq.

Hang on. I am sure you will see one of those ads in no time at all.

Senator GRASSLEY and I think it is time to end the big secrecy on the cost of these drugs. If they are going to advertise it and rattle off gibberish—I love the one that says: Don't take Otezla if you are allergic to Otezla.

That never would have dawned on me. That is part of their ad.

If you are looking at the ads and hearing the gibberish they throw at us, they tell you everything under God's green Earth, except a basic honest issue: How much does it cost?

That is why today we are introducing bipartisan legislation to require price disclosures in direct-to-consumer drug ads.

Our plan is simple. It actually passed the Senate once before, in 2018, and 88 percent of the American people support this kind of disclosure. In fact, after we worked to advance this measure, Donald Trump, then President of the United States, said this, and I want to make sure the quote is accurate. This is from his first term in office:

Big announcement today: Drug companies have to come clean about their prices in TV ads. Historic transparency for American patients is here. If drug companies are ashamed of those prices—lower them!

I may disagree with the President on many things, but I certainly agree with this statement there.

Big Pharma hates being honest with patients about the true prices of their drugs. They fear it might cut into their colossal historic profits. With the support of President Trump and Senator GRASSLEY, I believe this will be the year we finally pass bipartisan legislation to bring sunshine to these ads and to actually lower health costs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

S. 229

*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 “Drug-price Transparency for Consumers Act of 2025” or the “DTC Act of 2025”.

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF THE SENATE.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription pharmaceuticals is legally permitted in only 2 developed countries, the United States and New Zealand.

(2) In 2018, pharmaceutical ad spending exceeded \$6,046,000,000, a 4.8 percent increase over 2017, resulting in the average American seeing 9 drug advertisements per day.

(3) The most commonly advertised medication in the United States in 2020 had a list price of more than \$6,000 for a one-month supply.

(4) A 2021 Government Accountability Office report found that two-thirds of all direct-to-consumer drug advertising between 2016 and 2018 was concentrated among 39 brand-name drugs or biologicals, about half of which were recently approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

(5) According to a 2011 Congressional Budget Office report, pharmaceutical manufacturers advertise their products directly to consumers in an attempt to boost demand for their products and thereby raise the price that consumers are willing to pay, increase the quantity of drugs sold, or achieve some combination of the two.

(6) Studies, including a 2012 systematic review published in the Annual Review of Public Health, a 2005 randomized trial published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and a 2004 survey published in Health Affairs, show that patients are more likely to ask their doctor for a specific medication, and the doctor is more likely to write

a prescription for it, if a patient has seen an advertisement for such medication, even if such medication is not the most clinically appropriate for the patient or if a lower cost generic medication may be available.

(7) According to a 2011 Congressional Budget Office report, the average number of prescriptions written for newly approved brand-name drugs with direct-to-consumer advertising was 9 times greater than the average number of prescriptions written for newly approved brand-name drugs without direct-to-consumer advertising.

(8) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is the single largest drug payer in the United States. Between 2016 and 2018, 58 percent of the \$560,000,000,000 in Medicare drug spending was for advertised drugs, and in 2018 alone, the 20 most advertised drugs on television cost Medicare and Medicaid a combined \$34,000,000,000.

(9) A 2021 Government Accountability Office report found that direct-to-consumer advertising may have contributed to increases in Medicare beneficiary use and spending among certain drugs.

(10) The American Medical Association has passed resolutions supporting the requirement for price transparency in any direct-to-consumer advertising, stating that such advertisements on their own “inflate demand for new and more expensive drugs, even when these drugs may not be appropriate”.

(11) A 2019 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that health care consumers dramatically underestimate their out-of-pocket costs for certain expensive medications, but once they learn the wholesale acquisition cost (in this section referred to as the “WAC”) of the product, they are far better able to approximate their out-of-pocket costs.

(12) Approximately half of Americans have high-deductible health plans, under which they often pay the list price of a drug until their insurance deductible is met. All of the top Medicare prescription drug plans use co-insurance rather than fixed-dollar copayments for medications on nonpreferred drug tiers, exposing beneficiaries to WAC prices.

(13) Section 119 of division CC of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to increase the use of real-time benefit tools to lower beneficiary costs. However, there still remains a lack of available pricing tools, so patients may not learn of their medication’s cost until after being given a prescription for the medication. A 2013 study published in The Oncologist found that one-quarter of all cancer patients chose not to fill a prescription due to cost.

(14) The Federal Government already exercises its authority to oversee certain aspects of direct-to-consumer drug advertising, including required disclosures of information related to side effects, contraindications, and effectiveness.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a lack of transparency in pricing for pharmaceuticals has led to a lack of competition for such pharmaceuticals, as evidenced by a finding by the Department of Health and Human Services that “Consumers of pharmaceuticals are currently missing information that consumers of other products can more readily access, namely the list price of the product, which acts as a point of comparison when judging the reasonableness of prices offered for potential substitute products” (84 Fed. Reg. 20735);

(2) in an age where price information is ubiquitous, the prices of pharmaceuticals remain shrouded in secrecy and limited to those who subscribe to expensive drug price reporting services, which typically include

pharmaceutical manufacturers or other health care industry entities and not the general public;

(3) greater insight and transparency into drug prices will help consumers know if they can afford to complete a course of therapy before deciding to initiate that course of therapy;

(4) price shopping is the mark of rational economic behavior, and markets operate more efficiently when consumers have relevant information about a product, including its price, before making an informed decision about whether to buy that product;

(5) providing consumers with basic price information may result in the selection of lesser cost alternatives, all else being equal relative to the patient’s care, and is integral to providing adequate competition in the market;

(6) the WAC is a factual, objective, and uncontroversial definition for the list price of a medication, in that it is defined in statute, reflects an understood place in the supply chain, and is at the sole discretion of the manufacturer to set;

(7) there is a governmental interest in ensuring that consumers who seek to purchase pharmaceuticals for purposes of promoting their health and safety understand the objective list price of any pharmaceutical that they are encouraged through advertisements to purchase, which allows consumers to make informed purchasing decisions; and

(8) there is a governmental interest in mitigating wasteful expenditures and promoting the efficient administration of the Medicare program by slowing the growth of Federal spending on prescription drugs.

**SEC. 3. REQUIREMENT THAT DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER ADVERTISEMENTS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE DISCLOSURE OF PRICING INFORMATION.**

Part A of title XI of the Social Security Act is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

**“SEC. 1150D. REQUIREMENT THAT DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER ADVERTISEMENTS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND BIOLOGICALS INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE DISCLOSURE OF PRICING INFORMATION.**

**“(a) REQUIREMENT.—**

**“(1) IN GENERAL.—**Subject to paragraph (2), not later than July 1, 2026, the Secretary shall require that each direct-to-consumer advertisement for a prescription drug or biological product for which payment is available under title XVIII or XIX and that is required to include the information relating to side effects, contraindications, and effectiveness described in section 202.1(e)(1) of title 21, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation) also include an appropriate disclosure of pricing information, as described in subsection (b), with respect to such prescription drug or biological product.

**“(2) EXEMPTION.—**The requirement under paragraph (1) shall not apply to a prescription drug or biological product for which the wholesale acquisition cost for a 30-day supply of (or, if applicable, a typical course of treatment as set forth in the approved label for the primary indication addressed in the advertisement for) such prescription drug or biological product is less than \$35.

**“(b) APPROPRIATE DISCLOSURE OF PRICING INFORMATION.—**For the purposes of subsection (a), an appropriate disclosure of pricing information, with respect to a prescription drug or biological product—

**“(1)** shall clearly and conspicuously disclose the wholesale acquisition cost for a 30-day supply of (or, if applicable, a typical course of treatment for) such prescription drug or biological product; and

**“(2)** may explain that a consumer may pay a different amount for such prescription drug or biological product than such wholesale acquisition cost depending on the health insurance coverage of the consumer.

**“(c) RULEMAKING.—**Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall promulgate final regulations to carry out this section, including establishing requirements for—

**“(1)** the visual and audio components, with respect to each medium of direct-to-consumer advertisement, to communicate the wholesale acquisition cost of the advertised prescription drug or biological product; and

**“(2)** the amount of time for a manufacturer to update any direct-to-consumer advertisement to reflect any change to the wholesale acquisition cost of the advertised prescription drug or biological product.

**“(d) SANCTIONS.—**Any manufacturer of a prescription drug or biological product, or an agent of such manufacturer, that violates the requirement of this section may be subject to a civil money penalty of not more than \$100,000 for each such violation. The provisions of section 1128A (other than subsections (a) and (b)) shall apply to civil money penalties under the preceding sentence in the same manner as they apply to a penalty or proceeding under section 1128A(a).

**“(e) PUBLIC REPORTING.—**In order to enforce the requirement under this section, the Secretary may use information reported about manufacturers that fail to comply with such requirement.

**“(f) DEFINITIONS.—**In this section:

**“(1) BIOLOGICAL PRODUCT.—**The term ‘biological product’ means any biological product (as defined in section 351(i) of the Public Health Service Act) that is licensed by the Food and Drug Administration pursuant to section 351 and is subject to the requirements of section 503(b)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

**“(2) PRESCRIPTION DRUG.—**The term ‘prescription drug’ means any drug (as defined in section 201(g) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act) that has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration pursuant to section 505 of such Act and is subject to the requirements of section 503(b)(1) of such Act.

**“(3) WHOLESALE ACQUISITION COST.—**The term ‘wholesale acquisition cost’ has the meaning given such term in section 1847A(c)(6)(B).

**“(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—**There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for the purposes of carrying out this section.”.

**SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS**

**SENATE RESOLUTION 31—CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TO EXPEL OFFICIALS AND INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND TERMINATE CHINESE MANAGEMENT OF KEY PANAMANIAN PORTS**

Mr. SCHMITT (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. RICKETTS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 31

Whereas the strategic location of the Panama Canal is vital to global trade and the security of the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas Panamanians and Americans have invested significantly to secure the sovereignty, stability, and prosperity of Panama, including the construction, defense,

and transfer of the Panama Canal, ensuring it remains a critical asset for global commerce;

Whereas the construction of the Panama Canal by the United States required more than a decade of work (1904-1914), involved tens of thousands of workers, and cost approximately \$375,000,000, equivalent to more than \$10,000,000,000 in 2025, with thousands of workers losing their lives due to disease and hazardous conditions;

Whereas the defense and operation of the Panama Canal during the 20th century further demonstrated the United States' commitment, at significant financial and human cost, to maintaining the vital global trade route;

Whereas the Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, signed at Washington September 7, 1977 (commonly referred to as the "Neutrality Treaty"), prohibits actions that undermine the canal's neutrality or threaten United States security interests and grants the United States the right to act, unilaterally if necessary, to defend the canal's neutrality and ensure its operational security;

Whereas the Neutrality Treaty obligates Panama and the United States to act against any threat to the neutrality or peaceful operation of the Panama Canal, including undue foreign control over its infrastructure or management;

Whereas when President Carter ratified the Neutrality Treaty, President Carter accepted a legally binding condition to the Treaty, adopted by the United States Senate, establishing an independent right of the United States to intervene militarily, consistent with United States constitutional processes, to reopen or restore the operations of the Panama Canal, as the United States deems necessary, to ensure the canal remains open, neutral, secure, and accessible;

Whereas the People's Republic of China, through state-owned enterprises and Chinese government-affiliated private entities, has expanded its influence with key infrastructure projects and ports around the world, including in Panama, raising concerns about undue leverage and potential threats to free and fair navigation and trade;

Whereas the People's Republic of China Belt and Road Initiative fosters economic dependence and exerts outsized geopolitical influence through its investments;

Whereas Panama joined the Belt and Road Initiative in December 2018;

Whereas the involvement of Chinese government-affiliated enterprises in the construction, management, and maintenance of other critical infrastructure, such as a proposed fourth bridge spanning the Panama Canal, calls into question the ability of Panama and the United States to defend the canal's neutrality and ensure its operational security;

Whereas two major ports in Panama, the ports of Balboa and Cristobal, are currently managed by Chinese-affiliated entities, such as Hutchison Ports, a Hong Kong-based operator with significant ties to China's economic and political ecosystem, threatening the sovereignty of Panama and the security of the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas the involvement of officials from the People's Republic of China and entities that are subject to the National Security Law of the People's Republic of China and similar laws in Panamanian ports and infrastructure compromises international security and disrupts critical trade routes;

Whereas the People's Republic of China's control over portions of the infrastructure of the Panama Canal poses a direct threat to the national security and strategic interests of the United States;

Whereas allowing foreign exploitation of Panama's ports and infrastructure undermines the sacrifices made to secure Panama's independence and the shared values between Panama and the United States; and

Whereas the United States and Panama have a long history of partnership and shared commitment to democratic governance, sovereignty, and the rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses profound concern about the presence and influence of the People's Republic of China in Panamanian ports and infrastructure, particularly in facilities of strategic significance such as the ports of Balboa and Cristobal;

(2) calls upon the Government of Panama to—

(A) reaffirm its commitment to the "permanent neutrality" of the Panama Canal as defined by the Neutrality Treaty by seeking management structures that ensure unbiased, equitable access for vessels of all nations;

(B) review and terminate agreements allowing Chinese state-owned enterprises or China-based so-called private entities to manage strategic infrastructure, including the ports of Balboa and Cristobal;

(C) expel all officials from the People's Republic of China operating within Panamanian ports and other critical infrastructure projects; and

(D) reaffirm its commitment to maintaining the sovereignty of Panama and protecting the security of the Western Hemisphere by seeking partnerships that align with democratic values and mutual respect;

(3) urges the Government of the United States to—

(A) leverage provisions in the Neutrality Treaty, including Condition (1), to monitor and address threats to the neutrality of the Panama Canal, acting decisively to counter undue foreign influence;

(B) provide technical, financial, and strategic support to Panama as it seeks to assert sovereignty over its critical infrastructure and reduce its dependence on entities affiliated with the People's Republic of China;

(C) strengthen collaboration with Panama and other allies in the region to promote transparent and sustainable investments in infrastructure projects;

(D) establish a framework to restore operational control of the Panama Canal to a collaborative partnership between the United States and Panama, which should honor the spirit of the Neutrality Treaty, respect Panama's sovereignty, and incorporate United States expertise and resources to benefit both nations;

(E) offer significant United States investments to modernize Panama's canal infrastructure and provide alternatives to Chinese-funded projects; and

(F) develop a joint United States-Panama task force to oversee canal security and operations, enhancing regional security and ensuring freedom of navigation;

(4) encourages Panama and other regional and global allies to monitor and counter efforts by authoritarian regimes to exploit economic vulnerabilities to gain strategic leverage in the Western Hemisphere; and

(5) directs that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the President of Panama, and the National Assembly of Panama.

SENATE RESOLUTION 32—DESIGNATING JANUARY 23, 2025, AS "MATERNAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY"

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mrs. BRITT, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 32

Whereas each year in the United States, approximately 800 women die as a result of complications related to pregnancy and childbirth;

Whereas the pregnancy-related mortality ratio, defined as the number of pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births, more than quadrupled in the United States between 1987 and 2021;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group, the United States is one of the only countries in the world with a significant percentage increase in the maternal mortality in 2020;

Whereas, of all pregnancy-related deaths that occurred in the United States in 2020—

(1) approximately 25.7 percent occurred during pregnancy;

(2) approximately 11.1 percent occurred during childbirth;

(3) approximately 16.2 percent occurred 1 to 6 days postpartum;

(4) approximately 20.2 percent occurred 7 to 42 days postpartum; and

(5) approximately 26.9 percent occurred between 43 days and 1 year postpartum.

Whereas 83.5 percent of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States are considered preventable;

Whereas, each year, as many as 60,000 women in the United States suffer from a severe maternal morbidity, which includes unexpected outcomes of labor and delivery that can result in significant short- and long-term health consequences;

Whereas approximately 20 percent of mothers who give birth in the United States report experiencing mistreatment;

Whereas postpartum depression affects a significant percentage of new mothers who give birth, with estimates ranging from 10 to 20 percent of mothers who give birth experiencing depressive symptoms during the first year after childbirth, but many postpartum depression cases go undiagnosed and untreated, often due to a lack of screening;

Whereas various social and systemic factors can influence maternal health outcomes and contribute to disparities in care;

Whereas significant disparities in maternal health outcomes exist in the United States, including that—

(1) the pregnancy-related mortality ratio for Black women is nearly 3 times higher than that of White women;

(2) the pregnancy-related mortality ratio for American Indian and Alaska Native women is more than twice as high as White women;

(3) the pregnancy-related mortality ratio for Black, American Indian, and Alaska Native women with at least some college education is higher compared to women of all other racial and ethnic backgrounds with less than a high school diploma;

(4) the rate of severe maternal morbidity for Black and Asian-Pacific Islander women is approximately twice as high as the rate for White women;

(5) women who live in rural areas have a greater rate of severe maternal morbidity and mortality compared to women who live in urban areas;

(6) 59 percent of rural counties are considered a maternity care desert;

(7) rural counties with more Black and Hispanic residents and lower median incomes are less likely to have access to hospital obstetric services;

(8) the average travel distance for maternity care deserts and rural counties is 28.1 and 17.3 miles, respectively; and

(9) American Indian and Alaska Native women living in rural communities are more than twice as likely as their White counterparts to report receiving late or no prenatal care;

Whereas 47 States and the District of Columbia have adopted the option to extend coverage for postpartum care under Medicaid to 12 months;

Whereas 49 States, the District of Columbia, New York City, Philadelphia, and Puerto Rico each have a formal maternal mortality review committee or legal requirement to review pregnancy-related deaths;

Whereas State and local maternal mortality review committees are positioned to comprehensively assess maternal deaths and identify opportunities for prevention;

Whereas 49 States and the District of Columbia are participating in the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health, which promotes consistent and safe maternity care to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality;

Whereas community-based maternal health care models, including midwifery childbirth services, doula support services, community and perinatal health worker services, and group prenatal care, in collaboration with culturally competent physician care, show great promise in improving maternal health outcomes and reducing disparities in maternal health outcomes;

Whereas increasing the maternal health care workforce and expanding telehealth services can help reduce the disparities in maternal health outcomes;

Whereas many organizations have implemented initiatives to educate patients and providers about—

(1) all causes of, contributing factors to, and disparities in maternal mortality;

(2) the prevention of pregnancy-related deaths; and

(3) the importance of listening to and empowering all people to report pregnancy-related medical issues; and

Whereas several States, communities, and organizations recognize January 23 as “Maternal Health Awareness Day” to raise awareness about maternal health and promote maternal safety; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates January 23, 2025, as “Maternal Health Awareness Day”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Maternal Health Awareness Day, including—

(A) raising public awareness about maternal mortality, maternal morbidity, and disparities in maternal health outcomes; and

(B) encouraging the Federal Government, States, territories, Tribes, local communities, public health organizations, physicians, health care providers, and others to take action to reduce adverse maternal health outcomes and improve maternal safety;

(3) promotes initiatives—

(A) to address and eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes; and

(B) to ensure respectful and equitable maternity care practices;

(4) honors those who have passed away as a result of pregnancy-related causes; and

(5) supports and recognizes the need for meaningful investments in efforts to improve maternal health, eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes, and promote respectful and equitable maternity care practices.

SENATE RESOLUTION 33—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE RECOGNITION OF JANUARY AS “MUSLIM-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH” AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF MUSLIM AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KIM, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WELCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 33

Whereas the Senate is proud to recognize and commemorate “Muslim-American Heritage Month”, an observance that celebrates the contributions of Muslim Americans;

Whereas in keeping with the time-honored traditions of the Senate, the Senate recognizes and pays tribute to those who foster cultural pride and enhance the profile of diverse communities across the United States;

Whereas immigration of Muslims to the American colonies began with the arrival of indentured workers;

Whereas, during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, a significant number of slaves of Muslim heritage were brought to the United States;

Whereas in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, successive waves of immigration brought additional Muslims to the United States, who sought to pursue economic and social opportunity, as well as freedom of religion, and enriched the fabric of the society of the United States as business owners, entrepreneurs, health care professionals, humanitarians, scientists, and students;

Whereas Muslim Americans contribute greatly to charitable organizations that help people from all faiths in the United States and around the world by providing medical assistance, family services, and scholastic supplies, running before- and after-school programs, feeding the hungry, and providing recuperation efforts following natural disasters;

Whereas Muslim Americans have contributed to every part of the society of the United States by making advancements in architecture, arts, business, culture, government, law, medicine, the military, religion, and sports;

Whereas Bangladeshi-American Fazlur Rahman Khan left his mark on the cityscapes of the United States by pioneering a new structural system of frame tubes used to construct iconic buildings like the World Trade Center in New York City, New York, the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the Willis “Sears” Tower in Chicago, Illinois;

Whereas many Muslim Americans pursue the American dream and contribute to the economy of the United States as business owners and entrepreneurs, including Pakistani-born billionaire Shahid Khan, owner of the auto-parts company Flex-N-Gate and the National Football League’s Jacksonville Jaguars;

Whereas the invention of the ice cream cone by Syrian immigrant Ernest Hamwi is a practical confection with a near ubiquitous presence in the life of the people of the United States;

Whereas, in 2006, Keith Ellison of Minnesota was elected to the House of Representatives, becoming the first Muslim American to serve in Congress;

Whereas, in 2008, Ambassador Sada Cumber was appointed by President George W. Bush

to serve as the first Special Envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference from the United States, representing the United States to 57 Muslim-majority nations;

Whereas, in 2015, André Carson of Indiana, the second Muslim American elected to the House of Representatives, became the first Muslim American to serve on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

Whereas actor Mahershala Ali became the first Muslim American to win an Oscar for his supporting role in “Moonlight” in 2017;

Whereas, in 2018, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota were elected to the House of Representatives, becoming the first Muslim-American women to serve in Congress;

Whereas, in 2021, Zahid Quraishi was confirmed as the first Muslim American to serve as an article III Federal judge as a district judge of the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey;

Whereas, in 2021, Rashad Hussain was confirmed as the first Muslim American to serve as the United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom;

Whereas the invention of the intraventricular catheter system by Pakistani-American neurosurgeon Ayub Ommaya provides chemotherapy to treat brain tumors;

Whereas Muslim Americans have fought in support of the United States in every major war, from Bampett Muhamed and Yusuf Ben Ali under the command of General George Washington in the American Revolutionary War, to Captain Humayun Khan, who made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq in 2004;

Whereas Imam Warith Deen Mohammed, the first Muslim American to deliver the invocation for the Senate, and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, the civil rights activist and reformer also known as Malcolm X, were prominent religious leaders and scholars;

Whereas Muslim-American professional athletes like Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame members Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Hakeem Olajuwon, and Shaquille O’Neal, and 2-time world heavyweight boxing champion Hasim Shariff Rahman, thrilled sports fans across the United States and around the world during their respective careers;

Whereas Muslim-American Olympians, such as boxer Muhammad Ali, track and field athlete Dalilah Muhammad, and fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad, won medals in international competitions;

Whereas, with roots in at least 77 different countries and identifying racially as White, Black, Arab, and Asian, Muslim Americans are an extremely diverse population;

Whereas the current population of Muslims living in the United States is estimated at over 3,450,000 individuals;

Whereas over 4,500 Muslims serve on active duty, and over 2,300 Muslims serve as selected reserve personnel in the Armed Forces;

Whereas the Muslim population has been growing in the United States, and the present-day Muslim-American population is a tapestry of ethnic, racial, linguistic, social, and economic groups;

Whereas nearly 50 percent of Muslim Americans have reported experiencing religious discrimination, with that number rising to 64 percent for Muslim Americans whose appearance identifies them as Muslim, such as women who wear the hijab or headscarf;

Whereas there is a need for public education, awareness, and policies that help people be culturally competent when describing, discussing, or addressing the impacts that Muslim Americans have on all aspects of the society of the United States;

Whereas “Muslim-American Heritage Month” will be observed in the month of January; and

Whereas the incredible contributions and heritage of Muslim Americans have helped to build a better United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of January as “Muslim-American Heritage Month”;

(2) honors the contributions and integral role of Muslim Americans in the economy, culture, and identity of the United States; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe “Muslim-American Heritage Month” with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities that celebrate the contributions of Muslim Americans to the United States.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 34—CONGRATULATING THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS BEARS WOMEN’S SOCCER TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2024 NCAA DIVISION III WOMEN’S SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP**

Mr. SCHMITT (for himself and Mr. HAWLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

**S. RES. 34**

Whereas, on December 8, 2024, the Washington University in St. Louis Bears women’s soccer team (referred to in this preamble as the “Bears”) defeated the nationally ranked William Smith Herons, 3 to 0, to win the 2024 NCAA Division III Women’s Soccer Championship;

Whereas the Bears demonstrated extraordinary teamwork, skill, and hard work throughout this victory and the entire season;

Whereas the Bears attained a 23-0-2 record during this season;

Whereas the Bears achieved the top ranking in the 2024 NCAA Division III Women’s Soccer season;

Whereas the coaching staff led by head coach Jim Conlon provided outstanding leadership and strategy, contributing significantly to the victories throughout the season, culminating with the end-of-year victory in the 2024 NCAA Division III Women’s Soccer Championship;

Whereas Olivia Clemons was named Offensive Player of the Year, Rookie of the Year, and All-Tournament Offensive Player, finishing the season with an impressive 22 goals and 6 assists;

Whereas head coach Jim Conlon and assistant coaches Brandon Santel, Amanda Kesler, and Katharine Zaber were named Coaching Staff of the Year;

Whereas 4 players earned First-Team honors, 2 players earned honorable mention

nods, and 4 players were selected to the All-Tournament Team; and

Whereas fans of the Bears demonstrated enthusiasm and loyalty in supporting their team throughout the 2024 NCAA Division III soccer season: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Washington University in St. Louis Bears women’s soccer team on winning the 2024 Division III Women’s Soccer Championship;

(2) recognizes the achievements, contributions, and dedication of the players, coaches, management, and support staff of the Bears;

(3) congratulates the alumni, students, and faculty of the Washington University in St. Louis;

(4) recognizes the hard work and commitment of the staff of the Francis Olympic Field and Peter Johann Memorial Field; and

(5) respectfully requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Chancellor of the Washington University in St. Louis, Andrew D. Martin;

(B) the Director of Athletics of the Washington University Bears, Anthony J. Azama; and

(C) the head coach of the Washington University Bears women’s soccer team, Jim Conlon.

**AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have five 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 AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY**

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

**COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS**

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 23, 2025, to vote on a nomination, committee rules and procedures, and subcommittee organization and jurisdiction.

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 9:15 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

**COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS**

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 9 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

**ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025**

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 24; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that the Senate resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 3, and that all time during recess, adjournment, and leader remarks count postcloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW**

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:11 p.m., adjourned until Friday, January 24, 2025, at 10 a.m.

**CONFIRMATION**

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate January 23, 2025:

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**  
 JOHN RATCLIFFE, OF TEXAS, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING PROSECUTOR VICTOR VIGLUICCI ON HIS RETIREMENT AS PORTAGE COUNTY PROSECUTOR

### HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Victor Vigluicci for his service as the Portage County Prosecutor, and my sincere gratitude for all that he has done for the people of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, the "Birthplace of Champions." I have appreciated his partnership as we worked together to expand opportunity and deliver results for our shared constituents.

His drive to lead is commendable, and I have no doubt that he has bettered countless lives as a result of his steadfast service. Throughout his time in office, he proved to be a true public servant and leader. He led by example through his perseverance, compassion, and dedication to his role in the community.

As he goes on to continue serving our community in new ways, I wish him all the best in his future endeavors. On behalf of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his commitment to the people of Portage County and Northeast Ohio.

RECOGNIZING JANUARY 29, 2025, AS T T, OR VIETNAMESE NEW YEAR

### HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize this upcoming Wednesday, January 29, 2025, as Têt, or Vietnamese New Year.

This annual holiday is one of Orange County's most important celebrations. Families cook traditional dishes, exchange red envelopes, and come together at festivals across our district and all over the country.

Orange County's Vietnamese community is an essential part of our Orange County family—in fact, we are proud to be home to the largest Vietnamese community outside of Vietnam. Immigrants and Vietnamese-Americans are our firefighters, teachers, soldiers, entrepreneurs, and local leaders.

I'm proud to have represented parts of Little Saigon for decades throughout my career in public service, and I will always recognize the contributions and positive impact they've had in Orange County and across the United States.

In fact, I was honored to host the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Mr. Marc Knapper, a year ago for his first visit to Orange County. As the proud co-chair of the Vietnam caucus, we engaged with local community leaders and discussed ways to strengthen the ties between our two countries. We stopped by the Bao

Quang Temple in Santa Ana, met with business leaders throughout Little Saigon, and focused on bringing attention to our local Vietnamese community's concerns.

As we prepare to kick off the Year of the Snake, I want to wish everyone at home and around the world a happy Têt celebration.

Happy New Year (Chuc Mung Nam Moi).

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I had to return to California unexpectedly this week for medical treatment and missed votes. Had I been present, I would have voted NO on Roll Call No. 23 on passage of S. 5; YES on Roll Call No. 25 on passage of H.R. 471; and NO on Roll Call No. 27 on passage of H.R. 21.

### HONORING THE LIFE OF GORDON FRASSINELLI, SR.

### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of a long-standing public servant, Gordon John Frassinelli, Sr. of Stafford Springs, Connecticut. Aged 88, Gordon passed away sadly but peacefully on October 26, 2024, in the arms of his loving wife Barbara and surrounded by his family. Gordon led a remarkable and full life full of love and dedication to his family and community that will be sincerely missed.

Born October 8, 1936, to Lieutenant Governor Attilio "Pop" Frassinelli and Mildred (McLagan) Frassinelli in Stafford, Gordon was destined to live and thrive in Stafford. Gordon was raised in a close family and his father was a strong example of what it means to serve one's community. Gordon attended the Borough School prior to his tenure at Stafford High School where his strong work ethic and drive to help others became evident. In school, he served as a class officer as well as a member of the band, chorus, and drama clubs, student council, National Honor Society, history club, basketball team manager, and president of the ski team. This was only the start of a lifetime of community-based involvement.

Following graduation from Stafford High School in 1954, Gordon attended the University of Connecticut where he continued over-achieving. He served as President of the Newmann Catholic Society, played the French horn, served as President of the UConn marching band, and was a member of the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC), recog-

nized as a Distinguished Military Graduate when he completed the program. It was during this time that Gordon also fell in love with his life partner, Barbara Boone.

Gordon graduated from UConn in 1958 and was commissioned as a lieutenant, serving his country in the U.S. Army from 1959 to 1961. In the Army, Gordon furthered his education at the Adjutant Generals School at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Indiana and served on the staff of the school until he was discharged as a 1st Lieutenant in February 1961. His service in the Army could not keep him from the love of his life, and he married Barbara on January 2, 1960.

Gordon spent the bulk of his career working for the State of Connecticut from 1961 to 1992. Rewarded for his diligent work, he rose from the position of Trainee to the highest possible merit system position of State Executive Budget Officer in the Governor's Office of Policy and Management. As part of his work for the state, Gordon served as the architect of the state budget, always looking for the best ways to serve the people of Connecticut. I got to know Gordon during my time as a State Representative from neighboring Vernon and saw firsthand the high regard and respect Gordon commanded in both our state's Executive Branch of government and Legislative Branch. He was a true professional who made our state function well.

While Gordon selflessly served the state, his top priority always remained his family, never missing a game or show for any of his six children, and later, his grandchildren. Many of his children also became active in local politics, keeping the family tradition alive. Raising a group of athletes, Gordon was a strong advocate for athletic programs on governing boards and commissions for youth athletics including as President of the Stafford High School Booster Club where he helped reinstate football at Stafford High School in 1980 after a 30-year absence. He also spent time as the President of the Stafford Olympics Youth Football Program. While Gordon enjoyed the Yankees and Celtics, UConn sports had a special place in his heart as a longtime season ticket holder for the women's basketball team.

No matter what beheld him in his personal life, Gordon remained devoted to serving his community and enjoying time with his family. Gordon was a lifelong member of St. Edward Church, where he was baptized and married, volunteering to maintain the grounds, lecture, and share his voice as a member of the choir. Gordon also emceed at stag parties, fundraisers, and political dinners and spent time as a board member of the Italian benefit society, "the Club." Always involved in supporting his local community, Gordon was also a member of the Stafford Scholarship Foundation Scholarship Selection Committee.

In his retirement, Gordon settled into his role as a family man, helping out with everything from picking up kids and babysitting to building a house with his son-in-law. Even after suffering from ischemic optic neuropathy in 2001 and becoming legally blind, Gordon

• 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.

did not let anything stop him from enjoying and going about his daily life. Most of all, Gordon was always devoted to his wife Barbara, keeping humor and love alive in their relationship.

Gordon had an incredible sense of humor and was simply an amazing reflection of what eastern Connecticut has to offer. His impact will not soon be forgotten, and his legacy will live on in the lives he touched and the long-lasting effects his work will continue to have on the Stafford and greater Connecticut community. Gordon is survived by his wife of 64 years, Barbara, his six children, 17 grandchildren, one great-grandchild, sister, and many nieces and nephews. To this end, I ask that my colleagues in this chamber join me in honoring the example left by my friend and colleague Gordon Frassinelli.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, due to travel restrictions related to my pregnancy, I was unable to travel to D.C. to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 20; NAY on Roll Call No. 21; YEA on Roll Call No. 22; and NAY on Roll Call No. 23.

#### HONORING THE LATE CAROLYN JEAN SNYDER

### HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Carolyn Jean Snyder. She passed away peacefully on Friday, December 6, 2024, surrounded by her loving family. Carolyn was a community leader and realtor in the community of Torrance.

Carolyn Snyder was born in South Charleston, West Virginia on September 9, 1937, to her parents Boyd and Josephine O'Dell. In 1956, Carolyn moved along with her parents to Torrance, California.

In Torrance, Carolyn was a dedicated community leader and a successful realtor with over 25 years of experience. In her free time, Carolyn served the community of Torrance in numerous ways. As a Commissioner on Aging, she served the residents of the city and advocated for the needs of aging people. Carolyn was active in the Parent Teachers Association as well as the Pacific Coast Little League and the American Youth Soccer Organization. She supported the Torrance Education Foundation and the local Relay for Life. For over 40 years, Carolyn volunteered for the Torrance Memorial Hospital, assisting this important institution with its annual Holiday Festival, an important event for our community.

Beyond Carolyn's numerous contributions to the South Bay, she also loved being with her family and friends. She traveled a great deal and loved camping and sewing. It was an honor for my wife Betty and I to have known Carolyn.

Carolyn is survived by her children, James Franklin Campbell, Troy Campbell, Todd Sny-

der, and Tori Parker, eight grandchildren, five great grandchildren and siblings, nephews, nieces and cousins. Carolyn left an indelible mark on the community of Torrance and will be deeply missed.

#### HONORING COLONEL HAROLD PRESSEL

### HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to recognize Colonel (COL) Harold Pressel, U.S. Army Air Corps, on the auspicious occasion of his 101st Birthday on February 3, 2025.

COL Pressel honorably served alongside the "Greatest Generation" in WWII as a machine gunner on the B-24 Liberator, during which he earned—among myriad awards and decorations—the Purple Heart for his actions and wounds in combat. His aircraft was hit by flak after turning around for a second bomb run, which pierced the fuel tank. After bailing from the plummeting aircraft, COL Pressel told himself not to panic even when overcoming his parachute malfunction that caused him to barrel 120 MPH towards the ground.

After landing safely, he was surrounded by the enemy. Five German soldiers took him to a nearby farmhouse, where a German officer was waiting. While being interrogated with the rest of his crew, COL Pressel and his crewmates remained steadfast by answering every enemy question with only "name, rank, and serial number"—and was thrown in a boxcar headed to a German Prisoner of War camp. After suffering horrors from starvation to bug infestations, COL Pressel and his crew were liberated by General George Patton's Army on April 29, 1945.

COL Pressel returned to the United States a hero. After a brief time at the air base in Middletown, he was honorably discharged from military service. He began his civilian career at the Motter Electrical Shop in York, Pennsylvania—where he helped build numerous nuclear power plants in Pennsylvania.

COL Pressel shared two sons—Jim and Gary—with his beloved wife, Grace, before her passing, as well as four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored, humbled, and privileged to recognize Colonel Harold Pressel on his 101st Birthday. I wish him the blessings of great health, happiness, and prosperity in his future adventures. "Thank you" will never be enough for his service and sacrifices in the name of our great Nation. His life and legacy set the standard by which we all should be judged.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MAJOR GENERAL CHRISTOPHER P. CALLAHAN

### HON. GABE AMO

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize the 44th Adjutant General

of Rhode Island, Major General Christopher P. Callahan. After a storied career of more than four decades of service to our country, I would like to take a moment to express my profound gratitude and admiration for Major General Callahan's steadfast contributions to our state in advance of his retirement on January 31, 2025.

Since 2015, Major General Callahan has faithfully carried out the duties as Adjutant General and Commanding General of the Rhode Island National Guard. As the senior-most officer and strategic leader of our state's military forces, he is responsible for the mission readiness of all Army and Air National Guard units in the Ocean State. Over the past decade, more than 3,000 soldiers and airmen have skillfully and successfully deployed on missions around the globe thanks to Major General Callahan's leadership.

But beyond the logistical demands of ensuring that the National Guard is well-equipped, well-trained, and well-led, Major General Callahan capably navigated our community through the once-in-a-generation challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to Major General Callahan, the Rhode Island National Guard played an instrumental role in our state's robust vaccination efforts. As I look back on how we came together to keep Rhode Islanders safe, his example shines as a testament to courageous leadership during uncertain times.

Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for General Callahan's willingness to answer the call and serve our Nation with distinction. He has nobly served his fellow Americans and fellow Rhode Islanders for more than 40 years and our state will deeply miss his steady presence and wealth of experience. I thank him for his service and dedication.

#### HONORING EVAN MARQUARDT

### HON. ZACHARY NUNN

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible service of Evan Marquardt to the people of the Iowa Third District.

Always the first to arrive to the office, Evan's service to the people of Iowa is reflected in his commitment to running the best constituent response program on Capitol Hill. As a staff assistant, legislative correspondent, or legislative aide, nothing is more important to our team than ensuring every constituent is heard by their Member of Congress. A strong leader in our office, Evan has also proudly served as Fantasy Football Commissioner, Office Emergency Coordinator, and March Madness Tournament champion. His name shall live in glory in the Nunn office as the winner of the 2023 Fantasy Football season and in infamy as the loser of the 2024 Fantasy Football season.

A champion on the dodgeball court, and a true champion for heartland values, Evan embodies the hard work and passion for putting others first that have made him a fighter for Iowa.

HONORING THE LIFE OF  
MCKINLEY "ISA" RACHED

**HON. ROBERT GARCIA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Isa Rached, a truly extraordinary individual who left an incredible mark on the Long Beach community. Isa passed away on January 2, 2025, and while his presence will be deeply missed, his legacy of compassion, creativity, and service will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Isa was an artist at heart, a talented sketch artist whose creativity extended beyond the canvas. He crafted magnificent dresses for his performances at It's a Drag to Give, where his artistry and passion for self-expression flourished. Isa was known for his unwavering kindness and his ability to lift others up with his infectious smile, reminding everyone he met of the kindness that still exists in the world. His life was characterized by his kindness and compassion. He always had a constant drive to explore new ideas of service and support for his community.

Whether it was through his leadership in local causes like the Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition, the Downtown Business Association, or his advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community, Isa never had a negative word to say about anyone. His life was dedicated to bringing people together, creating a space where diversity was celebrated, and every voice was heard. Isa was a champion of service, always finding new ways to support others with an open heart.

A Buddhist, his faith was a guiding force in his life. It inspired him to live with compassion and courage, always striving to create peace and harmony in the world around him. His spiritual practice was a core part of his identity, infusing his actions with a deep sense of purpose and mindfulness.

He had a love of adventure and travel, and his zest for life led him to explore new experiences—like learning to scuba dive. Isa's passion for fashion and his eye for design made him a visionary fashion designer.

Isa's legacy is one of boundless generosity, artistry, and unwavering positivity. He has touched countless lives, and his impact will continue to be felt in the ongoing work of the organizations and causes he championed.

I extend my deepest condolences to Isa's family, friends, and the entire Long Beach community. Isa is survived by his mother, Rocio, father, Hector, sisters, Vanna and Josie, three nephews, Abraham, Jayden, Naithan, and niece, Evelyn.

Isa's spirit of adventure, creativity, and kindness will continue to inspire us all. His smile, his heart, and his dedication to peace will forever be with us, reminding us of the beauty in service and the power of compassion.

HONORING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALLIED VICTORY AT THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

**HON. ANN WAGNER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the Battle of the Bulge and the courage of the American troops who fought there.

This Saturday, January 25, marks the 80th Anniversary of this historic Allied victory. 41 days, Mr. Speaker.

For 41 days, our soldiers stood guard in much colder weather than we have experienced this week in Washington or back in my home State of Missouri.

For 41 days, these men, many still teenagers, fought from snow-covered foxholes when death and defeat looked imminent.

For 41 days, they saw their brothers, thousands of miles from home, succumb to hypothermia, bullets, bombs, and artillery.

For 41 days, over seven hundred thousand Allied troops, short on equipment, ammunition, and warm clothes, experienced warfare that they would never forget.

For 41 days, these heroes fought and won a battle that would fundamentally change the course of human history.

As we've all shivered through the freezing temperatures this month, it's impossible to imagine what must have gone through the minds of our soldiers hunkered down in the Ardennes.

The anguish and sacrifices these brave men endured will never be truly understood, but will never, ever, be forgotten.

It will not be forgotten by the liberated people of Western Europe, and certainly not by the American people these soldiers gave their lives defending.

Earlier today, the Embassies of Belgium and Luxembourg hosted a wreath-laying ceremony at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

I want to thank these Nations for organizing this moving tribute to those who held the line for freedom over tyranny.

But most importantly, it is my distinct honor to pay respects to the victors of the greatest land battle in the history of the United States Army.

We are, and forever will be, grateful for your heroism.

HONORING HOLOCAUST  
REMEMBRANCE DAY

**HON. LISA C. McCLAIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Holocaust Learning Experience, hosted by MorseLife Health System, an organization that serves many Jewish older adults and their families.

This year, International Holocaust Remembrance Day marks 80 years since the liberation of the Nazi death camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau, by Allied troops. On January 27, 2025, we remember and honor the 6 million

Jewish men, women, and children murdered by the brutal Nazi regime.

We should never forget the atrocities of the Holocaust. At liberation, allies witnessed the devastation of human remains and the destruction of the human spirit. This is the day we also acknowledge the multigenerational impact of the horror and terror perpetrated against the Jewish people.

Globally, we are witnessing an alarming rise in antisemitism, and it is more important than ever to recognize and remember the critical lessons we all learned from the Holocaust. If we do not learn from our history, we are bound to repeat it. The Holocaust is a darkness and evil no one should ever want to see again. I am proud to recognize the Holocaust Learning Experience, which continues to deliver a fully developed curriculum for teachers to teach a hard but necessary lesson on this difficult period in history.

The purpose of the MorseLife Holocaust Learning Experience is to educate and transform generations to end antisemitism, prejudice, bias, and bigotry. This innovative Signature Educational Model is unique, action-oriented, and impactful. The Holocaust Learning Experience deploys and delivers grade-specific, cross curricula lessons from the Holocaust directly into 5th through 12th grade classrooms.

Students demonstrate a greater capacity to see themselves in the shoes of others and feel more comfortable explaining to their peers how hate led to the Holocaust. The most telling finding is that students report they will intervene amongst their peers when they witness hateful behavior toward others.

I wish to congratulate and encourage the Holocaust Learning Experience to continue changing lives of our Nation's young people. Each day, this initiative teaches students to stand up, not stand by. Thousands of students have been transformed by this learning experience, carrying forward the message that silence in the face of hate is unacceptable.

The Holocaust will never leave the conscience of humanity. It is on us to ensure the mantra, "Never Again" remains true.

HONORING IVAR C. SATERO UPON  
HIS RETIREMENT

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Representative MULLIN and Representative PELOSI, rise today to honor the remarkable career of Ivar C. Satero, who retired as Airport Director of San Francisco International Airport (SFO) after decades of dedicated service to the City and County of San Francisco.

Ivar Satero began his extraordinary career in public service in 1984 as a Summer Engineering Intern while attending college. Following his graduation, he contributed his engineering expertise to the Department of Public Works and the Public Utilities Commission before joining the team at San Francisco International Airport in 1994.

Over the course of three decades, Ivar played an instrumental role in shaping the future of SFO, beginning with his work on the \$3 billion Master Plan Expansion Program. He



served as Project Manager for transformative transit initiatives, including the AirTrain System and the Airport BART Station, helping enhance connectivity and streamline passenger travel.

In 2003, Ivar was appointed Deputy Airport Director for the Design & Construction Division, where he oversaw the implementation of an ambitious 10-year, \$5 billion Capital Improvement Program. Under his leadership, SFO completed numerous groundbreaking projects, including the Replacement Air Traffic Control Tower, Terminal 1 Redevelopment, Terminal 3 Renovation, the Baggage Handling System Modernization, the AirTrain Extension, and the creation of the on-site Airport Hotel.

In 2014, Ivar advanced to Chief Operating Officer, supervising vital airport divisions including Design & Construction, Operations & Security, Information Technology, Planning & Environmental Affairs, and more. Two years later, in 2016, he was appointed Airport Director. His tenure as Airport Director was marked by his unwavering commitment to operational excellence, sustainability, and passenger experience.

In addition to being a graduate of San Jose State University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA in Finance from San Francisco State University, Ivar also holds a private pilot's license and is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of California. His commitment to innovation and public service has been an inspiration to all who have had the privilege to work with him.

His technical expertise and visionary leadership have left an indelible mark on SFO, elevating it as a world-class gateway for travelers from around the globe. On behalf of the constituents of California's 8th, 15th, and 11th Congressional Districts, we wish Mr. Satero best wishes in his well-earned retirement and extend our sincerest gratitude for his many years of service to the community.

#### RECOGNIZING JUDY McDONALD

### HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judy McDonald for her extraordinary service to the people of Tarrant County. For nearly 28 years, Judy has dedicated herself to improving the lives of countless individuals by helping them find meaningful careers, ensuring businesses thrive, and offering unwavering support to our community. Her leadership has left an indelible mark on Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, transforming it into a nationally recognized leader in workforce development.

Her passion, commitment, and tireless work have touched the lives of so many. No job was too small, no business too insignificant, and no individual ever beyond help. She has been a beacon of hope for those looking to build better futures, and your impact can be seen in the thriving businesses and empowered individuals across our region.

As Tyrone Taylor, Chair of the Workforce Development Board, so aptly said, "Judy's commitment to our cause and her ability to in-

spire and mobilize our team has been instrumental in achieving our goals." Her leadership has inspired and empowered all those around her, and the legacy she has built will continue to benefit our community for generations to come.

I thank Judy for her incredible service. Her dedication has shaped the future of Tarrant County, and it is with great pride that I acknowledge and celebrate her contributions here today.

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE RECOGNITION OF JANUARY AS "MUSLIM-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH" AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF MUSLIM AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

### HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud, as the longest serving Muslim in Congress, to introduce legislation to recognize January as "Muslim-American Heritage Month" and celebrating the heritage and culture of Muslim Americans in the United States. I thank the endorsing organizations that joined this important resolution: American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Islamic Relief USA, Muslim Americans in Public Service (MAPS), Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), and Project Islamic Hope.

I am honored to partner with my Senate colleague, Senator BOOKER, to introduce this important resolution to recognize the many contributions of Muslims in the U.S. and worldwide. I am also honored to have Reps. OMAR, TLAIB, and SIMON join me as coleads. The value of this bill to Muslim Americans is great because their contributions to the establishment of the United States is an inspiration that others can look to as an example of what a diverse community of people can accomplish. Unfortunately, these contributions have historically been overlooked. Diversity is a corner stone of American democracy and success; our American Muslim community is a vital contributor to our nation's strength, as well as to the talents, perspectives, and achievements this diversity brings. This bill illuminates the economic and cultural contributions of Muslims to America, and it helps combat harmful stereotypes.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing January as "Muslim-American Heritage Month" and celebrating the heritage and culture of Muslim Americans in the United States by supporting this important legislation.

#### CONGRATULATING SARA CULLINANE ON HER EXCEPTIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Sara Cullinane on her ex-

ceptional accomplishments as Director and Founder of Make the Road New Jersey. As she embarks on her new chapter of her life and passes the reign to new leadership, I want to recognize the extraordinary and powerful work that she has accomplished for the immigrant, working-class, and Latinx communities in the State of New Jersey. It has been an honor to partner with her.

Sara's leadership has been instrumental to the growth of such a powerful organization that truly serves those who need it the most. In acknowledging her time with Make the Road NJ, I want to applaud her unquestionable commitment to bettering New Jersey. Sara's work in providing immigrant and working-class communities with vital resources and education on the importance of knowing their rights in unprecedented times is admirable.

Make the Road New Jersey's success in assisting the immigrant community with legal services, health outreach, and educational programming have reached thousands of low-income individuals from underresourced and marginalized communities with critical, life-sustaining services, and transformational education. Sara has provided extraordinary leadership and guidance, and I add my voice to the sea of many who commend her remarkable vision.

I want to thank Sara for her hard work and dedication, which has inspired countless others to pursue their lives helping those who need it the most. I hope she takes immense pride in all the exceptional work that she has accomplished throughout this past decade. I wish her the best of luck in her next chapter.

#### RECOGNIZING TOMMIE "T-BONE" PRUITT, BLUES GUITARIST & VOCALIST

### HON. MIKE EZELL

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tommie "T-Bone" Pruitt for his incredible achievements as a Blues guitarist and vocalist. His talent and dedication to preserving and sharing the rich heritage of Mississippi Blues is something to be celebrated. As a proud resident of Ellisville, Pruitt's contributions to the music world continue to inspire generations, and his artistry serves as a testament to the power of music in connecting people across cultures.

Pruitt's success reflects the spirit of Mississippi—resilient, soulful, and deeply rooted in tradition. His musical legacy will undoubtedly continue to shine brightly for many years to come, and I have no doubt that his influence will continue to be felt far and wide.

I thank him for his dedication to his craft and for making Ellisville proud. I wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF OFFICER DORELLE C. BRANDON

**HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a Chicago Police Department hero, Officer Dorelle C. Brandon. Officer Brandon was tragically killed in the line of duty 40 years ago, marking the first time in our city's history that a female officer laid down her life in the line of duty. As we reflect on her life and legacy, I want to pay tribute to her selfless service and commitment to our beloved Chicago.

Born in Chicago on December 27, 1948, to Charles and Dolores Brandon, Dorelle attended St. Joachim Grammar School and graduated from Harlan high school. After graduation, she was appointed to the Chicago Police Department on February 27, 1978, following in her father's footsteps. Throughout her tenure she earned three department commendations, a unit meritorious performance award, twenty honorable mentions and two complimentary letters.

Officer Brandon served our city and community with courage, dedication, and compassion for five years. She was tragically taken from us on the morning of January 24, 1984. While serving undercover, Officer Brandon and her partner attempted to arrest a drug dealer. The suspect resisted arrest and began to struggle with Officer Brandon attempting to grab her service weapon. Her partner then opened fire on the suspect and unfortunately struck Officer Brandon on accident.

Her story and sacrifice remind us of the danger law enforcement officers face every day. As the first female officer of the Chicago Police Department to lay down her life in the line of duty, she was a tragic trailblazer who will forever be remembered for her selflessness and bravery.

Officer Brandon is survived by her devoted husband, Matthew, who first saw Dorelle while standing in line at the Chicago Police Academy in January of 1978. While he was waiting in line with a fellow officer, Matthew said "Do you see that girl over there? She's going to be my wife." After meeting, they became inseparable and shared a readily apparent love and devotion to one another that continues to this day.

Officer Brandon was a member of the Fraternal Order of Police. She is remembered by her husband, Matthew, daughter, Barbara Sharee Cannon, stepsons: Marvin Edward Brandon and Sean Scot Brandon, parents Charles and Dolore, stepfather, Norman White and her three brothers and five sisters.

This Friday, my fellow Chicagoans will gather to immortalize her sacrifice by naming the community room of the Chicago Police Department 3rd precinct office after her. I hope that her memory will continue to inspire others to public service and remind us of the great feats of heroism our brave officers perform on our behalf every day. May God continue to watch over them and keep them safe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Officer Dorelle C. Brandon's service and sacrifice.

HONORING JOHN CROMAN

**HON. ILHAN OMAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of John Croman, an extraordinary journalist and member of our community. Mr. Croman recently retired from his role as Chief Political Reporter for KARE 11 after nearly 30 years of dedicated service bringing reliable, informative, and timely political news to Minnesotans.

Mr. Croman attended the University of Kansas before moving to Minnesota to begin his career in reporting. He started at KARE 11 in 1997 as an investigative reporter and gravitated towards political reporting, where he would thrive for the rest of his career. He captivated audiences with his impeccable journalistic skills and his knack for making politics relatable. In his decades at KARE he covered major historical events, including the tragic loss of our late Senator Paul Wellstone, the 8-month recount of Minnesota's 2008 Senate election, and the legalization of same-sex marriage in Minnesota.

Those who worked closely with Mr. Croman admired his wealth of knowledge about Minnesota politics and history—they referred to him as "the contact, and the context," for every story. He was praised for his commitment to reporting on substantive policy rather than the fleeting trends of the moment, and his tireless dedication to the truth in his journalism.

Mr. Croman brought a unique flair to his work, often breaking into song and creating jingles for every occasion. He seized every opportunity to inject joy into his work and to share it with those around him, whether during marathon end-of-legislative-session nights, elections, or simply checking his microphone. He was also known for his dedication to his craft, often acting as his own cameraman and editor when working late or on days off, which he frequently did.

Chief Political Reporter John Croman embraced excellence, integrity, and passion for his work. His long and impactful career is a testament to his ability to communicate even the most complex issues to listeners and viewers around the state. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him for his remarkable service and celebrating his well-deserved retirement.

CELEBRATING THE INDUCTION OF  
KARMA MASON INTO THE WICHITA  
STATE UNIVERSITY'S  
SHOCKER SPORTS HALL OF  
FAME

**HON. RON ESTES**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. ESTES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Karma Mason on her induction into Wichita State University's Shocker Sports Hall of Fame.

This award was presented to Karma in honor of her contribution to the Wichita State University Championship Bowling Team from

1975 to 1978. Her exceptional talent and leadership proved instrumental to her team's success as she led them to the first national collegiate championship, culminating in three national championship teams over the course of her time at WSU.

Karma is a highly accomplished bowler with an outstanding record. Some of her impressive bowling achievements include a 196 average tournament score and a high tournament score of 279. She demonstrated leadership, hard work and dedication to the sport as team captain and anchor bowler for three years straight, proving integral to her team's success.

Karma's recent Hall of Fame recognition is just one of her many accolades throughout her long and successful career, and she continues to make Kansas proud. On behalf of the people of the Fourth Congressional District of Kansas, I congratulate Karma.

H.R. 10438, CAPPING COSTS FOR  
CONSUMERS ACT OF 2024

**HON. KIM SCHRIER**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Ms. SCHRIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to correct the record. At the end of the 118th Congress, we erroneously added Ms. UNDERWOOD as an original cosponsor to H.R. 10438. I would like the record to formally recognize that Congresswoman UNDERWOOD of Illinois is not an original cosponsor of H.R. 10438 from the 118th Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes yesterday due to an unavoidable emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 22, H.R. 165 Wounded Knee Memorial Act; and NAY on Roll Call No. 23, Passage of S. 5 Laken Riley Act.

HONORING THE LIVES OF NEIL  
AND SANDI BROOKS

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn a devastating loss in eastern Connecticut, with the passing of a beautiful married couple—Dr. Neil Brooks and his wife Sandi (Silverman) Brooks of Vernon, Connecticut. Neil Brooks passed away sadly and suddenly on November 27, 2024, at age 82. He was joined less than a month later when the love of his life, Sandi, passed away unexpectedly at age 81 on December 24, 2024. Neil and Sandi's longtime marriage was truly a masterpiece that their offspring, friends, and community will forever cherish in their hearts.

Neil was born in Manchester, Connecticut to Abner and Lenore Brooks on November 17,

1942. Neil was raised in the Rockville section of Vernon, Connecticut, where his father was very active in the community in town working for a local textile company, Amerbelle Corporation, and personally raising money for the super-sized Horowitz Community Pool that generations of Vernon kids have learned to swim at—including my two children. Abner's example made a big impact on Neil's outlook on helping people and being involved in efforts to improve life for his neighbors. Neil attended Rockville High School, and then pursued his passion to study medicine, attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the Hahnemann Medical School. After this, Neil came back to Rockville to practice family medicine. As a trusted doctor in the greater Rockville area, he cared for many thousands of patients and families in times of crisis and healing.

Further down the East Coast, Sandi Silverman was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Lou and Mitzi Silverman on March 3, 1943. She grew up in the Philadelphia area, attending Germantown High School before studying at Temple University.

Although they grew up with lives in different places, the stars aligned when Neil and Sandi met at the wedding of mutual friends, and they were married on July 2, 1966. This was the start of a loving 58-year marriage. Neil and Sandi were partners in all aspects of life, and nothing was more important to them than spending time with family and friends. They were known as a loyal, dependable couple, always providing support in whatever way necessary. In their free time, Neil enjoyed golfing and watching movies with friends and Sandi was known as a fantastic cook who loved to feed and entertain family and friends.

Sandi joined Neil in Rockville, Connecticut, where he devoted his career as a physician to providing the highest standard of care to his patients and community. As if his work in family medicine was not all-consuming, Neil also served as the President of both the Connecticut and American Academies of Family Physicians, President of his synagogue, Medical Director at Vernon Manor, and in leadership roles at Rockville Hospital and the American Medical Association. His work involved lots of medical conferences and political work, which Sandi supported diligently, traveling all across the country.

Despite their busy schedules, Neil and Sandi always prioritized the relationships in their lives—between each other, family, friends, and anyone else who crossed their paths. I had the privilege to know them as friends and supporters in my political campaigns—which always came with lots of passionate ideas and opinions that I always learned from. Usually, those exchanges took place in a New York-style delicatessen in Vernon, with Neil and his morning coffee group solving the world's problems.

At both memorial services, their son David Brooks found the inner strength to speak powerfully and eloquently about the rich family life Neil and Sandi created. The crowds in attendance were visible evidence of the deep impact they made in so many lives. While we mourn the loss of these incredible individuals, we can take solace in the knowledge that they have been reunited with each other. And, as David stated, they left many memories that are blessings for those of us who knew them. Neil and Sandi are survived by their son David and his wife Jen as well as their granddaughter

Emma, who is following in Neil's footsteps and studying to be a physician's assistant. They are also survived by nieces, nephews, and grandnieces. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in honoring Neil and Sandi Brooks and their amazing life story.

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HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF MOTHER ALICE HILLIARD

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**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the extraordinary life and legacy of Mother Alice Hilliard, a remarkable woman who lived a life defined by faith, resilience, and selfless service. Born on March 24, 1921, her life was a testament to strength, love, and devotion to her family, community, and church.

Alice attended Wooden City School in Lewisville and accepted Christ at an early age, joining Union Hill Baptist Church under the leadership of J.H. Wyatt. In 1942, she relocated to Richmond, California, where she took on a historic role during World War II. Alice joined the workforce at the Kaiser Shipyard, stepping into roles traditionally held by men serving in the military. Her hard work and dedication earned her the distinguished title of "Rosie the Riveter," and she was later featured in the book "Staging Migrations Toward An American West" by Marta Effinger-Crichlow, highlighting her contributions during this pivotal time in American history.

After working at the shipyard, Alice continued her professional journey at the Dole Cannery and Aebi Nursery, where she eventually retired. However, her life's work extended far beyond her career. Alice had a passion for gardening, especially tending to her beloved rose bushes, traveling with her family, sewing, and cooking. She also faithfully served her community as a member of Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church in Richmond for over 70 years. She was deeply involved in numerous church auxiliaries, including the Women's Mission Union and Baptist Training Union, and served as Chair of the Kitchen Committee. Her dedication to her church family was unwavering.

Mother Alice Hilliard's 103 years were marked by a life of faith, perseverance, and selfless love. She was an inspiration to all who knew her, and her legacy will live on in the hearts of her family, friends, and community. Today, I honor her remarkable life and extend my deepest condolences to all who mourn her passing. May her memory be a blessing to us all. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Ms. Hilliard's loved ones. I know they and the people of California's 8th Congressional district join me in celebrating her life and legacy.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VIETNAM VETERAN SERGEANT ROYAL EDWARD NEELEY

**HON. J. LUIS CORREA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of U.S. Army veteran Royal "Roy" Edward Neeley.

A former Green Beret with the 1st Special Forces Command, Airborne, Sergeant Neeley was born on April 8, 1948, in Los Angeles to Charles and Mary Neeley. He passed away October 12, 2024, at age 76.

Although he lost his mother at an early age, Roy enjoyed his youth growing up in Los Angeles with his two sisters. A graduate of Fremont High School, he was an avid sports fan and music lover.

On October 23, 1967, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed at Fort Buckner, Okinawa, Japan. As a radio operator and a Green Beret, his unique skill set made him and his fellow soldiers in the Army Airborne's 1st Special Forces Command one of the most adaptable and capable forces in the United States military, poised to protect the Nation's interest across the globe at a moment's notice.

Sergeant Neeley was honorably discharged from the Army in October 1970. Two years later he married Elaine McDonald on December 2, 1972, in a private family service in Las Vegas.

The wedding reception was memorable because the newlyweds and guests celebrated both the nuptials and Anthony Davis' six touchdown run that helped the University of Southern California clinch a 45–23 win over Notre Dame. The day was a win-win for Roy and Elaine, who would enjoy 52 years of marriage.

Roy was totally immersed in his work as an operations manager with Tanne Apparel, Value City Department Stores, Liz Claiborne, and Hybrid Apparel. These ventures took him and the family to Ohio and Alabama.

Service and loyalty were always part of his everyday life. At all of the McDonald-Neeley Family events, there wasn't a bid whist game he wouldn't play rise and fly. He never missed an opportunity to play golf with his brothers-in-law Bobby and Billy McDonald. Even if it meant being late to a family function, the links with Bobby and Billy came first.

Memories of Roy will be cherished by his family, including his wife, Elaine; sons Aaron Paul Neeley and Craig Edward Neeley; daughter-in-law, Alexis Neeley; grandchildren Nia Phillips, Nicolas Neeley, Ian Neeley, Brenden Neeley, Brennah Neeley, Maddox Anderson, Royce Neeley, and soon-to-be Scarlett Neeley; countless nieces and nephews; and his best friend Bud Feldman.

Roy will be remembered for his cheerful smile, strong positive attitude, and dedication to providing for his family.

Please join me in celebrating the life of Royal Edward Neeley, one of our Nation's most esteemed veterans, who lived a life of honor and service to his family, community and country.

RECOGNIZING EUGENE MITCHELL  
AS OHIO'S 13TH CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT CHAMPION OF THE  
WEEK

**HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, January 23, 2025*

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Eugene Mitchell as Ohio's 13th Congressional District Champion of the Week.

Eugene recently earned the 2024 Lifetime Achievement award, presented by the Ohio Public Transit Association. This award honors those who have exemplified leadership and advocacy for public transit in Ohio.

Eugene has served our community as a bus driver for METRO for more than 30 years. He takes this responsibility very seriously, because he knows that when people get on his bus, their lives are in his hands.

He cares for his regular riders and takes pride in his service to his community. That pride is demonstrated by his interest in con-

tinuing to drive his bus with no plans to retire soon, even at the age of 76.

I congratulate Eugene on this award and thank him for his dedication to our community. I wish him the best in the years to come.

# Daily Digest

## HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

## Senate

### Chamber Action

*Routine Proceedings, pages S305–S341*

**Measures Introduced:** Forty bills and seven resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 199–238, S.J. Res. 4–6, and S. Res. 31–34. **Pages S334–35**

#### Measures Passed:

**Washington University in St. Louis Bears Women's Soccer Team:** Senate agreed to S. Res. 34, congratulating the Washington University in St. Louis Bears women's soccer team for winning the 2024 NCAA Division III Women's Soccer Championship. **Page S329**

#### Measures Considered:

**Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act—Cloture:** Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 23, to impose sanctions with respect to the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies. **Pages S307–10**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Sean Duffy, of Wisconsin, to be Secretary of Transportation. **Page S307**

Prior to the consideration of this measure, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S307**

**Duffy Nomination—Cloture:** Senate began consideration of the nomination of Sean Duffy, of Wisconsin, to be Secretary of Transportation. **Page S307**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition

of the nomination of Scott Bessent, of South Carolina, to be Secretary of the Treasury. **Pages S310–18**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S310**

**Hegseth Nomination—Agreement:** Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense. **Page S318**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 51 yeas to 49 nays (Vote No. EX. 14), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S318**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination, post-cloture, at approximately 10 a.m., on Friday, January 24, 2025; and that all time during recess, adjournment, and Leader remarks count post-cloture. **Page S341**

**Nomination Confirmed:** Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 74 yeas to 25 nays (Vote No. EX. 13), John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. **Pages S317–18**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 72 yeas to 26 nays (Vote No. 12), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S310**

**Messages from the House:** **Page S333**

**Measures Referred:** **Page S333**

**Enrolled Bills Presented:** **Page S334**

**Executive Reports of Committees:** **Page S334**

**Additional Cosponsors:** **Pages S335–36**

**Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:** **Pages S336–38**

**Additional Statements:** Pages S332–33

**Authorities for Committees to Meet:** Page S341

**Quorum Calls:** One quorum call was taken today. (Total—2) Page S318

**Record Votes:** Three record votes were taken today. (Total—14) Pages S310, S317–18

**Adjournment:** Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:11 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 24, 2025. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S341.)

## Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

### NOMINATION

*Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:* Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Brooke Rollins, of Texas, to be Secretary of Agriculture, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Cornyn and Cruz, testified and answered questions in her own behalf.

### BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Eric Turner, of Texas, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 119th Congress.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments for the 119th Congress:

*Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment:* Senators Rounds (Chair), Crapo, Kennedy, Lummis, Britt, Banks, Cramer, Moreno, Warner, Reed, Cortez Masto, Warnock, Kim, Blunt Rochester, and Alsobrooks.

*Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance:* Senators Hagerty (Chair),

Ricketts, Banks, McCormick, Kim, Van Hollen, and Cortez Masto.

*Subcommittee on Economic Policy:* Senators Kennedy (Chair), Rounds, Tillis, Ricketts, Banks, Warnock, Reed, Smith, and Blunt Rochester.

*Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development:* Senators Britt (Chair), Crapo, Rounds, Cramer, Moreno, McCormick, Smith, Van Hollen, Gallego, Blunt Rochester, and Alsobrooks.

*Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection:* Senators Tillis (Chair), Crapo, Kennedy, Hagerty, Lummis, Britt, Ricketts, Cramer, Cortez Masto, Reed, Warner, Warnock, Kim, Gallego, and Alsobrooks.

*Subcommittee on Digital Assets:* Senators Lummis (Chair), Tillis, Hagerty, Moreno, McCormick, Gallego, Warner, Van Hollen, and Smith.

*Senators Scott (SC) and Warren are ex officio members of each subcommittee.*

### BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:* Committee ordered favorably reported the Amendment of Rule 6(b) of the Committee Rules to establish the reporting quorum, and the nominations of Douglas Burgum, of North Dakota, to be Secretary of the Interior, and Christopher Wright, of Colorado, to be Secretary of Energy.

### BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Environment and Public Works:* Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Lee Zeldin, of New York, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

### BUSINESS MEETING

*Committee on Veterans' Affairs:* Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Douglas Collins, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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# House of Representatives

## Chamber Action

**Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced:** 78 public bills, H.R. 641–718; and 9 resolutions, H.J. Res. 29; and H. Res. 57–64, were introduced.

Pages H383–87

**Additional Cosponsors:** Pages H389–90

**Reports Filed:** There were no reports filed today.

**Speaker:** Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Womack to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H303

**Recess:** The House recessed at 10:58 a.m. and reconvened at 12 p.m. Page H309

**Guest Chaplain:** The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Chaplain Judy Malana, United

States Navy, Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies Staff, Washington, DC.

Pages H309–10

**Suspension—Proceedings Resumed:** The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, January 21st.

*Requiring the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death:* H.R. 375, to require the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death, by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  ye-and-nay vote of 359 yeas to 62 nays, Roll No. 24. Page H346

*Fix Our Forests Act:* The House passed H.R. 471, to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, by a ye-and-nay vote of 279 yeas to 141 nays, Roll No. 25.

Pages H312–35, H346–47

Agreed to:

Perry amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 119–1) that strikes carbon sequestration and ecosystem services prioritization from section 301 biochar demonstration projects; and Pages H333–34

Carbajal amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 119–1) that allows the U.S. Forest Services to approve the removal of hazardous trees near power lines on federal land without requiring a timber sale, easing a serious threat that has in the past been a major cause of destructive wildfires. Pages H334–35

H. Res. 53, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 471) and (S. 5) was agreed to yesterday, January 22nd.

*Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act:* The House passed H.R. 21, to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion, by a ye-and-nay vote of 217 yeas to 204 nays with one answering “present”, Roll No. 27. Pages H335–45, H347–48

Rejected the Chu motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary by a ye-and-nay vote of 205 yeas to 216 nays, Roll No. 26.

Pages H347–48

H. Res. 5, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 21), was agreed to on Friday, January 3, 2025.

**Work Period Designation:** Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he designated the period from

Thursday, January 23, 2025, through Monday, February 3, 2025, as a “district work period” under clause 13 of rule 1. Page H348

**Quorum Calls Votes:** Four ye-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H346–H348.

**Adjournment:** The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

## Committee Meetings

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

*Committee on Agriculture:* Full Committee held an organizational meeting. The Committee adopted its Rules for the 119th Congress, as amended. The Authorization and Oversight Plan and Bipartisan Staff List were adopted.

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

*Committee on Appropriations:* Full Committee held an organizational meeting. The Committee adopted its Rules and Subcommittee Jurisdictions for the 119th Congress.

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

*Committee on the Budget:* Full Committee held an organizational meeting. The Committee adopted its Rules and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress.

### STRENGTHENING AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY

*Committee on Energy and Commerce:* Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled “Strengthening American Leadership in Wireless Technology”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

*Committee on House Administration:* Full Committee held an organizational meeting. The Committee adopted its Rules, Subcommittee Members, Parking Policy, Resolution to Promulgate Regulations Regarding Mandatory Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policies for House Offices, Resolution to Promulgate Regulations Regarding Displaying a Statement of Rights and Protections Provided to House Employees, Resolution to Promulgate Regulations Governing the House Retention through Educational Advancement Program for House Employees, and Resolution to Amend the Eligible Congressional Member Organization Handbook for the 119th Congress.

### LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

*Committee on Natural Resources:* Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on

H.R. 231, the “Colorado River Basin System Conservation Extension Act of 2025”; H.R. 261, the “Undersea Cable Protection Act of 2025”; H.R. 331, to amend the Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act to clarify a provision relating to conveyances for aquifer recharge purposes; and legislation on the WaterSMART Access for Tribes Act. Testimony was heard from Representatives Hageman, Carter of Georgia, Fulcher, and Stansbury; Dwight Witherspoon, Attorney, Water Rights Unit, Navajo Nation Department of Justice; Wesley Hipke, Section Manager, Water Projects, Department of Water Resources, Idaho; and public witnesses.

#### AMERICA BUILDS: EXAMINING AMERICA’S FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL NETWORK

*Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:* Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials held a hearing entitled “America Builds: Examining America’s Freight and Passenger Rail Network”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

#### CORRECTING VETERANS ADMINISTRATION’S VIOLATIONS OF VETERANS’ DUE PROCESS AND SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

*Committee on Veterans’ Affairs:* Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing entitled “Correcting VA’s Violations of Veterans’ Due Process and Second Amendment Rights”. Testimony was heard from Jordan B. Cohen, Analyst, Firearms Policy, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

### *Joint Meetings*

No joint committee meetings were held.

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#### COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025

*(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)*

##### Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

##### House

No hearings are scheduled.



*Next Meeting of the SENATE*

10 a.m., Friday, January 24

*Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*

9 a.m., Friday, January 24

## Senate Chamber

**Program for Friday:** Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense, post-cloture.

At approximately 9 p.m., absent an agreement and if all time is used, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination of Peter Hegseth, to be followed by a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

## House Chamber

**Program for Friday:** House will meet in Pro Forma session at 9 a.m.

## Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

## HOUSE

Amo, Gabe, R.I., E62  
 Carson, André, Ind., E64  
 Correa, J. Luis, Calif., E61, E66  
 Courtney, Joe, Conn., E61, E65  
 Estes, Ron, Kans., E65  
 Ezell, Mike, Miss., E64

Garamendi, John, Calif., E61, E63, E66  
 Garcia, Robert, Calif., E63  
 Jackson, Jonathan L., Ill., E65  
 Lieu, Ted, Calif., E62  
 McClain, Lisa C., Mich., E63  
 Nunn, Zachary, Iowa, E62  
 Omar, Ilhan, Minn., E65  
 Perry, Scott, Pa., E62

Pettersen, Brittany, Colo., E62  
 Schrier, Kim, Wash., E65  
 Sykes, Emilia Strong, Ohio, E61, E67  
 Veasey, Marc A., Tex., E64  
 Wagner, Ann, Mo., E63  
 Waters, Maxine, Calif., E65  
 Watson Coleman, Bonnie, N.J., E64



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