

RECOGNIZING TOM FANNING AND CHRIS WOMACK

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tom Fanning and Chris Womack of the Southern Company.

Tom is the current chairman of the board, CEO, and president of Southern Company. For more than 42 years, Tom's excellent leadership has helped mold Southern Company into the great company it is today. I thank Tom for his decades of service to Southern Company and the First District of Georgia.

On March 31, 2023, Chris Womack will become chairman of the board, CEO, and president of Southern Company. Chris currently serves as chairman, president, and CEO of Georgia Power. Prior to those positions, Chris worked for former Congressman Leon Panetta.

I congratulate Chris and wish him well as he prepares to lead Southern Company.

IN DEFENSE OF PARENTS

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

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in defense of parents who have the right to guide their child's education and to know what is being taught in the classroom.

This body will soon vote on a great piece of legislation, H.R. 5, the Parental Bill of Rights. This bill puts parents in the driver's seat and makes students the priority, not bureaucrats or administrators.

It is hard to imagine who would fight against parental rights and school choice, but just the other day, Democratic legislators in my home State of Georgia were trying to stop several successful bills that expand education options for families.

Shockingly, their reasoning was that low-income families are too uneducated and poor to have a say over their own children's schooling.

If you don't believe me, here are the exact words of Georgia's 67th House District Representative just last week: "... they," meaning the parents, "are already in the lower 25th percentile, meaning a lot of those parents did not finish high school, cannot direct, and could not finish their own education."

She continues: "I am extremely concerned that we would put money in their hands, that entire piece of life in the hands of parents who are not qualified to make those decisions."

Well, I think that is nonsense. The vast majority of Americans—moms and dads and teachers and students—know that is nonsense.

History is littered by governments who thought they knew better, and that people and parents did not know better, much to the detriment of that culture and the ultimate failure of that government.

That is why I am offering two amendments to the Parental Bill of Rights.

The first one establishes the right of parents to be informed about, and consent to, participation in any non-curriculum events or activities.

We already do this for things that government schools deem important like field trips, gifted programs, individual education plans, and free and reduced lunches. I believe that parents' rights do not end at the discretion of the administration.

Unfortunately, in recent years, some school systems have used the classroom as a bully pulpit to push social engineering instead of learning environments. This is not a partisan issue, and this has got to stop. The way it stops is keeping parents informed of what happens at school.

My other amendment guarantees parents the opportunity to address their school boards regarding any violation of their rights. As we have seen too often across the country, concerned moms and dads have been silenced, thrown out, or threatened when standing up for their children. This is unacceptable.

Families need accountability in their schools and a place to make their voices heard. Fortunately, from Georgia to Virginia, from Texas to Idaho, and yes, even from California to New York, we are beginning to put students over systems and the people over a government, just like the Constitution intended.

This revolution of school choice and parental rights will help millions of families across America, and we are just getting started.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Hear the cries of Your people, O Lord.

Out of the depths of their suffering, hear their voices, pleading for rescue from the hands of their tormentors for an end to the violence they endure from the hands of their oppressors and relief from the poverty they experience in both body and spirit.

Let Your ears be attentive to the pleas that rise to You from across the globe from the innocent men, women, and children who are caught in the

crossfire of the war in Ukraine and from the enemy's conscripted soldiers who are forced to fight a war that is not of their own making.

Hear the voices of those who dare to speak words of peace and reconciliation into the winds of war and silence the rhetoric of false claims to the hegemony of property and the control of Your people.

We wait for You, O Lord, to speak Your word. Countless wait on You to reach into their souls and give them reason to hope. More than those who wait in the darkness for the dawn, more than these, do we wait for Your power to redeem Your children.

In Your steadfast love, save us from ourselves and from our inequities.

In Your most holy name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 30.—An act to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the reappointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress:

Denise A. Hibay of New York.

NATIONAL AG WEEK

(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, this week is National Ag Week. It is a time where America honors and gives thanks to her farmers, ranchers, and ag workers. Without their hard work, dedication, and ingenuity, our Nation would not enjoy the rich bounty of food they grow.

However, there are daunting issues that face our agricultural sector: Fuel, water supply—especially in my home State of California; although right now, we are very grateful for the massive rain—market conditions, and the trade commitments being enforced, such as the deficit we have with China.

Agriculture is essential to the economic well-being of my district, northern California, and the West.

California farmers rely on an abundance of water and low fuel prices to grow the crops we eat.

The last several years have seen fields go fallow because California's broken water management system has not been able to deliver the water that was needed.

Indeed, if we don't have the water supply, these crops that America receives so much of from California would not be grown, they would need to be imported or not have them at all.

It is in America's best interest to pursue permitting reform and unleash our domestic energy potential.

We celebrate National Ag Week in order to keep Americans working, fed, and our farmers in the fields.

HAYFIELD BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a team of high school athletes from Virginia's Eighth Congressional District.

Two weeks ago, Hayfield Secondary School's boys basketball team defeated the Patriot Pioneers to win Virginia's Class 6 basketball title for the second consecutive season.

Their hard-fought win was a testament to their collective work and to the energetic, orange-out crowd that traveled down from Fairfax to cheer them on.

Hayfield Secondary students, teachers, and administrators are the best of our future. They are diverse, brilliant, and creative. It takes the whole Hayfield community to build the past two seasons where they had a 62-1 record in addition to back-to-back State championships.

Hayfield's win reflects their courage, discipline, and excellent sportsmanship.

Congratulations to Coach Carlos Poindexter, to everyone who made this success possible, and to the Hayfield players who brought this championship home.

Daryl Holloway, Jr., David King, Gregory Jones, Donovan Bass-Briscoe, Yohanse Awoke, Jahleel Jackson, Braelen Cage, Phenix Card, Andrew Ramirez-Novas, Owen Pottenburgh, Ryan Payne, Isiah Blue, Sean Burton, Parker Cage, Evan Sussin, Landon Judy, Jaylen Lemon, and Damarius Duncan.

Go Hawks!

AMERICAN FAMILIES

(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, as revealed by The Wall Street Journal on March 10:

The Pentagon's budget request seems large, but the figure is only a 3.2 percent increase, and with inflation at 6 percent it means a decline in buying power. Compare the growth to the double-digit increases for domestic accounts: 19 percent for the Environmental Protection Agency; 13.6 for both Education and Energy Departments; 11.5 percent for Health and Human Services.

Defense in 2022 was only 3 percent of GDP, down from 6 percent during the Cold War, even though America's challenges today are more numerous and acute.

Mr. Biden's largest failure is promising his budget will keep America safe instead of leveling with the public about the threats.

We should have a return of bipartisan support for defending American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the Global War on Terrorism continues moving from Afghanistan to the safe haven of America.

Thank you to the Prime Minister of Japan, Fumio Kishida, for the courage to visit Kyiv, Ukraine, this week as the democracies unite against war criminal Putin.

RECOGNIZING THREE NICARAGUAN PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to place in the RECORD the names of three Nicaraguan political prisoners who were among those released and sent to the United States on February 23, 2023.

Luis Carlos Valle Tinoco, Karla Vanessa Escobar Maldonado, and Yader Antonio Polanco Cisneros joined the massive protests in Nicaragua in April 2018. All were denied due process, imprisoned in deplorable conditions, and refused access to medical care as their health declined just because they disagreed with their government.

They were recognized as prisoners of conscience by the Defending Freedoms Project of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, and I was privileged to serve as their advocate.

Some Nicaraguan prisoners who arrived here are well-known leaders, but many are not. They have been stripped of their nationality, lost everything, and have a tough road ahead.

The Ortega government must be held accountable for its crimes.

SALUTE TO OUR FARMERS AND RANCHERS DURING NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

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

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute our farmers and ranchers as we celebrate National Ag Week.

In Nebraska, we grow the food, fuel, and fiber we need to feed the world.

We are known as the "Cornhusker State" and the "Beef State." We are number one for cattle on feed, number two for ethanol production, and number three for corn exports.

We are home to the four largest center-pivot irrigation manufacturers who help farmers efficiently apply water resources around the globe.

These are just a few of the things that make Nebraska the number one ag State and the number one in the Nation for ag receipts per capita.

We are also home to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Daugherty Water for Food Institute, which is leading the research we need to ensure that our world's natural resources support food security for years to come.

As we celebrate National Ag Week, I would extend a heartfelt thank you to the farmers and ranchers who work hard and sacrifice each day to feed the world.

PAKISTAN DAY

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

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express my love and appreciation for the Pakistani-American community. I am proud to be introducing a resolution supporting a designation of March 23 as Pakistan Day.

The holiday of Pakistan Day, coming up tomorrow, marks the creation of the world's first Islamic Republic. Of course, Ramadan begins at sundown today, so I extend my best wishes for a happy Ramadan to Muslims around the world.

Pakistan Day is an opportunity for people of Pakistani heritage, wherever they live, to join with their neighbors in joy and celebration of their culture, their achievements, and their aspirations for the future. We are all enriched by this spirit.

I am deeply inspired by the contributions of Pakistani Americans who have given their brilliance to my district and our country as educators, innovators, public servants, organizers, and so much more.

Thank you to the American Pakistani Advocacy Group for your work which makes our democracy stronger.

I look forward to joining all those who will be observing Pakistan Day tomorrow, from Islamabad to Yonkers.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOLINARO). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery 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.