

Together, we broke records, raising over \$600,000, equivalent to 1.7 million meals for families in need. I am inspired every year by the resilience of the walkers and the generosity of the community.

I also want to recognize New England Public Media and 93.9, "The River," for amplifying this cause and inspiring others to join the fight, but let's be clear. Charity alone cannot end hunger. Congress must do its part by further improving our antihunger safety net and supporting programs like SNAP, WIC, TEFAP, and universal school meals nationwide.

The March for the Food Bank is one step we are taking in Massachusetts to improve food security. Hunger is solvable, and it is time for us to end hunger now.

PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH

(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, the military protects the freedom of all American families, and we must provide adequate support to retain our ability to have peace through strength.

Tomorrow, the House will consider the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act to improve the lives of servicemembers and their families and strengthen national security with the energetic leadership of Chairman MIKE ROGERS.

This bill supports the deployment of the National Guard to the southern border, deters the Chinese Communist Party, combats anti-Semitism, blocks war criminal Putin, supports Israel, cuts inefficient programs, and guts woke programs at the Department of Defense.

The legislation improves the quality of life of servicemembers with housing upgrades, pay raises, lower healthcare wait times, better access to childcare, employment support for spouses, and more.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Open borders for dictators put all American families at risk of imminent 9/11 attacks, as warned by the FBI.

Trump will reinstitute existing laws to protect American families with peace through strength. I congratulate Chairman-elect BRIAN MAST.

CINDERELLA STORY OF ASU FOOTBALL

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

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a team from my district, a team that is a Cinderella story for all ages, the Arizona State University football team.

A couple of years ago, the team was in bad shape. This year, the team was coming off two straight seasons of only three wins, their worst stretch since the 1940s.

Coach Kenny Dillingham was hired a couple of years ago, the youngest head coach in Division 1 college football. He grew up in Phoenix. He worked hard at rebuilding this program.

Their star player, running back Cam Skattebo, had only one college scholarship coming out of high school. Analysts predicted that ASU would finish dead last in their first season in the Big 12 Conference, 16th out of 16 teams.

No one believed in them, but they believed in themselves. They are a testament to what anyone can achieve when they show up, work hard, and are good teammates. They won 11-2 this season, undefeated at home for the first time in 20 years.

Just this past Saturday, they had a massive victory over Iowa State and won the Big 12 Conference championship, solidifying their place as one of the best comeback stories in Arizona history.

They are now one of the best teams in the United States. No one is underestimating them now. Coach Dillingham and the people's Heisman winner, Cam Skattebo, and this team are easy to root for. They have activated our valley like never before. Onward to Victory and Forks Up.

CELEBRATING RETIREMENT OF COLONEL ROBERT R. "BART" BARTRAN

(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 honor Colonel Robert Bartran for his remarkable 36 years of dedicated service to the Mississippi Army National Guard.

Over the course of his distinguished career, Colonel Bartran has exemplified what it means to be a true leader—selfless, committed, and always ready to serve.

His service has not only protected our Nation but also strengthened our State and enriched the communities that he has sworn to defend. He has answered the call of duty with distinction, representing the State of Mississippi with pride and honor.

In his role as the director of the counterdrug program for the Mississippi National Guard and as commandant of the Regional Counterdrug Training Academy at Naval Air Station Meridian, Colonel Bartran has made an incredible mark on the battle against illegal drugs and organized crime.

His leadership has not only advanced the mission but has also guided countless servicemembers, empowering them to make a difference in their own communities.

His vision and dedication remain a steady force, driving the success of fu-

ture generations of guardsmen and -women.

On behalf of all Mississippians, we are deeply grateful for Colonel Bartran's extraordinary contributions to our State, Nation, and military.

I thank Colonel Bartran for his tireless commitment, leadership, and unwavering service. As he enters this new chapter of his life, we wish him nothing but success, happiness, and fulfillment.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 7673, LIBERTY IN LAUNDRY ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 4199, JUDICIAL UNDERSTAFFING DELAYS GETTING EMERGENCIES SOLVED ACT OF 2024; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5009, WILDLIFE INNOVATION AND LONGEVITY DRIVER REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1612 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1612

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 7673) to prohibit the Secretary of Energy from prescribing or enforcing energy conservation standards for clothes washers that are not cost-effective or technologically feasible, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 4199) to authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to commit.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 5009) to reauthorize wildlife habitat and conservation programs, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment with an amendment consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-52. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority

member of the Committee on Armed Services or their respective designees. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 4. The chair of the Committee on Armed Services may insert in the Congressional Record not later than December 10, 2024, such material as he may deem explanatory of the Senate amendment and the motion specified in section 3 of this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, last night, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 1612, providing for consideration of three measures, including the Senate amendment to H.R. 5009, the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025.

The rule makes in order a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment with an amendment consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-52.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate on the motion, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee or their respective designees.

The rule also provides that the chair of the Armed Services Committee may insert into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, not later than December 10, 2024, such material as he may deem explanatory of the Senate amendment and the motion specified in section 3.

Additionally, the rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 7673, the Liberty in Laundry Act, under a closed rule.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their respective designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Further, the rule provides for consideration of S. 4199, the Judicial Understaffing Delays Getting Emergencies Solved Act of 2024, under a closed rule.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by

the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the rule and the underlying piece of legislation, beginning with the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025.

Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of Speaker MIKE JOHNSON, Chairman MIKE ROGERS, Ranking Member ADAM SMITH, and additional colleagues in the House and Senate, the fiscal year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act represents the result of months of bipartisan and bicameral collaboration.

It is a bill that balances the needs of our servicemen and -women and the fiscal challenges facing our Nation. The NDAA significantly improves the quality of life for our servicemembers, deters our adversaries, supports our allies, and focuses on military readiness and our national security.

Our country is facing serious threats to our security and freedom at levels that we have not seen since World War II. It is imperative for our national security that our servicemembers and their families are supported so that they can focus on their mission.

Ahead of the NDAA, Chairman ROGERS established a panel to evaluate the quality of life for our servicemembers and found that servicemembers' standards of living are a major cause of low morale and family stress. This undermines our recruitment, retention, and military readiness.

□ 1230

The NDAA puts our servicemembers and their families first and addresses many of the issues found by the Quality of Life Panel. This legislation boosts compensation, improves housing, expands access to medical care, increases access to childcare, and provides support for the spouses of servicemembers.

Through the tireless work of the House Armed Services Committee and Rules Committee staff, the NDAA advances important policies to support our warfighters at home and abroad and deters our adversaries.

The National Defense Authorization Act ensures that our Nation's military is organized, trained, and equipped to deter our adversaries. Communist China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and any other nation or terrorist group must know that they will never succeed in a war with the United States of America.

To strengthen our defense, the NDAA supports the continued modernization of our nuclear deterrent. It invests in our naval fleet, increases innovation, and revitalizes our defense industrial base to ensure our warfighters have the capabilities they need to win on future battlefields.

The NDAA restores American deterrence by restoring lethality, defending Israel, securing our southern border,

and providing oversight and accountability.

We must continue to modernize our military. The NDAA fosters innovation by providing for the development and fielding of artificial intelligence, hypersonics, quantum computing, and autonomous systems.

The NDAA builds and maintains the overmatch we need to deter China. This legislation counters Communist China's malign global influence in Africa, South America, and Central America. The NDAA removes Communist China from our supply chains and prevents CCP spies from infiltrating our research institutions.

The NDAA bolsters Taiwan's defense and support of our Indo-Pacific allies as they work to deter our shared adversaries. This legislation also supports our ally Israel as they defend themselves from Hamas terrorists by fully funding cooperative missile defense programs and expanding emerging technology research and development efforts.

The NDAA reforms and improves the acquisition process by streamlining the budgeting, milestone, and contracting processes making them more efficient, user-friendly, and less costly.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the NDAA includes language that saves our taxpayers over \$31 billion by cutting inefficient programs, obsolete weapons, and Pentagon bureaucracy.

We live in the greatest Nation on Earth, and it is imperative that we support those who protect our freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, the fiscal year 2025 NDAA is another step in that direction.

Now, moving on to H.R. 7673, the Liberty in Laundry Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is simple. It clarifies the intent of the Energy Policy Conservation Act of 1975 by prohibiting the Secretary of Energy from imposing new efficiency mandates or enforcing existing standards for washing machines unless these standards: one, are cost-effective and technologically feasible; two, save the consumers money; and three, save a significant amount of energy.

The Energy Policy Conservation Act of 1975 already requires the Department of Energy to follow specific criteria for prescribing new efficiency standards and the DOE may only propose the new standard if the new standard results in a significant conservation of energy, is technologically feasible, and economically justified.

The DOE, under President Biden, has consistently ignored the consumer protections built into the underlying statute and has used efficiency and appliance standards to pursue climate objectives over consumer choice. They have attempted to impose these mandates on every appliance in our homes: gas stoves, clothes dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and air-conditioners.

These mandates have increased the cost of appliances, undercut appliance production quality, and jeopardized

consumer choice. It is just another example of executive overreach that has made the cost of living for everyday Americans more expensive.

If the Biden administration had proposed standards in accordance with the law, H.R. 7673 wouldn't be coming to the floor.

Finally, we have S. 4199, the JUDGES Act of 2024. It is another simple bill, Mr. Speaker.

Congress last comprehensively updated judgeships for the district courts in the Judicial Improvements Act of 1990. Since then, the population of the United States has grown by nearly 100 million people and Federal caseload has increased by 40 percent.

In the last 20 years, civil cases pending more than 3 years have increased 346 percent and the average time between filing cases and trial is over 2 years, but often it is 3 to 4 years.

This bill is based off the 2023 recommendations of the Judicial Conference of the United States and increases district judgeships by 66 over time, splitting the new judges into six tranches across at least two Presidential administrations.

Additionally, S. 4199 amends certain districts in Utah, Texas, and California, and requires a GAO report on the caseload of district courts and courts of appeals with recommendations on how to alleviate any caseload-related challenges.

Mr. Speaker, to simplify it further, this bill requires the President to appoint, with the advice and consent of the Senate, new judgeships for certain district courts by each of the years 2025, 2027, 2029, 2031, 2033, and 2035.

That is across six different Congresses, across three different Presidential terms, and at least two different Presidential administrations.

This bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent in August. I will say that again, Mr. Speaker. This bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent in August, and the House should now do its part to address the workload demands in the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to consideration of these important pieces of legislation and urge passage of this rule.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and my colleague from Rules (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) for the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, families all across the United States want Congress to help lower the cost of living, whether it is the single mom working to put enough food on the table for her kids or an elder who tries to stretch their Social Security as much as possible. Millions of Americans also worry about the cost of their utilities. Indeed, utility bills are at the heart of our most basic needs. They are some of the highest costs that working families have to think about each month.

H.R. 7673, the Liberty in Laundry Act—yes, I know. Some chuckle just by hearing the title—but the Liberty in Laundry Act betrays Americans' desire for lower costs because it increases utility bills. Energy-efficient washing machines can save the average family up to \$285 over the washing machine's lifetime.

Republicans would take away these savings with these bills. This isn't the first appliance where Republicans are raising costs. Republicans are making your refrigerators, dishwashers, and stoves even more expensive to operate. With these bills attacking energy efficiency, they are definitely not looking after American working families.

Who are they really protecting?

With just 6 more days in the congressional calendar this year, we have a laundry list. Indeed, we need to talk about laundry, but it is the laundry list of unfinished business that Congress should be doing for the American people.

However, my colleagues across the aisle decided that a washing machine is more important than Social Security, the farm bill, nutrition programs, and so much more.

I am here to tell you, when I am in New Mexico, my constituents never ask me what I am doing about washers and dryers unless, of course, I am lost in the hardware store.

They do ask, however, about saving Social Security and lowering the cost of medicine. While Democrats have worked hard to protect Social Security and lower healthcare costs, what do we hear from the other side? Trump's billionaire bros were just here and they said his plans would "necessarily involve some temporary hardship," from billionaire bro Musk.

Now, I need to tell you, if you are a billionaire, a little bit of hardship, you are not going to face with some of the cuts they are talking. Working families will suffer.

This rule also includes the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2025. I am pleased that so much of this year's NDAA is rooted in improving the quality of life for our servicemembers and their families.

These measures, some of which were described by my colleague, include things like the 14.5 percent pay raise for junior enlisted servicemembers and 4.5 percent pay raise for all other servicemembers. They are going to provide our military personnel with the resources they deserve.

Indeed, it is the care for our servicemembers and the shared goal of increased military readiness that typically makes the NDAA very bipartisan. That is why it is, indeed, disappointing that the Republican majority decided to use the NDAA to attack military families with the inclusion of a provision to attack transgender children.

As Ranking Member SMITH eloquently discussed at Rules last night, for the first time, the NDAA is attacking a family member's right to choose

the healthcare they need for their kids. He pointed out that there are thousands of families who rely on medical care to improve the lives of children who suffer from gender dysphoria.

Imagine, you are serving in the Marines because you and your family love your country, but your child is suffering. He comes to you, she comes to you, their pain is so great that they tell you they are contemplating suicide. Of course, as a parent, you want to do everything you can to help your child, and the medical profession has tools that can help. They can help you treat your child, save your child, make sure your child leads a healthy, happy life, but Congress is now telling that marine, you can't get the medical help your child needs.

Congress is telling that marine: We know better.

The Committee on Armed Services did not ask for this ban on transgender healthcare for minors. That was explained to us last night in Rules. This did not come out of the Committee whose goal is to look at armed services. No, this proposed ban was inserted by Speaker JOHNSON.

What Republicans are doing is interfering with a parent's ability to get healthcare for their children.

Why do Republicans keep interfering in personal healthcare decisions?

We have Republican politicians sitting on the examination table when a parent is trying to get their children care just like they sit on the examination table when women are trying to get reproductive healthcare.

This mean provision is a stain on the bipartisan NDAA.

I don't know why Republicans keep launching culture wars when the NDAA should focus on preventing wars.

Finally, the rule also includes the JUDGES Act, adding Federal judges to ensure we guarantee justice in America. We worked on a bipartisan bargain to do just that. Democrats and Republicans negotiated a good, fair deal to pass this bill, but the deal was to pass it before the election so we could ensure impartiality before anybody knew who had won.

Republican leadership went back on that deal and refused to move the bill until Donald Trump won. That is a huge breach of trust.

How are we supposed to negotiate unless the other side keeps their promise?

Republicans broke their word and broke the deal.

Time and again, the Republican majority shows the American people that their priorities are power and partisanship. They did it again with a closed rule for each of these bills, so Congress cannot debate any amendments that were offered.

Members should have the opportunity to debate. The American people should have the opportunity to hear where their Representatives stand on these issues, where they will vote on amendments, but we keep getting denied the right to have any amendments

debated on this floor in the people's House.

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I will take just a second to read to the American citizens the provision that the Democratic Party, at least some in the Democratic Party, are using as an excuse to vote against the National Defense Authorization Act.

I will read this word for word: "Medical interventions for the treatment of gender dysphoria that could result in sterilization may not be provided to a child under the age of 18."

Let me read that one more time, Mr. Speaker. "Medical interventions for the treatment of gender dysphoria that could result in sterilization may not be provided to a child under the age of 18."

□ 1245

That is the provision that they are talking about that is their excuse for voting against the National Defense Authorization Act.

We are talking about children under the age of 18, and we are saying that we are not going to allow a surgical procedure on them that could lead to or result in sterilization.

I don't understand why we are even having this discussion. It defies logic to me that it is even legal to do that to a child under the age of 18. These are permanent and irreversible procedures, and they should not be allowed.

Mr. Speaker, they certainly shouldn't be an excuse to vote against the National Defense Authorization Act.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I point out, once again, that these are decisions, individual decisions with regard to gender care that a marine, a naval officer, or enlisted personnel are making in consultation with their doctors and for their family. We are saying we know better.

I would also point out what happens if your child has not gotten the care they need and have taken their life? Fifty-six percent of transgender youth attempt suicide.

When the Republican Governor of Utah was vetoing a transgender ban, his words were so moving. He said: I don't really understand this, but it is not my place to understand those decisions. This is what haunts me is his statement: "But I want them to live." That is a quote. "But I want them to live."

We should want all of our children to live, and we should let the parents of those children take actions so that their children can live.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Rules and my dear friend and mentor.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I feel like I am living in an alternative reality right now.

Liberty in laundry? I mean, liberty in laundry? Are you kidding me, Mr. Speaker? I mean, you can't make this stuff up. Who came up with the title? ChatGPT? What is next, changing the national motto to "lint free or die"?

It is no surprise coming from the same Republican Party that gave us the Refrigerator Freedom Act and the Hands Off Our Home Appliances Act. I mean, is something wrong with them? I ask that seriously, Mr. Speaker. Americans voted for lower grocery prices, not whatever the hell this is. This is insane.

As I listen to the gentleman on the other side talk about lowering costs for consumers, I have to wonder what bill is he talking about because it is definitely not this one.

This bill gives big companies license to cut corners and make bad appliances that use more electricity and water. I mean, to put it simply, they object to appliances that save consumers money on their bills. What the hell planet are these guys living on where that saves people money?

I remember, Mr. Speaker, when a washing machine used to last 30 years. People could go their whole lives without buying a new refrigerator. Now they break all the time. Why is that? It is because these big, huge companies cut corners and because my Republican friends are letting them do it right here and right now.

That is what this is all about. That is the Republican solution: Let the appliance companies cut corners so they can make a buck, say it will lower costs, and then turn around and act surprised when everyone's crappy washing machine breaks down in 2 years.

This bill is about one thing. It is about making money for big corporations at the expense of everyone else. That is all my Republican friends care about.

Then we have the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2025. I have to tell you, the military budget is out of control. We are looking at over a trillion dollars. I mean, does anyone here realize how much money that is? This is for an agency that cannot even pass an audit. Not once in 33 years has the DOD been able to pass an audit.

Meanwhile, I hear from every one of my friends on the other side of the aisle about the deficit, the deficit, the deficit. There are long diatribes about the national debt. Where is that energy and passion today as we are talking about an agency that probably wastes more money in a second than most people earn in a year?

The kicker here is that all this money we spend on the military, a huge chunk of it doesn't even go to our troops. It goes to defense contractors. It goes to their CEOs. It goes to the military-industrial complex. There is no discussion of that on the floor today—just more money, more money, more money for the Pentagon.

When does it all end?

Don't worry, though, the Republicans found time to strip out language on in

vitro fertilization for our servicemembers. They found a way to deny people IVF because of their extreme views on everything under the Sun. Women's rights, family rights, you name it, they are against it.

They also found a way to talk about transgender people, their weird obsession. They talk about transgender people and bathrooms more than they talk about jobs and the economy. They never miss an opportunity to divide people, to double down on the cruelty.

Once again, the agenda of this majority is just all screwed up, and today's rule is just the latest example of how wrong their priorities are.

Mr. Speaker, before I forget, I have one last thing. This rule that we are debating provides for three more completely closed rules on legislation. This is the most closed Congress in history. This is the most authoritarian House in U.S. history. My colleagues are making Putin proud. But I will tell you this: It is lousy for democracy.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge that the citizens did vote for lower gas prices, grocery prices, secure borders, and extension of the Tax Code.

I again want to read the provision of the bill: Medical interventions for the treatment of gender dysphoria that could result in sterilization may not be provided to a child—a child, Mr. Speaker—under the age of 18.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 9643, a bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have been relentless on their attacks against reproductive healthcare rights, including IVF treatments that are so important to millions of Americans hoping to start a family.

Just recently, the House-passed and Senate-passed versions of the NDAA contained provisions to improve IVF access for our servicemembers. However, what did Republicans do? They stripped those provisions from the legislation we are considering today. They stripped the recommendations to allow access to IVF treatment.

Simply put, that is why we must defeat the previous question and pass H.R. 9643, to ensure that IVF treatment is protected for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment into the RECORD along with any extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD) to discuss our proposal.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, there are only 2 weeks left of this Congress and I, along with many of my colleagues, want to use that time to do useful things that will actually help the American people.

Instead, House Republicans and Speaker JOHNSON have us debating the Liberty in Laundry Act, but I am here today to urge my colleagues to consider a vote on the Right to IVF Act, a bill that I have been proud to lead this Congress, which would protect the right of Americans across the country to receive fertility treatments.

I wish we were not facing unprecedented times, where even our most basic freedoms, including the freedom to start or grow your family, are at risk.

Like so many hopeful parents, I struggled with my own fertility when having my children, and I am so grateful that there were no government restrictions on what was available to me. That would have made an already heartbreaking situation even more heartbreaking.

Unfortunately, politicians and judges across the country are now threatening to strip hopeful parents of that right. Imagine looking at a couple who has been hoping and praying for a baby for years and has struggled to conceive or a cancer patient who has been told by their oncologist that treatment could destroy their fertility, and then telling them that they can no longer turn to IVF.

Imagine a military couple in the midst of IVF treatments in one State where they are permitted, then being transferred to a new post in a State that forbids IVF.

Since long before my time in Congress, I have believed that judges and politicians have no place in your bedroom or doctor's office, and that your personal medical decisions are yours alone to make. That is why I am proud to be the House lead of the Right to IVF Act, which would ensure hopeful parents across the country have access to the fertility treatments they need and to expand insurance coverage to make those treatments more affordable.

With an incoming administration that has promised to roll back reproductive rights, it is more crucial than ever that we pass the Right to IVF Act and prevent access to fertility treatments from being swept up in all the dangerous rhetoric and legislation around embryos and personhood.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, instead of wasting time with messaging bills that have no chance of becoming law, Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans should be taking steps that would actually solve problems for the American people. Please put the Right

to IVF Act on the floor for a vote today, and vote "no" on the previous question so that we can protect Americans' right to build their families free from government interference.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell you a couple of the great things the National Defense Authorization Act does: 14.5 percent pay raise for our junior enlisted, and a 4.5 percent pay raise for all other servicemembers. It fixes some of the cost of living and the basic needs allowances for our soldiers, and it authorizes an additional \$954 million over the Pentagon's request for housing and facility maintenance accounts.

It authorizes over \$569 million to build new family housing units, \$1.2 billion to renovate and build new barracks.

It increases access to childcare, authorizes over \$176 million for the design and construction of new childcare centers. It fully funds childcare fee assistance programs to eliminate all fee assistance wait-lists for eligible families.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of good things in this National Defense Authorization Act. It takes care of our military servicemen and -women, and it makes sure that we are safe.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON), another distinguished member of the Rules Committee and my friend.

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to a rule that demonstrates much of what is wrong with the 118th Congress under this Republican majority, primarily a failure to do the people's business in a timely and serious manner.

This rule has three bills. First, there is S. 4199, which addresses serious understaffing in our Federal courts, which impedes access to justice for all Americans. This carefully negotiated, bipartisan bill should have passed months ago, but it has been delayed in the House to seek partisan political advantage in the staffing of those new positions.

Next, we have the Liberty in Laundry Act, part of the House Republican spin cycle to undermine energy efficiency standards for common household appliances. Like the companion bills that have been offered throughout this term, it would hamper the process of setting energy efficiency standards upon which consumers rely to save money and operate their homes more efficiently.

□ 1300

Finally, and most distressingly, this rule puts forward a politicized version of the National Defense Authorization Act. For 60 years, Congress has worked in a bipartisan manner to draft the NDAA, coming together to put our troops, veterans, and national security above political considerations. The FY25 NDAA breaks from this tradition.

I am deeply opposed to a provision in this NDAA that will prohibit the children of U.S. servicemembers from receiving medical treatment if they are diagnosed with gender dysphoria. This provision has no business being in an NDAA. At a time when we are struggling to recruit and retain soldiers, ensuring access to medical care for servicemembers and their families is more important than ever, but this bill, as written, will take away medically necessary care.

The evidence is clear. Gender-affirming care of various types is life-changing and lifesaving for the children who need it. Our soldiers need to be able to focus on their missions, not worrying whether their children are able to get the medical treatment that they need.

In order to illustrate the impact of this political attack, I would like to share the following story from a military spouse whose family would be harmed by this provision of the NDAA. They write:

My spouse has proudly served in the U.S. Air Force for 22 years, dedicating their life to protecting our country. Over the years, our family has moved across the Nation and the world, embracing the challenges and opportunities that military life brings.

One of the greatest blessings of this life has been the assurance of quality healthcare for our family. It has been a cornerstone of our stability and a key reason why my spouse continues to serve. Knowing we could depend on the military healthcare system gave us the peace of mind to focus on the sacrifices required of us as a military family.

However, I am now writing to you with great concern and a heavy heart. Recent legislative efforts to restrict or eliminate access to gender-affirming care threaten not only the well-being of my trans child but also the very values of dignity and respect that our military stands for.

This care has been transformative for my child, giving them confidence, joy, and a sense of self that we had only glimpsed before. To have this vital care stripped away feels cruel and unjust. For lawmakers to target military families, families who already sacrifice so much for this Nation, only compounds the pain.

My spouse has given 22 years to the service of this country, and now it feels as though the country is turning its back on us.

I am thankful to this military family for sharing their story.

The ability to obtain medical care for one's child, including gender-affirming care, should be between a parent, a child, and their doctor, and politicians should stay the hell out of it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, for all of these reasons, I oppose today's rule.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, again, as long as that treatment did not result in the sterilization of a child under the age of 18, then there is not a provision in this legislation that should be a problem.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. McCORMICK).

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 7673, S. 4199, and H.R. 5009, the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025.

I am confident that this year's NDAA will have a lasting, positive impact on our national security, and I urge my colleagues to support the rule providing for its consideration.

The fiscal year 2025 NDAA authorizes targeted, responsible investments in critical technologies and future capabilities while restoring our military's focus on lethality.

I served with sailors, marines, and Army folks from all walks of life during my time on Active Duty. We all bled red and were all green at heart, and we were all united in our mission to protect the United States.

Putting our differences under the microscope only divides us and distracts us from our mission, so I am pleased that the NDAA gets things like DEI and critical race theory out of the military's divisive issues.

I am also glad that it reauthorizes language I put in last year's NDAA to improve the Defense Department's transparency on how it works with entities that discriminate against conservative voices by steering advertisement dollars away from them.

I was also proud to champion specific provisions in this bill that will help us deter and, if necessary, defeat our allies in the future fight. Things like using drones to clear land mines, changing how we do aircraft maintenance by using AI to bring down costs and improve readiness results, and making it easier for the Marine Corps to procure critical capabilities like LPDs and CH-53K helicopters will all help us maintain our edge over our adversaries using these techniques.

Perhaps most importantly, the NDAA will drastically improve our servicemembers' quality of life, especially for the junior enlisted. The least we can do for our fellow Americans who take up the mantle of service is to make sure they have good housing, quality medical care, and the tools and resources to raise a family in the military if they so choose.

This NDAA deters our adversaries, supports our allies, and exercises Congress' lawful oversight mandate to cut down on waste and improve the way our military does business within the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I express my sincerest thanks to Chairman ROGERS, Ranking Member SMITH, my fellow committee members, and all the staff for their work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have helped with this bill, and I urge swift passage for the rule and swift passage of the fiscal year 2025 NDAA.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire of the gentlewoman if she has any additional speakers.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, indeed, I do have additional speakers.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Vermont (Ms. BALINT).

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, this is a message to all of my colleagues voting on the NDAA and to Americans who might be watching: You are being misled.

Our most cynical Republican colleagues are telling you that Democrats are pushing for sterilization and surgery for kids in military families. Let me be absolutely clear: This is not true. That is not what is going on here.

Here is what is true: TRICARE currently covers appropriate gender-affirming hormone therapy for all military dependents, period, the kind of care that millions of doctors support as safe and effective.

Now, Republicans want to restrict this, but only for trans kids. They are targeting trans kids and their families and saying what kind of healthcare is appropriate for them. This is a very tiny percentage of the population, and they are using this opportunity to scapegoat them.

We know that appropriate and medically recommended care saves lives. We know this. It is well documented. Why wouldn't we want to do everything that we can to save the lives of children?

I am a member of a military family. I was born on an Army base in Germany when my dad served in the military. Military families carry the weight of the world on their shoulders. They shouldn't have to worry whether their kids can receive the lifesaving care that they need.

Our servicemembers have enough to worry about. Why do Republicans want to make it even more complicated for them by limiting healthcare options for their families?

I am here to say it absolutely loud and clear: Military families deserve the healthcare that they need. This includes gender-affirming care options for their children.

Servicemembers across this country and across the world deserve so much better than what they are getting from House Republicans.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, once again, I will read the provision word for word: "Medical interventions for the treatment of gender dysphoria that could result in sterilization may not be provided to a child under the age of 18." That is word for word the language in the bill.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard from my Democratic colleagues as we have raised our voices in opposition to this rule. We have raised our voices in oppo-

sition to this rule for numerous reasons.

One is that it is not really taking care of the people's business, of their most pressing concerns—liberty and laundry, really?—when we could be addressing key things like funding the government, protecting Social Security, passing the farm bill, and making sure that we have the nutrition programs so children do not go to school hungry and stay hungry.

We need to protect education. We need to do all of these things that the American people are asking for, and what do we get instead? We get their bills for liberty and laundry.

This is a continuation of their other bills, you know, stoves, refrigerators, all kinds of things that mean nothing to the American people but that mean a lot to those big corporations and those billionaires.

Time and time again, Republicans have come to this floor and told us who they stand with. They stand with the richest Americans. They stand with the billionaires. They stand with the wealthy corporations who do not want any regulation.

When they say no regulation, what they are saying is don't pass the kinds of regulations that save lives, don't pass the kinds of regulations that make sure that we save money. That is when we will constantly point out every time they do it: Who are you standing with? The wealthiest, the billionaires.

We are standing with working families.

Then, we have the NDAA, something that is usually and almost always bipartisan. You do not hear the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee come before the committee and describe how these kinds of provisions are poison pills, how they are a stain on bipartisanship.

My colleague across the aisle keeps getting up and pointing out one provision, but that provision fails to acknowledge that the lack of care leads to death, leads to suicide. You are standing in between a father, a mother, and their child. You are standing in between the parents, the doctors, and their child.

I think that Americans deserve more. We deserve American families, especially those who, as the story from the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON) said, have sacrificed so much for our Nation, who go and travel from one base to another base to another base knowing they can get care for their children.

Members on the other side say: No, no, no, we know better than you. We know better than the parent and the doctor as to what care your child should get.

That is insulting to our marines, to those who serve in our Navy, to those who are deployed overseas and on our bases around our own country. They deserve better.

That is why we are calling out that provision, because it interferes with a

family's ability to get care for their children. Because of these tragic problems and the fact that you don't let us debate anything—all those amendments that were offered, no, we never get to debate any of those, so the American people don't know. They can't hear us talk about these things. This is one of the only times we get to come to talk about these things.

For these reasons, I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I think every American knows that when agencies pass rules and regulations just for the sake of passing rules and regulations, those rules and regulations increase the costs of consumer goods. It doesn't hurt the billionaire. It hurts the working Americans.

This week, we have the ability to advance significant legislation in the House of Representatives. In fiscal year 2025, the National Defense Authorization Act fully authorizes our national defense and improves efficiency while eliminating wasteful spending and harmful programs.

□ 1315

Mr. Speaker, it strengthens our military and takes important steps to address the security threats Americans face from our adversaries including China, Iran, and foreign terrorist organizations.

It improves our military readiness, provides robust support to our ally, Israel, and supports law enforcement operations at our southern border.

Critically, Mr. Speaker, it focuses on improving the quality of life of our servicemembers and their families who sacrifice so much to defend us. This NDAA provides a 14.5 percent pay raise for our junior enlisted servicemembers and a 4.5 percent pay raise for all other servicemembers.

The NDAA has been enacted into law every year for 63 years, and I encourage all Members to do what is best for our military and national security and support this legislation.

Additionally, H.R. 7673, the Liberty in Laundry Act, pushes back on executive overreach that is increasing the costs of appliances and diminishing their quality.

Again, H.R. 7673 clarifies the intent of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act by prohibiting the Secretary of Energy from imposing new efficiency mandates or enforcing existing standards for washing machines, unless they are cost effective and technologically feasible, not likely to result in any additional costs to Americans, and save a significant amount of energy.

Again, passing additional rules and regulations that increase the cost of people's appliances doesn't matter to the billionaire. It does matter to the working American.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bill which supports energy

efficiency standards. As long as the technology exists to meet them, they don't take more money out of the pockets of hardworking Americans, and they actually save energy.

Finally, S. 4199, the JUDGES Act of 2024, adds 66 judgeships over three different Presidential terms. It fairly works to address the workload demands in our courts. I call on my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on the previous question and "yes" on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I urge on my colleagues to support this legislation which passed out of the Senate unanimously.

The material previously referred to by Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ is as follows:

The material previously referred to by Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1612 OFFERED BY
MS. LEGER FERNANDEZ OF NEW MEXICO

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 5. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the bill (H.R. 9643) to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 6. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 9643.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

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

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1330

AFTER RECESS

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 4367;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1612;

Adoption of House Resolution 1612, if ordered; and

The motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 3613.

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.

THOMAS R. CARPER WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 4367) to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 399, nays 18, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 493]

YEAS—399

Adams	Brownley	Cohen
Aderholt	Buchanan	Cole
Aguilar	Bucshon	Collins
Alford	Budzinski	Comer
Allen	Burchett	Connolly
Allred	Burlison	Correa
Amo	Bush	Costa
Amodei	Calvert	Courtney
Armstrong	Cammack	Craig
Arrington	Caraveo	Crawford
Auchincloss	Carbajal	Crenshaw
Babin	Cárdenas	Crockett
Bacon	Carey	Crow
Baird	Carl	Cuellar
Balderson	Carson	Curtis
Balint	Carter (GA)	D'Esposito
Banks	Carter (LA)	Davids (KS)
Barr	Carter (TX)	Davidson
Barragán	Cartwright	Davis (IL)
Bean (FL)	Casar	Davis (NC)
Beatty	Case	De La Cruz
Bentz	Casten	Dean (PA)
Bera	Castor (FL)	DeGette
Bergman	Castro (TX)	DeLauro
Beyer	Chavez-DeRemer	DeBene
Bice	Cherfilus-	Deluzio
Bilirakis	McCormick	DeSaulnier
Bishop (GA)	Chu	DesJarlais
Bishop (NC)	Ciscomani	Diaz-Balart
Blumenauer	Clark (MA)	Dingell
Blunt Rochester	Clarke (NY)	Doggett
Bonamici	Cleaver	Donalds
Bost	Cline	Duarte
Bowman	Cloud	Duncan
Boyle (PA)	Clyburn	Dunn (FL)
Brown	Clyde	Edwards