

Attached is a copy of the letter I submitted to the Governor of California.

It has been an honor to serve the people of California's 33rd and 37th Districts, and I greatly appreciate their trust in me over these last twelve years. I also appreciate the faith and fellowship of my colleagues. I am enormously proud of what we have accomplished by working together to address real issues that impact the people who sent us all here to Congress. We have not always agreed, but our greatest achievements have come when we were able to set aside our differences and find common ground.

The issues that face us have not been small, but neither has our resolve. Our conversations have not always been comfortable, and the solutions before us have not always been easy, but we have not been deterred. I hope in the next Congress that we will continue to see real efforts to legislate and to improve lives.

It is not without sadness that I announce my resignation. I know I leave behind much work to be done. But I am proud to be called home and look forward to the challenges that lie ahead as Mayor of Los Angeles. I am also proud of the young colleagues I leave behind. The future of public service is bright.

Sincerely,

KAREN BASS,  
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, December 8, 2022.

Hon. GAVIN NEWSOM,  
Governor of California,  
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR NEWSOM: I write to inform you of my resignation, effective December 9, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. PST, as United States Representative for the 37th Congressional District of California.

Sincerely,

KAREN BASS,  
Member of Congress.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS), the whole number of the House is 431.

#### HONORING L.G. RAUN

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a good friend and a great leader for American agriculture, Mr. L.G. Raun.

L.G. and his lovely bride, Linda, are rice farmers from El Campo, Texas, a third-generation family farm. Both have very capably and faithfully served the U.S. rice industry all their lives in varying degrees of leadership within USA Rice.

L.G. recently completed his term as president of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness, a highly respected consortium of farm and ranch organizations, agricultural lenders, and allied businesses serving Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, and Colorado.

Although L.G.'s term as president of the Southwest Council is concluding, I am confident that he and Linda's role

in service to American agriculture will carry on, and all of agriculture will be better for it.

I often say, agricultural policy doesn't just impact farm families like the Rauns, but it impacts every American and everyone who eats. These are critical matters, and the Rauns deserve a lot of credit for helping us get it right.

Thank you, L.G., for your strong leadership and your friendship.

#### CONTINUING BABY FORMULA SHORTAGE

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, while the baby formula shortage no longer draws as many headlines, parents are still suffering as a third of American families still struggle to find baby formula, according to recent Census Bureau statistics.

Countless parents are still searching store after store in hopes of finding formula to feed their children. That is unacceptable. Parents deserve both solutions and answers.

Months ago, the Energy and Commerce Committee unanimously advanced my resolution calling for the Biden administration to release documents related to the recall of infant formula and potential impacts on the infant formula supply chain.

Let me reiterate. This was passed unanimously in committee with support from both sides of the aisle. I am urging the Speaker and Democrat leadership to allow a full vote on this resolution immediately.

We need to hold the administration accountable and ensure that this level of failure never happens again.

#### RECOGNIZING APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI TEACHERS

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, for the sixth consecutive year, Appalachian State University has led the entire Nation in the number of alumni who have become National Board Certified Teachers.

Indeed, this is a monumental feat. This accolade not only speaks to the caliber of Appalachian State's alumni, but also to the university's commitment to prepare talented individuals who will go on to make a profound impact upon our society.

Under the steadfast leadership of Chancellor Sheri Everts, and thanks to the dedication of countless members of this university, Appalachian State's excellence continues to be recognized on the national stage.

Congratulations to Appalachian State, the Reich College of Education, and its many alumni on this wonderful accomplishment.

#### CONTINUING INFLATION

(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. Madam Speaker, the Christmas season is a time for families across America to be joyous. However, due to irresponsible policies of Biden and Democrats, inflation has reached 40-year highs.

The Thanksgiving meal was particularly tough on the wallet, but now with Christmas, prices continue to be unbearable. Even the cost of a Christmas tree is expected to rise 15 percent.

According to a recent survey by RetailMeNot, more than half of holiday shoppers plan to make fewer purchases due to higher prices.

Average national costs have increased. Airfare is up 42 percent, public transportation up 28 percent, gas up 17 percent, food up 12 percent.

I was grateful this weekend for a day-long visit to Kyiv in Ukraine. The people of Ukraine, with Poland and Germany, are courageous for liberty and rule of law.

In the tradition of the American Revolution, they understand: Don't tread on me. Appeal unto Heaven. Live free or die.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism continues moving from Afghanistan's safe haven to America.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. WILD) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, December 9, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,  
The Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 9, 2022, at 10:44 a.m.

That the Senate passed S. 2333.  
That the Senate passed S. 2834.  
That the Senate passed S. 4216.  
That the Senate passed S. 5229.  
That the Senate passed S. 5230.  
That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 310.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 7535.

That the Senate agreed to Relative to the death of Alan R. Parker, former Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate S. Res. 867.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,  
Clerk.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

### EMPOWERING THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION ACT

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 7077) to require the United States Fire Administration to conduct on-site investigations of major fires, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act”.

#### SEC. 2. FIRE SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

##### “SEC. 38. INVESTIGATION AUTHORITIES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a major fire, the Administrator may send incident investigators, which may include safety specialists, fire protection engineers, codes and standards experts, researchers, and fire training specialists, to the site of the fire to conduct a fire safety investigation as described in subsection (b).

“(b) INVESTIGATION REQUIRED.—A fire safety investigation conducted under this section—

“(1) shall be conducted in coordination and cooperation with appropriate Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities, including Federal agencies that are authorized to investigate any fire; and

“(2) shall examine the previously determined cause and origin of the fire and assess broader systematic matters to include use of codes and standards, demographics, structural characteristics, smoke and fire dynamics (movement) during the event, and costs of associated injuries and deaths.

“(c) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), upon concluding any fire safety investigation under this section, the Administrator shall—

“(A) issue a public report to the appropriate Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities on the findings of such investigation; or

“(B) collaborate with another investigating Federal, State, local, Tribal, or territorial agency on the report of that agency.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—If the Administrator, in consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities determines that issuing a report under paragraph (1) would have a negative impact on a potential or ongoing criminal investigation, the Administrator is not required to issue such report.

“(3) CONTENTS.—Each public report issued under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations on—

“(A) any other buildings with similar characteristics that may bear similar fire risks;

“(B) improving tactical response to similar fires;

“(C) improving civilian safety practices;

“(D) assessing the costs and benefits to the community of adding fire safety features; and

“(E) how to mitigate the causes of the fire.

“(d) DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY.—In addition to a fire safety investigation conducted pursu-

ant to subsection (a), provided doing so would not have a negative impact on a potential or ongoing criminal investigation, the Administrator may send fire investigators to conduct a fire safety investigation at the site of any fire with unusual or remarkable context that results in losses less severe than those occurring as a result of a major fire, in coordination and cooperation with the appropriate Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities, including Federal agencies that are authorized to investigate the fire.

“(e) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to—

“(1) affect or otherwise diminish the authorities or the mandates vested in other Federal agencies;

“(2) grant the Administrator authority to investigate a major fire for the purpose of an enforcement action or criminal prosecution; or

“(3) require the Administrator to send investigators or issue a report for a major fire when the Administrator, in coordination and cooperation with the appropriate Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities, determine that it may compromise a potential or ongoing criminal investigation.

“(f) MAJOR FIRE DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘major fire’ shall have the meaning given such term under regulations to be issued by the Administrator.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 7077, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7077, the Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act.

Although significant progress has been made in preventing major fires over the past 25 years, building fires in the United States remain a serious problem.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, there was an estimated 372,000 residential building fires within the United States in 2020. These fires caused an estimated 2,615 deaths, 11,825 injuries, and \$8.6 billion in property loss.

It is very timely that we are about to enact this bill as winter approaches and residential building fires are more likely to occur.

It is essential that we learn from major fires to inform and improve future fire prevention efforts. The U.S. Fire Administration is an essential part of these efforts.

Unfortunately, the agency currently lacks the authority to participate in post-fire onsite investigations.

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H.R. 7077 addresses this gap by authorizing USFA to send their own ex-

perts to the site of a major fire to conduct an onsite investigation in coordination and cooperation with Federal, State, local, Tribal, and Territorial authorities. In doing so, this bill more fully leverages the unique expertise of the U.S. Fire Administration to help strengthen fire prevention.

This bill would also require the administrator to issue a public report on the findings of an investigation or collaborate with another investigating agency on their report. This report would include recommendations on improving tactical response and civilian safety practices, as well as on approaches to mitigation. These reports are an essential component of ensuring that everyone can utilize the knowledge we collect from major fires to improve future prevention efforts.

I thank my friend and colleague, Representative RITCHIE TORRES, for his leadership on this bill. Representative TORRES introduced this bill after a major residential building fire in his district on January 9 of this year resulted in the tragic deaths of 17 people, including 8 children.

I also thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Representatives HALEY STEVENS, ANTHONY GONZALEZ, and PETER MEIJER for their leadership on this bill, and I urge all of my colleagues to join us in passing this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 7077, the Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act. This bipartisan legislation would give the U.S. Fire Administration the authority to send specialists to assist local firefighter investigators in onsite investigations of major fires.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, last year had the highest number of home fire deaths in 14 years. As was mentioned, families in Representative TORRES' district know the devastation of major fires after suffering through New York City's deadliest fire in over three decades. This single fire claimed the lives of 17 residents, including 8 children.

By empowering the U.S. Fire Administration to partner with local fire departments, we can better determine the root cause of these tragedies and make sure that they never happen again.

The U.S. Fire Administration is housed within FEMA, and it has valuable and lifesaving resources on preventing, responding to, and investigating fires. This bill would ensure that State and local governments can access their expertise and, hopefully, prevent major fires in the future.

The bill directs incident investigators to examine the determined cause and origins of fires. It also requires them to assess broader systematic matters including use of codes and