

treasures, and these are our libraries, especially at our schools.

Libraries are essential in addressing the achievement gap, and as a former first grade teacher, I know how important it is to all children. Libraries provide students with access to books, technology, and trained librarians who foster literacy and academic success.

Yet in Texas, we are seeing a troubling trend. Houston ISD, which is primarily in my district, has cut 28 librarian positions, and Spring Branch ISD has replaced certified librarians with less qualified staff.

Statewide, over one in five schools no longer has a full-time librarian. These cuts disproportionately affect underserved communities where students rely on libraries for resources they lack at home.

At the same time, Texas has approved a Bible-based curriculum for public schools. While this curriculum is optional, it does nothing to close the achievement gap.

Instead of focusing on ideological narratives, we should invest in proven solutions, like restoring librarian positions to provide equitable access to education and ensure all students can thrive.

Books, which could include the Bible, but many other books, are gateways to opportunity, and librarians are essential guides in that journey. Let's invest in real solutions to ensure every child has the tools to succeed.

HONORING THE FACULTY OF TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of several Texas Southern University faculty researchers in the 18th Congressional District and the great city of Houston.

Since the foundation of Texas Southern University, a historically Black college and university, it has remained a pillar to the Third Ward and the African-American community in Houston at large.

It is home to more than 1,400 outstanding faculty and staff members who each play a critical role in helping this historic institution shape and mold the future of America's finest students.

I would like to recognize a few of the contributions of these faculty researchers who have blazed a path in their respective fields of study: Dr. Robert Bullard, whom my mother, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, worked with closely, is the founding director of the Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice. He is a distinguished professor of urban planning and environmental policy and is often referred to as the father of environmental justice.

He has addressed topics such as environmental racism, urban land use, housing, sustainability, climate justice, and community resilience in 18 books. Dr. Bullard has also helped garner the support of more than \$70 million in external funding.

Dr. Howard Henderson is the founding director of the Center for Justice

Research and a professor of justice administration in the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs. He serves as an advisory board member of the Vera Institute's Rural Jail Research Policy Network. Dr. Henderson is a member of the National Scientific Advisory Committee at the Institute of Justice Research and Development at Florida State University and is a member of the National Science Foundation's STEM Opportunities in Prison Settings workgroup. He has also secured over \$2 million in research funding.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for these great leaders in research.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

H.R. 1432. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to certain organizations for members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 3821. An act to reauthorize the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act of 2018.

H.R. 5863. An act to provide tax relief with respect to certain Federal disasters.

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

S. 712. An act to identify and address barriers to coverage of remote physiologic devices under State Medicaid programs to improve maternal and child health outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women.

S. 3242. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to revise the shareholder threshold for registration under that Act for issuers that receive support through certain Federal universal service support mechanisms, and for other purposes.

S. 3738. An act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 4477. An act to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF JOE TANNER

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of the former Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Joe Tanner, who sadly passed away on Sunday, November 24.

Mr. Tanner had an impressive career in the State government for 26 years, making him the longest serving commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

He was first appointed to the position of commissioner for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 1972. Mr. Tanner served as commissioner until 1984 and completed a second term of service from 1990 to 1995.

Mr. Tanner accomplished many impressive achievements throughout his

career. He was responsible for over 400 legislative efforts and consolidated 38 State agencies into the DNR.

Mr. Tanner was a dedicated servant to the environment and law, known for establishing a State single-point environmental permitting system.

Mr. Tanner will forever be remembered for his excellence and dedicated service to the State of Georgia. My heart and my thoughts go out to his family, friends, and all those who had the pleasure of working alongside him.

CONGRATULATING CASSANDRA CANNON

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cassandra Cannon for her placement in Inc.'s 2024 Female Founders 250 list.

Since launching her luxury lingerie company, Lake, Ms. Cannon has expanded her company immensely, growing Lake's revenue by 50 percent, customer base by 185 percent, and roster of employees by 134 percent in 2023 alone.

Prior to launching the company, Cannon was preparing to begin medical school and her cofounder, Anne Read Lattimore, was working in the pharmaceutical industry.

The two realized there were improvements to be made in the women's sleepwear industry and decided to exit the medical field to launch Lake in 2014.

The company boasts a spectacular headquarters on West Harris Street, coupled with a design studio on Broughton Street in Savannah and fulfillment center in Pooler.

Congratulations to Ms. Cannon, Ms. Lattimore, and the dedicated employees of Lake on this stellar achievement. I look forward to watching this company flourish in years to come.

KIA 15-YEAR MANUFACTURING ANNIVERSARY IN GEORGIA

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kia on 15 years of manufacturing in the State of Georgia.

Boasting 2,200 expansive acres of land in West Point, Georgia, Kia's manufacturing plant is the first North American manufacturing site for the corporation, based in Seoul, South Korea.

After its groundbreaking ceremony in October of 2006, Kia has increased its capacity to produce 350,000 vehicles per year.

Soon Kia will complete its \$217 million expansion to allow for the production of electric vehicles in addition to the plant's customary products.

I extend my most sincere thanks and congratulations to Kia and its Georgia team for their hard work and contributions to growing and strengthening American manufacturing.

Congratulations to Kia and its Georgia team on this significant milestone. I look forward to watching the company continue to provide jobs, opportunity, and top-notch products in Georgia for many years to come.

CONGRATULATING GEORGIA TECH

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Georgia Tech

for ranking number one among public schools in the South. This achievement was recently reported by *The Wall Street Journal* and deservedly reflects the university's impressive legacy.

Georgia Tech has retained its number one spot for industrial engineering and has recently achieved this top ranking for civil engineering.

Meanwhile, the university's aerospace, biomedical, computer, mechanical, and materials engineering programs all ranked in the top four among all universities nationwide.

Georgia Tech is a leader in advancing research and preparing students for careers in technology and innovation. This is an incredible achievement and a source of pride for Georgians everywhere.

Our public universities are great options for young people to get a quality education, and Georgia Tech embodies this to the fullest.

These well-deserved rankings highlight the commitment of students and staff alike to maintaining a culture of innovation and of excellence.

I congratulate the students, the staff, and the alumni of Georgia Tech.

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ARE AT RISK

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, as I rise today, women's basic reproductive freedoms are under relentless attack by rightwing politicians and judges across the country.

Over 2 years ago, Donald Trump's hand-picked MAGA Supreme Court Justices overturned *Roe v. Wade*, dismantling 50 years of judicial precedent.

This catastrophic decision has left one in three women living under outright abortion bans and unleashed a coordinated effort to undermine the full range of reproductive healthcare, including access to birth control.

In his concurring opinion in the *Dobbs* case, Justice Clarence Thomas explicitly called for revisiting the right to contraception. Despite the fact that over 90 percent of women rely on contraception at some point in their lives, extremist Republicans have seized on this as a rallying cry to target birth control.

In Oklahoma, Republican lawmakers have proposed radical legislation to outlaw widely used forms of contraception, including IUDs and the morning-after pill.

In States like Virginia, Arizona, Tennessee, and North Carolina, extremist Republicans have blocked efforts to protect access to contraception.

Adding to this alarming trend, Trump's Project 2025 blueprint outlines a dangerous agenda to further dismantle reproductive healthcare, including targeting emergency contraception and insurance coverage for birth control.

Despite his campaign claims of ignorance about Project 2025, Trump is now staffing his administration with the very architects of this extreme agenda.

I refuse to stand by and let these MAGA extremists interfere with women's private healthcare decisions. That is why I am fighting to pass my Right to Contraception Act to ensure every American has the right to access the full range of FDA-approved birth control.

This legislation is a safeguard against the growing threats to contraceptive rights. It ensures that every American can make crucial decisions about their health, their family planning, and their future.

The Right to Contraception Act guarantees the right to access contraceptive services and protects healthcare providers' ability to deliver them. It also secures access to the full range of contraceptive methods, including birth control pills, IUDs, and emergency contraceptives like Plan B.

In June, I was proud to announce a discharge petition to bring my bill to the House floor for a vote, and I invited my Republican colleagues who claim to support the right to contraception to join me in signing it. All these months later, not a single House Republican has signed that petition.

This comes after 195 House Republicans voted against the right to obtain birth control in the last Congress, and the legislation was blocked by Republicans in the Senate.

To quote award-winning poet and fellow North Carolinian Maya Angelou: "When someone shows you who they are, believe them. . . ."

Time and time again, extremist Republicans have shown us exactly who they are. Their attacks on reproductive rights didn't stop with *Roe*. In fact, they are just getting started.

In contrast, we Democrats believe that every American has the right to decide whether, when, and with whom to have children. No politician or judge should have the power to take that right away.

Republicans purport to believe in small government. Let them start by staying out of our bedrooms and our doctors' offices.

While I may soon be departing Congress because of the outrageous gerrymandering by the Republican-controlled legislature in North Carolina, let me be clear: I will never stop fighting for women to receive the basic reproductive healthcare they need and deserve.

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WASHINGTON'S FISCAL INSANITY

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, when I come to this floor, I often speak about how our brightest days are yet to come, about the next generation of

Americans, and about the future we should be working to build for them.

Currently, the Biden administration and Washington's embrace of fiscal insanity is a stumbling block to reaching that future. In November, America's national debt climbed to \$36 trillion.

This is not normal. Washington, D.C., has a spending addiction, and it is just expected that Americans and future generations of Americans will pay for it. Our Nation, our children, our future grandchildren, and our future great-grandchildren cannot afford for us to continue kicking the can down the road.

Last year, the U.S. Census revealed that the median household income was nearly \$80,000. Today, if everyone decided to pitch in and tackle our debt, every American household would need to contribute almost \$273,000 to bring our balance to zero.

Compare that price tag to the average mortgage in the United States, which is about \$245,000. Our national debt 4 years ago was nearly \$28 trillion. Over the course of 1,400 days, the United States accumulated a debt of \$68,352 per second.

No American family could survive that way. Yet, year after year, this is the way our Federal Government acts. This is not sustainable.

If any Member of this body had a loved one who was racking up debt at this rate, none of us would encourage them to mindlessly continue their spending habits. We would do what we could to help them evaluate their spending and get them back on the right track.

Yet, only about half of this body seems to care about how our Federal Government spends our tax dollars. Our fiscal house is in utter disaster, and we need to get serious and start finding solutions.

Since I was sworn into Congress, I have sounded the alarm on our national debt. I have opposed bloated spending packages that only focused on funding far-left wish lists. I fought to reduce and reprioritize our Federal spending. I have challenged this body to think about the blank checks we are writing and ask ourselves: Is there a way to do this more efficiently?

This petition has often been ignored while Washington sticks to business as normal and spends, spends, spends. Enough is enough. This is not fiscal responsibility. This is fiscal insanity.

On November 5, 2024, America made it clear that we no longer want business as usual in this town. It is time to get our fiscal house in order and to get our country back on track.

As America approaches its 250th birthday, President-elect Trump was spot-on in creating the Department of Government Efficiency as a perfect gift to our Nation and to the next generation of Americans.

Mr. President, hear me loud and clear: We will work with you to make our government work for the people again, to make it efficient again, and