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No. 5

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 10, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARCUS J. MOLINARO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2024, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING MELVIN DANIEL

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the late Melvin Daniel who will be posthumously inducted into the Arkansas Agricultural Hall of Fame in March.

A Bismarck native, Melvin spent 37 years as an agriculture education teacher and FFA adviser for the Glenwood, Lake Hamilton, and Foreman school districts, including 33 years at

Lake Hamilton where he advised the school's first FFA State officer, first American FFA Degree recipient, and trained 33 State-winning FFA judging teams.

Melvin was a dedicated agriculturalist known not only for his dedication to agricultural education and FFA but also for his passion for raising Black Angus and Limousine cattle and for his time spent as director of the Master Gardeners program with the Garland County Cooperative Extension Service.

Although I never had Mr. Daniel as my ag teacher, he taught at a neighboring high school. I spent much time with him and his students at fairs, conventions, and contests. Mr. Daniel had a desire to see all students succeed, whether they were his students or not. I was one of those who benefited from knowing him.

I am honored to stand today and recognize my friend, Mr. Melvin Daniel, for his lifelong commitment to agriculture. His induction to the Arkansas Agricultural Hall of Fame is well deserved, and I know his family and the community are still inspired by his service.

HONORING THE BRAGG FAMILY

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend my condolences to the friends and loved ones of the Bragg family from Monticello. While visiting family in Michigan over the holiday, Hope and Don Bragg, their son Kenny and their daughter, Elizabeth, lost their lives in a house explosion. Their son Stephen and Hope's father, Richard Pruden, made it out but are still in recovery.

Hope was a dedicated Arkansas 4-H instructor, and Don was a renowned scientist, who conducted critical research at the University of Arkansas at Monticello that will forever impact forestry in Arkansas and nationwide.

In fact, much of the research that Don conducted has impacted the work

that I have done throughout my career as both a forester and a Member of Congress.

I am thankful for both Hope and Don's contributions to the agricultural and forestry sectors, but, furthermore, I am thankful for their generous contributions to their community.

I was devastated to learn about this tragedy, as I know many were. Hope and Don's absence will be greatly felt and impact many in Drew County and across the country, but they leave behind a lasting legacy of love for science and public service.

My prayers go out to Stephen and Mr. Pruden as they recover from this disaster and the Braggs' friends and families as they navigate this devastating loss.

RECOGNIZING TOM NICHOLS

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Tom Nichols for his distinguished career in broadcast radio. For over 65 years, Tom Nichols has been in the radio business in Arkansas. Since 1958, when he got his start with the Hot Springs DJs, Tom has impacted the Natural State's radio industry beyond measure.

After years of managing KZNG in Hot Springs, Tom and his wife, Polly, became trailblazers in Arkansas radio when they started the first-ever radio station in Pike County in Glenwood. What began as a small AM radio station became the spot for Arkansans in Pike County to receive breaking news and daily entertainment on AM and FM frequencies.

As KWXI grew in Glenwood, Tom and Polly saw a need for quality radio in Hot Springs Village, and, thus, they started KRVE where they still are today. The KVRE call letters mean Village Radio Entertainment, which is exactly what they are all about.

One of Arkansas' last family-owned and operated stations, KVRE is known as being personable and making its listeners feel like friends and family. As

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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



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someone who has joined Tom on KVRE for several interviews, I can attest to the familiar and personal environment he and his family have curated in Hot Springs Village.

Tom has not only been able to capture and maintain the nostalgia of hometown radio with local personalities and local news, but he has adapted with the times. You cannot only listen at 92.9 locally, but you can also listen worldwide at KVRE.com.

It is with great honor that I rise today to recognize Tom Nichols and his 65 years of service in radio broadcasting.

HONORING JOSE DE SOSA

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true champion for community empowerment and civil rights in the San Fernando Valley and beyond, the incomparable Jose De Sosa.

Jose De Sosa dedicated over six decades of his life to tirelessly advocating for justice, equality, and the well-being of our community. His passing leaves a void that will be felt by all those lives he touched.

Born in Panama City, Panama, Jose later migrated to New York City where he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served our country for over 10 years.

That service was one of the many milestones he accomplished throughout his life.

Jose met his beautiful wife, Juanita, in 1959. They got married and moved to Pacoima where they raised seven outstanding children.

In his life's works, he demonstrated his commitment to justice and equity over the course of his 36 years working for Pacific Telephone Company which later became AT&T.

In fact, he was a leader in pushing the Pacific Telephone Company to recruit from the Los Angeles Unified School District's Skills Center, improving economic opportunity for Black and Brown students and enabling hundreds of people to secure work and provide for their families in those good-paying jobs.

But Jose's biggest impact on the San Fernando Valley was through his positions with the NAACP, where he served as president of the local chapter, and his various roles as a board member in regional and State-level organizations.

He was the first Afro-Latino to be elected president of a local and state-wide NAACP, and he used his Black and Latino heritage to build working relationships between both communities and beyond.

In challenging times during the 1980s, when Pacoima grappled with issues of police brutality from the Los Angeles Police Department, Jose De Sosa emerged as a fearless leader. His un-

wavering commitment to justice was instrumental in banning the use of the carotid choke hold by the LAPD, a pivotal step towards safeguarding the rights, safety, and dignity of all individuals.

He worked with many of my colleagues, such as the legendary Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS and also Congresswoman Diane Watson to hold LAPD accountable.

It is these examples of his incredible leadership that makes Jose De Sosa's impact felt both locally and nationally. This advocacy on behalf of the safety of his community even led to a landmark Supreme Court decision sharply limiting the use of battering rams by law enforcement.

His dedication to protecting the civil rights of all people reverberated throughout our community and set a precedent for justice.

Even in his later years, Mr. De Sosa continued to serve his community with passion and vigor. He remained accessible and responsive to our community, making phone calls and sending emails whenever his assistance was needed to help a good cause.

These efforts included actively informing people about programs that save money through solar energy, demonstrating his commitment to both the environment and sustainability and economic empowerment for all communities.

He also continued to serve on various boards, such as the Valley Interfaith Council, Alicia Broadous-Duncan Multipurpose Senior Center, Boys & Girls Club of San Fernando Valley, Greater San Fernando Valley Optimist Club and Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County.

In fact, the Neighborhood Legal Services' community room in Pacoima is named in his honor.

Mr. De Sosa's legacy is one of resilience, determination, selflessness, and service to all. His life's work has left an indelible mark on the landscape of civil rights and the community and advocacy overall. As we reflect on his contributions, let us remember Mr. De Sosa as an inspiration to us all—a true force for positive change.

May his memory be a guiding light for future generations as we strive to continue the fight for justice and equality for all. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends, and all those who were fortunate enough to know this remarkable individual.

I had the honor of recognizing Mr. De Sosa last year right here on the United States House of Representatives floor to commemorate Black History Month as one of our leaders in Pacoima and the San Fernando Valley.

A few years later, we honored him in the community at the Boys & Girls Club of San Fernando Valley. We shared stories and laughed and even cried together.

Mr. De Sosa was married to his wife and partner, Juanita, for 61 years. She

passed recently. They were world travelers, and they instilled that in their children and their descendants.

He leaves grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews, friends, and acquaintances. We all miss him. May his legacy endure and inspire us to build a more just and compassionate society for everyone.

CRISIS AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight how President Biden's open-border policies and Senator SCHUMER's inaction and refusal to pass our Border Security Act is resulting in everyday Americans dying.

In 2023, the overdose death rate topped 112,000 individuals, setting a new record.

Fentanyl is still the number one killer of Americans aged 18 to 45. Mr. Speaker, 70 to 80 percent of all fentanyl in the U.S. comes from the southern border. That is not just me saying it, that is what the Drug Enforcement Administration is saying.

Drug cartels are making \$32 million a week smuggling individuals into our country. Yes, every asylum seeker, migrant, illegal immigrant, whatever you want to call them, that is coming through our southern border is paying the drug cartels, who, in turn, then use that money to continue to poison our children by selling drugs.

The DEA seized 384 million doses of fentanyl. That is enough to kill every single American. The DEA stated that in December of 2022, most of the fentanyl being trafficked was from two cartels, and it is being mass produced at secret factories in Mexico with chemicals being sourced largely from China.

In May of last year, the DEA conducted an operation that resulted in over 3,000 arrests, the seizure of almost 44 million fentanyl pills, more than 6,500 pounds of fentanyl powder, more than 91,000 pounds of methamphetamine, roughly 8,400 firearms, and more than \$100 million.

Yes, the DEA is doing a great job, but look at the pressure we are putting on this agency simply because the President insists on having an open border, and Senator SCHUMER refuses to do his job.

We passed legislation here to add fentanyl and all its analogues to schedule 1, and he refuses to do it over there. We passed the Border Security Act in May, and he has been sitting on it since then. We took action to halt and put sanctions on Chinese entities that are manufacturing and producing this fentanyl, and, yet again, the Senate refuses to take action.

□ 1015

According to the DEA, Mexican criminal organizations are now the

most prominent wholesale-level heroin traffickers in Chicago, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Washington, and they have a great presence in my city of New York.

Let's talk about New York City. Last year, we saw more than 3,000 people die from drug overdoses in New York City, 80 percent of which were tied to fentanyl. That number has doubled since the New York Democrats and the legislature passed the 2020 bail law allowing traffickers and dealers to be released automatically back onto our streets.

Look at these headlines: "Suspects accused of running \$7M fentanyl ring released without bail"; "NY's lax bail law lets lethal fentanyl peddlers off scot-free"; "NY bail laws required most of 30 drug dealers busted on [Long Island] for peddling 'tranq,' cocaine and fentanyl to be 'automatically released'"; "Mexican cartel smugglers nabbed with \$1.2M worth of meth in NYC—then released thanks to lax bail laws"; "New York man busted with 20K fentanyl pills released without bail"; "Six people busted as part of \$7M drug trafficking ring in Bronx released without bail under new State law," which Kathy Hochul and the Democrats refuse to fix.

The Federal policies of the Democrats, coupled with the policies of my State government, have been a complete failure and disaster, and Americans are dying as a result.

Once again, I urge my Governor and the State legislature to do their job, and I urge our colleagues on the other side in the Senate to do their job. We took action here in the House. We passed multiple pieces of legislation, most predominantly the Border Security Act. I expect CHUCK SCHUMER to care about what is happening in his own State of New York and do the same.

REINSTATE LIMIT ON HIGH-CAPACITY MAGAZINES

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, last year set the record for the highest number of mass murders with a firearm in more than a decade. In fact, 2023 marked yet another year where there were more mass shootings than days in the year.

These events continue to retraumatize our communities and our Nation because no community has been untouched by this deadly epidemic.

One common denominator in these mass murders is the use of large capacity ammunition feeding devices, or high-capacity magazines. These magazines hold 30, 40, or even 100 rounds of ammunition, and they have been used in all 10 of our Nation's deadliest mass shootings. High-capacity magazines increase a shooter's ability to kill or injure large numbers of people quickly.

One event that I still remember starkly is the shooting in Aurora, Colo-

rado, at the movie theater, which is just a few miles from my home. One single perpetrator used an assault rifle and a 100-round magazine to fire 65 shots within just minutes, killing 12 people and injuring 70 others.

Despite the fact that many members of the audience for that movie were either Active-Duty military or veterans who were trained to respond to a situation just like this, they were unable to respond because the volley of bullets was simply too extreme. The high-capacity magazine allowed that shooter to continue firing, pinning people down as shot after shot rang out.

There are so many more examples of this terrible, terrible destruction: Columbine, also right outside my district; Dayton; Las Vegas; Parkland. No other developed country experiences this level of violence from firearms.

Now, I recognize there is not one single piece of legislation that will completely end gun violence, but something must be done. In mass shootings with four or more people killed between 2015 and 2022, high-capacity magazines led to more than twice as many people being killed and nearly 10 times as many people being wounded per incident on average.

It makes sense if you think about it because if you have just a few rounds of ammunition, then those highly trained soldiers and veterans in that movie theater audience would have been able to stop the shooter, tackle him, and disable him after he stopped shooting. Instead, when you can shoot up to 100 rounds in rapid fire, this is not possible.

High-capacity magazines were designed for war. They weren't designed for hunting. They weren't designed for self-defense. Yet, they continue to be used against our fellow citizens in our hometowns and communities.

Experts agree that reinstating the limit on high-capacity magazines would be an effective step in protecting our communities.

Today, Representatives TITUS and SCHNEIDER, along with the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and I, are announcing that we are filing a discharge petition to bring the Keep Americans Safe Act up for a vote so we can reinstate the U.S. ban on high-capacity magazines.

My bill would prohibit the sale or transfer of any high-capacity magazine capable of holding more than 15 rounds of ammunition. This is legislation that has been passed by this Chamber two times 2 years ago as part of the Assault Weapons Ban and the Protecting Our Kids Act.

It is our obligation as Members of Congress to keep the American people safe and to protect our communities. Now is the time to reinstate the limit on high-capacity magazines.

The petition will now be filed at the desk, and I urge all of my colleagues to sign it. It will take 218 signatures to bring this bill to the floor and to move us one step closer to eradicating the

terrible ravages of gun violence for the American people.

TRUE THREATS TO DEMOCRACY

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, President Biden marked the third anniversary of the January 6 Capitol riot by calling it a "day that we nearly lost America," and he asked: "Is democracy still America's sacred cause?"

That is an important question. What happened on January 6 was a national disgrace. A riotous mob disrupted the Congress and its congressional responsibility to observe the counting of the votes of the electoral college. To conclude that "we nearly lost America" to a lunatic wearing buffalo horns that day is hysterical hyperbole, to say the least. True insurrections are made of sterner stuff.

When the last of these yahoos was kicked out of this building a few hours later, Congress calmly completed the electoral count and confirmed Joe Biden's election.

Nevertheless, Mr. Biden is correct to raise concerns about the growing threats to our democracy, and he is right that democracy depends on the loser of an election accepting its outcome as the legitimate will of the majority. Many Democrats refused to do that in 2016 and many Republicans in 2020.

Why do so many voters no longer trust the integrity of our elections? Could it be that so many of the safeguards that assure a fair election and an accurate count have been stripped away?

For hundreds of years, we all looked our neighbors in the eye as they handed us our ballots. We all cast our votes in curtained booths where no one could influence us. We all watched our ballots placed in locked containers. At 8 p.m., we knew exactly how many votes had been cast, and a few hours later, we knew the outcome of all the elections.

We all had our say during the campaign, and we waited until the debate was over to make our decision on election day. It was very hard to cheat, and everyone could trust that process.

All that has changed. In recent years, the leftist Democrats have rigged election laws to extend voting over an entire month, accept ballots after election day, harvest ballots by political operatives, use mail-in ballots where there is no chain of custody, prevent observers from unobstructed views of ballot counting, and suppress debate and hide critical information from voters.

Freedom of speech is the beating heart of democracy, yet the left-leaning bureaucracies, increasingly independent of the will of the voters, actively colluded to influence elections by intimidating political opponents, starting with the Tea Party. They have

promoted utterly false narratives, most notably the Russian collusion hoax.

Courts have recently found the government guilty of violating the First Amendment by actively pressuring social media platforms to censor the very political dialogue that is central to the functioning of a democracy. The President even attempted to establish a disinformation czar to decide what information could reach voters.

Our fundamental democratic institutions are also under growing attack. The left has been very clear that it intends to pack the Supreme Court by creating new seats for leftist appointments and to pack the Senate by creating overwhelmingly Democratic States, like Washington, D.C.

Less than 2 years ago, leftist mobs descended on the homes of Supreme Court Justices in an illegal attempt to pressure and intimidate them, yet Mr. Biden's Department of Justice refused to enforce the law that protects jurists from such bullying.

The President has opened our borders and produced an illegal mass migration unprecedented in our history while his party has pushed to permit foreign nationals to vote in our elections, making a mockery of Americans' right to self-determination.

How does Mr. Biden explain the unprecedented acts of his agents seeking to ban from the ballot candidates who directly challenge his candidacy? It is not just the brazen and unconstitutional attempt to keep his leading Republican challenger from the ballot. The agents of his party have been aggressively working to ban Democratic primary challengers as well and seizing from Democratic voters in Iowa the right to have any meaningful say in next week's election, for fear they would not vote for him in sufficient numbers.

Mr. Speaker, our democracy is indeed under attack from the lunatic fringe on both extremes. When we ask which presents a clear and present danger to our democracy, I would respectfully but earnestly suggest the President remove the log from his own eye before he criticizes the speck in his neighbor's.

HONORING KEN SMITH

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

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to honor the extraordinary career of Ken Smith, who at one time was from Delaware and then Virginia and now makes his home in Florida.

A long time ago, in the faraway land of Delaware, Ken was a young policy assistant to Governor Pete du Pont, after serving as a staff aide during the Nixon administration. His career in education had started in 1973 when President Nixon appointed him vice chairman of the National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children.

Governor du Pont and Ken made the startling discovery that there was enormous economic, social, and cultural potential residing in adults who had dropped out of high school but were never realized because of educational and career blockages. These were smart kids, but kids who, for whatever reason, had to quit school and go to work.

With the Governor's blessing and leadership, Ken created Jobs for Delaware's Graduates, a model program for intervening with the young women and men most likely to drop out, saving them not just to get them to graduation but to land them in good jobs or at least postsecondary education.

Jobs for Delaware's Graduates worked so well, Governor du Pont shared its success with Republican and Democratic Governors across the country, and many created their own programs. Vice President Walter Mondale was so impressed, he asked them to replicate it across the country. They needed a national leader, and Ken Smith was chosen to be the first—and for more than 40 years the only—CEO and President of Jobs for America's Graduates.

Jobs for America's Graduates launched in four States, including Virginia, and was bipartisan from the very start. Ken wisely cultivated Governor after Governor from both parties to grow the programs in their States, knowing that this was the most secure path to sustained economic growth and to overcome the poverty that cursed our least educated.

Today, Jobs for America's Graduates is helping 75,000 young people per year in over 1,450 high schools, middle schools, and out-of-school programs in more than 40 States.

I had the great privilege of chairing Jobs for Virginia's Graduates for 14 years, always bipartisan. It is now led by the Honorable Eileen Filler-Corn, the first woman speaker in the Virginia House. JVG is serving the kids with barriers to success in over 50 Virginia high schools today.

Ken Smith wisely created a national board to oversee the growth of this most successful high school dropout prevention program. The board chair is always a Governor, and it alternates between a Democratic and Republican every year. We are honored to have Governor Kim Reynolds of Iowa chair the board this year. She succeeded Governor John Bel Edwards last year. A fun fact is that the Jobs for America's Graduates board has more Governors than any other board, including the National Governors Association.

□ 1030

Ken's leadership and advocacy over 40 years has inspired many highlights, from Governor George Bush installing the program in every high school in El Paso, to Governor Mike Pence expanding all throughout Indiana. Our own Virginia Governor, Chuck Robb, served as national chairman; and our current

Governor, Glenn Youngkin, has kept this commitment in his budget.

Remarkably, with Ken Smith at the helm, over 1,400,000 young men and women have graduated from high school, exceeding expectations they and their families had rarely hoped for.

In more than 40 years, Jobs for America's Graduates has never had a graduation rate below 90 percent, and today, the current graduation rate is above 95 percent.

Throughout his career, Ken has been appointed by multiple Presidents to serve as an education adviser given his deep connection and commitment to helping youth.

Thanks to Ken could not be given without saying thank you to his family, of course, who supported him throughout his career. Nora, his wife; Tara and Jennifer, his daughters; and most recently, his two granddaughters continue to support his work.

I have known many good human beings in my life. I get to serve in this House, where the great majority of us, Democrats and Republicans, serve because we are trying to make the world and America a better place. I have almost never met a man who has had as great a lifetime impact on far more than 1 million young people than Ken Smith. He has given his life to others and changed those lives with his love, hard work, and his courage.

Ken Smith, in your deserved pretend retirement, I salute you and thank you for your inspiration and your service.

REGAINING OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF OUR BORDER

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

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I visited the southern border last week in Eagle Pass, Texas, to see the situation at our border firsthand and to hear from Border Patrol, landowners, judges, and community members on how this is impacting them.

This was my fourth border visit since I have been in Congress. The crisis at our border is worse than ever.

Just last month, CBP reported 302,000 illegal crossings. That is enough people to fill out the Anaheim Angel Stadium nearly seven times over, just from one month.

I heard from Border Patrol who said they are spreading themselves thin as we see more crossings. They have become caretakers instead of devoting their time to handling the backlog of illegal migrants or working to protect our border.

The border facilities are expensive. In fact, the Del Rio and Eagle Pass facilities alone cost \$25 million to maintain every month. This doesn't include the salaries of Border Patrol agents.

I heard from county leaders who said that every week they perform autopsies on dead migrants found at the border. The price that both migrants and our communities pay is staggering.

Meanwhile, we have some reports of the Biden administration storing unused physical barriers and technologies at taxpayers' expense that could be used to help secure our border.

The numbers are startling, and the stories are heartbreaking. As a mother, grandmother, and immigrant who came here legally as a young girl, seeing these migrants being exploited by cartels breaks my heart.

Let me be clear, there is nothing fair, humane, or compassionate about the Biden administration's border policies. In fact, the Biden administration and DHS Secretary Mayorkas' open border policies have only emboldened cartels, giving them \$32 million a week profit. While cartels line their pockets and funnel fentanyl into our streets and our schools, Americans are endangered, and our Border Patrol is overworked and overwhelmed.

Sadly, this has undermined the legal immigration process and all those who have been waiting and playing by the rules.

This year, marks 100 years of the U.S. Border Patrol. Let's do right by these brave men and women who have dangerous and demanding jobs and give them the tools they need to protect us.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced a bipartisan border strategy bill to gain operational control of our southern border, and I am committed to do my part in being part of the solution here. The Biden administration must come to the table and do the same.

THANKING MIKE MARKUS FOR HIS DEDICATION
TO THE WATER DISTRICT

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank the Orange County Water District general manager, Mike Markus, for his dedicated service to the water district and to ensuring access to clean water for our Orange County communities and residents.

During his impressive 35-year career, Mike managed the implementation of the Groundwater Replenishment System program, which has become the largest potable reuse project in the world with a capacity to hold enough water for 1 million people.

Mike has received many notable and well-deserved awards for his work, including most recently the USC Sonny Astani Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award.

He has been a great resource to me and my office and I appreciate his partnership in supporting our communities. It has been a great privilege to work with his son, Dan, who is the staff director on the House Foreign Affairs Indo-Pacific Subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mike for everything, and I wish him a very wonderful and successful retirement.

SOCIAL SECURITY: A PROMISE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I wish my constituents back home in the 21st Congressional District and Americans throughout the country a very happy new year. May it bring us good tidings and health, and may the Congress come together to solve some of the critical problems that we are facing in our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 83 years ago, the first Social Security check went out. Beginning as a promise for future generations of America, it was an attempt to create a safety net; and it has. Social Security is the major source of income for the majority of people over the age of 65; that accounts for over 70 million Americans.

In my 21st Congressional District, located in California's San Joaquin Valley, nearly 88,000 people depend upon this program for their basic needs: for food, for rent, for groceries. It is critical therefore that we address the issues involving Social Security.

A lot has changed in our country since it was first enacted in the 1930s during the Great Depression. Americans today, those who are receiving, and those who hope to receive Social Security, fear that the future of this vital program and their benefits are at risk, and they should be.

Why? Well, the long-term financial integrity of Social Security is not sustainable, and therefore, we have to fix it.

Instead of fixing Social Security, many of my extreme MAGA Republicans are focused on gutting the program and cutting vital benefits. That is wrong.

Under the leadership of my good friend Congressman JOHN LARSON, House Democrats have put forth a plan of action to secure and expand the benefits of Social Security. The Social Security Act of 2100: A Sacred Trust Act permanently improves Social Security's long-term health by extending the trust fund's solvency, which is critical, without any increase in taxes on the middle class. Let me repeat that: without any increase in taxes on the middle class.

It also repeals the bureaucratic rules, like the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset that prevents law enforcement officers, firefighters, and their families from receiving full benefits. They should receive full benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of this bill because Congress must uphold its promise to all seniors so they can retire with respect and dignity.

What are we talking about? We are talking about America's safety net. American seniors and future generations deserve better. We owe it to them who have spent their entire lives contributing to make their country a better place to live and who are counting on Social Security in their golden years.

Our country needs a roadmap to protect Social Security for generations to come, and this bill will do just that. I

remain committed to upholding the sacred trust that was made many years ago, working together with Republicans and Democrats for all Americans to fix the solvency of our Social Security system.

SECURING OUR BORDER

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, much has been said about the challenges we face at the border and immigration in America. We must fix this broken immigration system. We had an opportunity in 2013, and Republicans and Democrats must come together to protect our border, to protect it from human trafficking and from the movement of illicit drugs.

With commonsense action, I believe we can come together to do this. I will continue to work with my colleagues so that we can fix our broken immigration system and secure our border. That is what needs to be done.

HONORING THE LATE SERGEANT JUAN ERIC CANTU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an incredible man and former constituent, the late Sergeant Juan Eric Cantu.

Sergeant Cantu honorably served our Nation as a member of the U.S. Army during the war in Vietnam with the 228th Aviation Battalion associated with the 1st Cavalry Division. He deployed to Vietnam from 1966 to 1968 and was a tail gunner on a Chinook helicopter and a fixed rotor mechanic.

He served as commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars, president of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 892, and a founding member of AMVETS Post 1111.

Additionally, Mr. Cantu founded the legendary GI Joe's Living Military History Museum in Kinston, which displays memorabilia, uniforms, weapons, and photos from all major conflicts starting with the Revolutionary War and became a place of comfort and solace for veterans to share their stories and heal their wounds.

Those who knew Mr. Cantu described three principles that best defined him: his legendary work ethic, his optimistic nature, and his love for his fellow veterans.

We honor him today. We remember him today. Sergeant Juan Eric Cantu was a humble servant, community leader, and remarkable human.

May he rest in peace and may God bless his family and friends.

MEDICARE FEE CUT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the proposed 3.37 percent Medicare fee cut. When a physician sees a Medicare patient, they do so out of the goodness of their heart. They care for the patient. It doesn't make financial sense.

When you see a Medicare or Medicaid patient, you actually lose money. It

costs more to see patients than you are getting for the cost of care.

When I ran a private practice, I stayed up many, many nights, Saturday nights, trying to find out how to squeeze out money—to find each paper clip, make sure that we knew where the staplers were—just to make sure that we made payroll and that we paid the light bill.

Oftentimes I did not take a salary when we could not do that, but that was private practice. We were our own destiny. We knew how to take care of patients. We had an ownership in patients.

When adjusted for inflation over the last 20 years, the Medicare fee schedule for physicians has been cut by 20 percent.

What other profession expects to be cut year after year rather than receive raises, especially during this inflationary period?

One of ObamaCare's directives was to starve private practice, to force them, to drive them into employment. My former practice is employed now by a hospital. They have done well, but this is an entirely different tenet with patient care.

Physicians are being cut every year in their pay. Hospitals, albeit smaller, get raises every year.

□ 1045

While this still may not be much to carry the cost of care in these hospitals, but why are the people who are providing care to the patients the ones who are being cut?

Why is this a bad model?

It is because I think employed physicians tend to be a different bird from private practice physicians. They tend to be more working on the clock, they tend to decrease efficiency, and they actually increase the cost of care.

There is much more ownership with private practice physicians. When a private practice physician comes into a community, they establish roots, and they become part of the community. They join churches, and they join civic groups.

Unfortunately, the employed physician model as we see it now is much more transitory. There is a contract, and if that doesn't work out, then they move in 3 years. Then patients are left in the lurch. My doctor—it is always my doctor—took care of me for 20 years. That is starting to stop; that is ceasing.

The Medicare fee schedule cuts must stop. This is why I introduced H.R. 6683, the Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act. The legislation stops this year's cut while we work on a permanent solution.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the reasons I came to Congress: to fix Medicare. We are experiencing a critical doctor shortage now, but it is going to be off the cliff in 3 to 5 years, especially with surges.

No other profession, as I just said, expects to be cut every year rather than

get raises. Every day now we add 10,000 new patients to Medicare. Imagine a hardware store, Mr. Speaker, where you bought a hammer for a dollar, and you were paid 60 cents. It doesn't make sense.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the bill.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Holy and immortal God, we pause to offer our prayers of both gratitude and grief for Your servant, Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson. Words cannot adequately express our appreciation to You for allowing us to share the journey of life with such a woman of perseverance and presence, leadership and legendary impact. Thank You for allowing her to touch the lives of so many in both her nursing and political careers.

While we mourn Representative Johnson's passing, with hearts bereft of her friendship and mentorship, and with compassion for her grieving family, in the face of the fragility of life, we do not grieve as those without hope. For we trust in the promise she held dear, that those who have departed this life will be united with You in everlasting glory.

May her memory be a blessing, and may Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson be blessed as she rests now from her labor in lifelong service to You and to Your people.

Into Your everlasting arms we commend our lives, and in Your eternal name we offer our prayer.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CELEBRATING KANE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST'S CENTENNIAL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate 100 years of the Kane Veterans of Foreign Wars charter located in McKean County.

The Kane VFW post is a top-tier post in the State. In 2023, they qualified and were awarded All State status for the second time and were also awarded the coveted All American Post award for the first time.

The post will mark this anniversary with a celebration at the end of January with numerous guest speakers, camaraderie, and friendship.

The Kane VFW post's first meeting to establish their charter was held on December 11, 1923, in the Eagle Hall, and they were granted their charter on January 29, 1924, with just 79 founding members. Over the years, the club grew in size, serving as a place for veterans and community members alike to gather in fellowship.

Mr. Speaker, VFW posts are so important to our communities because they offer veterans a place to gather together and connect. From hosting local Scout troops to important community meetings, the Kane VFW post has seen it all over the last 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Kane VFW and their dedicated members on this monumental anniversary.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF THE HONORABLE EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

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

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Texas giant, a trail-blazer, a leader, my mentor, and my friend, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Congresswoman Johnson was unrivaled in her ability to deliver for Dallas and Texas. She always put Texans first and fought every day for her constituents in Dallas.

Congresswoman Johnson broke so many barriers. It is not hyperbole to say that I would not be here today serving in Congress if it weren't for Congresswoman Johnson.

Everywhere you look, Texans can see the mark that she made on our State in her 50 years of public service, from improving the VA, to investing in transportation, to fighting for Texans' civil rights, and to her work as the chair of the House Science Committee to pass the Chips and Science Act and invest in high-tech manufacturing.

Texas lost a giant, and I lost a friend. We all mourn this loss for our Texas community.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the fact that January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Human trafficking erodes personal dignity and destroys the moral fabric of our society. Sadly, it is the fastest growing illicit trade in the world, with an estimated 40.3 million people living as slaves worldwide.

In this day and age, it is easy to think of human trafficking as a problem that happens elsewhere, but sadly, the U.S. accounts for almost 52 percent of global human trafficking, with the sex trafficking of minors accounting for the largest percentage.

Unfortunately, this problem has been exacerbated by the Biden administration's weak border policies, which criminal cartels are exploiting. Obviously, we need to secure the border immediately and hold traffickers accountable.

During National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, we must reaffirm our unwavering commitment to eradicate this crime against humanity and to support victims of this horrific crime.

BIDEN BORDER DESTABILIZATION

(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, last week, I joined Speaker MIKE JOHNSON and Republican colleagues from 26 States at the border in Eagle Pass, Texas.

What I witnessed and heard was madness. Each month, Border Patrol agents, county sheriffs, and public safety personnel are assaulted with unaccompanied children and tens of thousands of illegal aliens crossing.

Since Biden took office, there have been over 7 million illegal crossings, including 300 on the terrorist watch list. The irresponsible failure of Biden

encourages drug smugglers, human traffickers, and terrorists to enter, with terrorist attacks imminent in America.

Democrats should promote the Republican-passed H.R. 2 border security bill to stop destabilization, as condemned by New York Mayor Eric Adams.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years in the global war on terrorism as it continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with Biden open borders for terrorists. It is sadly clear there will be more 9/11 attacks across America imminent, as warned by the FBI.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 788, STOP SETTLEMENT SLUSH FUNDS ACT OF 2023; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 98, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO "STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS"; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 38, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO "WAIVER OF BUY AMERICA REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS"

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 947 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 947

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 788) to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-18 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further 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; (2) the further amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status". All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution 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 Education and the Workforce or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 38) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to "Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers". All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution 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 Transportation and Infrastructure or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to commit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), 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

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, last night, the Rules Committee met and produced a rule, House Resolution 947, providing for the House's consideration of several pieces of legislation.

The rule provides for H.R. 788, the Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act, to be considered under a structured rule. It provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, or their designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Additionally, the rule also provides for H.J. Res. 98, a joint resolution related to a rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to the "Standard for Determining

Joint Employer Status.” H.J. Res. 98 would be considered under a closed rule, and it also provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, or their designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Finally, the rule provides for consideration of S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution nullifying the final rule of the Federal Highway Administration relating to “Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers.” It also provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, or their designees, and provides for one motion to commit.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and in support of the underlying pieces of legislation.

Beginning with H.R. 788, the Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act, Mr. Speaker, we have picked up right where we left off in the first session of the 118th Congress, stopping this administration from overstepping.

During the Trump administration, the Department of Justice went about ending the practice of allowing these third-party settlement agreements. Because the focus of the Justice Department should be delivering justice and doing so under equal application of the law, the Justice Department should not be picking winners and losers. The DOJ should not be in the business of choosing parties far removed from the taxpayer and not directly related to the case at hand to be benefiting from a settlement.

Sadly, from the very onset of the Biden Presidency, this administration has been laser focused on undoing the progress of the previous administration. This administration has consistently and simultaneously overstepped their authority in rulemaking and underdelivered for the American people. That is why we are here.

Following the President’s day-one directive to review reinstating Obama-era policies, the Biden administration began rescinding Trump-era policies.

□ 1215

I think most Americans would agree that the Federal Government should not be requiring settling parties to make donations to unrelated third parties.

I think most Americans would be shocked that these settlement payments don’t go to the U.S. Treasury but to liberal wish-list recipients.

Justice is not best served by this practice and it is why the Trump administration ended the process.

Just as important, ending this practice ensures accountability from the government by preventing those in power from rewarding political allies, as well as protecting this body’s constitutional responsibilities.

We have seen this practice used to push funds to far-left organizations

that use the money to support out-of-touch or woke ideologies. We should put an end to this egregious practice by the Biden administration.

Moving on to the workforce. As a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I am glad to see consideration of H.J. Res. 98, of which I am an original cosponsor.

This legislation is meant to protect small businesses, particularly franchisees from the Biden administration’s assault.

This resolution is meant to preserve the job opportunities these leaders create and to protect their freedom to run their businesses as they see fit. It also preserves choice and flexibility for prospective employees. This joint resolution will ensure a predictable and rational legal standard for what qualifies as a joint employer.

For an administration that can’t seem to put far-left ideology aside long enough to get our economy on track, I suppose this rule fits in with a larger pattern of stifling economic growth and driving the cost of doing business even higher.

We should be taking up policies that empower employers, not finding ways to make it more difficult to do business in America.

Finally, on to S.J. Res. 38. Similarly, and it seems there is a pattern here, Mr. Speaker, this joint resolution fights back against the Biden administration’s policies that hurt American manufacturers in favor of the Communist Party of China.

S.J. Res. 38 will ensure Buy America requirements are applied and that this misguided Biden rule does not strengthen China over American companies.

We understand the administration wants to force electric vehicles on the American people, and that in order to make these chargers less expensive and to meet their unrealistic green goals, they want to rely on Chinese manufacturers, but we cannot let those political objectives hurt our own American manufacturing while strengthening China at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, as we all have said and highlighted before on the floor, we know the Biden administration’s priority is to pour billions into green energy and clean cars. By rushing to reach arbitrary green and climate agendas, the United States is more likely to solidify China’s control of our energy future rather than save the planet.

Mr. Speaker, we must be strengthening our American manufacturers. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting S.J. Res. 38 as the Senate, including Senate Democrats, have already done.

If the President really wants to veto this bill, despite his administration’s flawed approach, then we should give him that opportunity.

I look forward to consideration of all of these three pieces of legislation, and I urge the passage of this rule.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. HOUCHIN) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, you would think that for the very first week back of the new year, House Republicans would try to correct course and fix their failing majority.

You would think that after presiding over one of the most unproductive, ineffective, incompetent sessions of Congress in history, certainly since I have been here, that Republicans would use the new year as a fresh start to reset their priorities and to actually work with Democrats to get stuff done.

You would think that they would bring to the floor some big, important piece of legislation to follow through on their promises, or, I don’t know, a bill to stop the government shutdown that is right around the corner.

You would think all of that, but you would be wrong.

Today, we are here for the first meeting of 2024 to consider more junk, more filler, more nonsense messaging bills that do nothing to help everyday people—bills that seek to help their billionaire friends and corporate sponsors.

First is H.R. 788, the so-called Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act. This bill stems from a fruitless Republican-led investigation based on meritless allegations of political bias when the Obama administration’s Justice Department held big banks accountable for their predatory lending practices.

After a full year in the majority, Republicans still have no new ideas or real agenda to help the American public, so they want to pass off this solution in search of a problem from 10 years ago as some big, important new bill.

It is not big, it is not new, and it is definitely not important. It is a waste of our time.

Then we have S.J. Res. 38. This joint resolution is House Republicans’ attempt to weaken President Biden’s Buy America requirements, allowing Federal dollars to be spent on chargers made in competitor countries like the People’s Republic of China. While Democrats and President Biden work to bring jobs back from China, Republicans are eager to do the bidding of billionaire corporations and ship jobs overseas to China.

Now let that sink in.

Finally, is H.J. Res. 98, a resolution that blatantly attacks workers. This bill would weaken their ability to organize and collectively bargain. These three bills have one thing in common, Mr. Speaker: They will not become law. They are going nowhere, and they are a waste of our time.

The way this place is being run is just so absurd. It is pathetic.

We are facing a partial government shutdown by the end of next week. The extreme MAGA Freedom Caucus is once again eager to shut it down.

Now maybe they think a shutdown will help crash the economy, like Donald Trump has said he wants. The leader of the Republican Party spent the week praying for the economy to collapse because he thinks it will help him win the election in November. Imagine that.

Mr. Speaker, that really illustrates the difference between Democrats and Republicans.

We want America to succeed, no matter who is in charge, because we love this country and we put people over politics. Republicans led by Trump are cheering for America to fail and for everyone to suffer because they think it will help them politically.

What a sick, twisted, messed up ideology. They are literally cheering for America to fail. I guess they think that maybe if they shut down the government that that will help.

I heard that the current Speaker was on the telephone with Donald Trump basically begging him to support the deal to fund the government, because let's be honest, that is who run this place: Donald Trump and the MAGA extremists who worship him.

That is the guy, by the way, whose lawyers argued in court yesterday that he can legally assassinate any of us and he can't be held accountable because the President is above the law.

I mean, what the hell is wrong with these people? Not a peep, not a whisper from any of my Republican colleagues. Not a single one of them who is willing to stand up and display some courage and say that the former President should not be above the rule of law.

We may be back, Mr. Speaker, and it may be a new year, but it is clear it is the same old Republican majority trying to distract from their own disarray and division and doing the bidding of Donald Trump instead of working for the American people.

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

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, these arguments merely are misdirection. The executive branch has the power under the Constitution to enforce the laws.

When wrongdoers violate Federal law, any settlement with the government should be focused on three things: compensating victims, redressing harm, and punishing or deterring unlawful conduct.

Settlement agreements that require donations to outside parties do not accomplish those goals. Required donations do not compensate victims, as the funds go to outside third parties not involved in the litigation, and they do not punish and deter unlawful conduct, particularly as settling parties can reduce their fines from \$2 to \$1 for each dollar donated.

Moving on to criticisms against H.J. Res. 98 about franchisees. It is a hysterical argument that broadly misses the mark.

Employees of franchisees are still entitled to protection under the National

Labor Relations Act. They are still able to organize labor unions if they so choose. Franchisees are subject to collective bargaining laws, worker safety laws, fair wage laws, and franchisors, just as other large companies are.

One of the concerns that we have is that there will be disastrous consequences under this rule. I just find that is not the case. We are promoting small business owners and franchisees above these woke policies that harm the American employer and the American worker.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, we can talk about these filler bills all day, but the fact of the matter is they are going nowhere. We are wasting our time doing this.

We should be focused on making sure that Republicans don't shut the government down beginning at the end of next week.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide for consideration of a measure that unambiguously states that the people's House will keep its promise to the American workers and senior citizens. We will protect and preserve Social Security and Medicare for future generations, two important programs that my Republican friends are constantly attacking.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in 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 Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD), to discuss our proposal.

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the previous question. Instead of focusing on policies that would make life better and easier for Americans, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are constantly wasting time on legislation to disrupt longstanding laws, to pass bills that would offshore American manufacturers, make it more difficult for workers to receive a fair shake, and prevent the Federal Government from holding big corporations accountable.

Rather than focusing on these issues, our time would be better spent ensuring that our seniors have access to the benefits that they have earned.

Social Security and Medicare are more than just important government programs, they are commitments made by one generation to the next.

Since my first term in Congress, I have worked tirelessly to protect these critical benefits, fighting back against extremist cuts that would gut our Nation's cornerstone economic security programs. The fight goes on because the GOP is still hell-bent on eliminating these programs.

Social Security and Medicare are overwhelmingly popular because they provide critically important benefits, not only to our seniors, but to other vulnerable Americans, as well.

My constituents and all Americans have paid into these programs, and they are counting on them for a dignified retirement and essential healthcare.

It is also critical that we work to ensure that the Social Security Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have the resources that they need. Despite the fact that Social Security is by far the most popular and necessary program in our country, the Social Security Administration does not receive the funding that it desperately needs to support many of the most vulnerable in our community and across the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, ensuring that our seniors can receive the benefits they have earned should not be a partisan debate.

I hope that my Republican colleagues agree and that we can find bipartisan commonsense solutions to this pressing issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that we can focus on more pressing legislation, like funding our government and reaffirming our commitment to seniors and the more vulnerable members of our society, and reaffirming our commitment to Social Security and Medicare.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, if I had one word to describe what I hear from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, including the administration, it would be gaslighting.

My colleagues claim that we don't want to help everyday Americans. My colleagues claim that we are offshoring American jobs when the very bills we are considering here today are trying to fight against doing precisely that.

They claim that we are trying to hurt businessowners.

We are trying to help businessowners by giving them more flexibility to engage in employee relationships as they see fit. We are trying to bring American jobs back by supporting our American manufacturers over Chinese manufacturers. We are trying to compensate victims over woke ideological groups.

It is more gaslighting from our colleagues on the left. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will recognize that and will join us in support of this legislation.

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

□ 1230

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

Mr. Speaker, I would just respond to the gentlewoman that one of the differences between Democrats and Republicans is the Democrats have historically been and continue to be on the side of workers and on behalf of small businesses in trying to bring as

many jobs back from places like China as possible, and we would be doing that no matter who is in charge in the White House because we put people above politics.

I contrast that with my friends on the other side of the aisle who seem to be cheering for America to fail and who work overtime to try to demean our workers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD an article that appeared in The New York Times titled: "Trump says he hopes any economic crash happens in 2024 so he isn't blamed."

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

There was no objection.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 9, 2024]

TRUMP SAYS HE HOPES ANY ECONOMIC CRASH HAPPENS IN 2024 SO HE ISN'T BLAMED.

(By Maggie Astor)

Former President Donald J. Trump said in an interview on Monday that he believed the economy would crash—and that he hoped it would happen in the next year so the blame would fall on President Biden's administration.

We have an economy that's so fragile, and the only reason it's running now is it's running off the fumes of what we did," Mr. Trump told the conservative commentator Lou Dobbs in an interview broadcast Monday evening on the MyPillow founder Mike Lindell's platform. "It's just running off the fumes. And when there's a crash, I hope it's going to be during this next 12 months, because I don't want to be Herbert Hoover."

President Hoover presided over the 1929 stock market crash that started the Great Depression.

Mr. Trump is hoping to capitalize on voters' economic concerns, as a number of polls have shown that voters trust him and other Republicans more than they trust Mr. Biden to handle the economy. In the interview, he criticized Mr. Biden's and congressional Democrats' spending on infrastructure and renewable energy.

The Biden campaign has been frustrated by a disconnect between positive economic indicators—including strong G.D.P. growth, increasing jobs and higher wages—and negative public opinion. Many Americans are still struggling to get by, mortgage rates are high, and while inflation has fallen significantly from the peaks of 2022, those price increases still weigh heavily on voters' minds.

Andrew Bates, a White House spokesman, condemned Mr. Trump's comments hoping for a downturn and said the former president's policies "would worsen inflation with tax giveaways to rich special interests."

"A commander in chief's duty is to always put the American people first, never to hope that hard-working families suffer economic pain for their own political benefit," Mr. Bates said. "Republican officials should welcome the economic progress President Biden is delivering, instead of revealing twisted true colors that would shrink the American middle class in the name of their own cynical self-interests."

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let that sink in. The leader of the Republican Party, the person whom they are all falling over each other to try to support, is cheering for our economy to crash because it might help him politically.

It is not about the American people, it is not about workers, and it is not about businesses. It is about him.

What happened to the Republican Party?

The obsession with Trump and all of this is not only disappointing, but it is scary. Again, I will go back to the way I began this debate. The legislation we are considering today is three nothing burgers. None of these bills are going to become law. They are just filler. They are an excuse for us to be able to meet when what we should be doing is making sure that the government remains open and that it doesn't shut down at the end of next week.

Quite frankly, that business should have been done last year, but Republicans continue to fight amongst themselves and can't seem to be able to get anything done. Again, this is the most unproductive and useless Congress, I think, in history.

So, again, I would just simply say that we all need to figure out a way to pass legislation that will not adversely impact our economy and to find areas of common ground where we can actually get stuff done, but this is not what we are doing today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), who is a distinguished member of the Rules Committee.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are just at it again, aren't they?

They keep bringing up bills that protect big corporations and banks instead of helping Americans and protecting working families.

We saw it when Republicans tried to cut funding for the Consumer Product Safety Commission and to weaken the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. These are agencies that the American people trust and they want because these are agencies that stand with consumers.

Our consumers need and want someone in their corner. Republicans, however, keep trying to restrain the Federal agencies who are charged with defending and protecting our consumers, including today, the Department of Justice.

H.R. 788 is another attempt to protect those same big banks and big corporations, the ones that pollute our communities and put their own profits over people's ability to stay in their homes.

For example, Bank of America made a lot of money by selling subprime mortgages before the 2008 financial crisis. Bank of America hurt regular people's ability to buy and stay in a home of their own. So the Department of Justice went after Bank of America, and they entered into a settlement agreement to hold that bank accountable. That settlement required the bank to pay damages to the Americans who were directly harmed by its actions.

We know that what the Bank of America and all those greedy corpora-

tions did was to more than just hurt the consumers of that bank, it hurt the housing market itself. It made it harder for families to buy homes. Their actions led to the Great Recession.

So the settlement that the Department of Justice did made sure that Bank of America had to pay nonprofits to address the larger systemic harm the bank caused. Those settlement funds helped provide resources for housing, counseling, homeownership, and more. In Iowa, nonprofits provided down payment assistance and demolished decaying homes. In Indiana, the bar foundation provided legal aid in foreclosure cases.

These are good things.

Why would we want to stop them?

Apparently, however, Republicans didn't like the fact that the Department of Justice was standing up to bad actors because H.R. 788 would block that help.

H.R. 788 would handcuff the Department of Justice so it could not demand a bad actor pay for the harm it caused to our society.

I must remind everybody that, just as we heard from our ranking member, we are dedicating a whole week to this bill and some others that would overturn actions that our Americans need to protect them to move us forward in protecting our climate.

We are doing all of this instead of what?

We are not funding the government, are we?

Do any of these bills deal with any of the issues that Americans want us to do?

These bills show us that Republicans cannot govern. Instead, they are continuing to put profits over people, and we must reject this rule.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, again, this has been the most incompetent, ineffective, and unproductive Congress in the history of the United States of America. The fact that we are here considering these nonsense, do-nothing bills is just the latest example.

This Republican majority has been a failure and a total embarrassment. I could spend all day comparing our record with theirs. Republicans have had pathetically few bills of substance enacted into law, and on must-pass legislation, every single time it has been Democrats who have had to step up to give Republicans the votes that they needed to get things across the finish line. The gentlewoman can't rebut that because there is nothing to rebut. Republicans have done nothing of importance. I don't even know why they want to be in charge, quite frankly, since they have wasted away their time in the majority.

It is not just me saying that. It is them. Congressman CHIP ROY who sits on the Rules Committee said: "I want

my Republican colleagues to give me one thing, one thing, that I can go campaign on and say we did. One. Anybody sitting in the complex, if you want to come down to the floor and come explain to me one material, meaningful, significant thing the Republican majority has done. . . .”

More recently, Congressman ANDY BIGGS said: “We have nothing to go out there and campaign on. . . . It is embarrassing.”

Congresswoman DEBBIE LESKO said: “We can’t get anything done around here. It is very frustrating.”

What do Republicans say when they go home and voters ask: What have you done? What have you done?

What do you tell them?

What do you say to somebody who asks: Why are you more concerned about Hunter Biden than about our constituents?

You people need to touch the grass, get a grip, and get some help. Republicans have turned this place into one big SNL skit, except this isn’t funny. We have serious business to get done around here, and they are just openly admitting that they cannot govern.

They have no new ideas or problems that they want to solve. Their whole platform is built around using division and anger to distract from the unmitigated disaster that is this Republican majority. The only hope around this place is that it is an election year and their gross incompetence will probably lose them the House come November.

Mr. Speaker, we have to do better, and there needs to be more urgency in this Chamber about making sure that the government doesn’t shut down next week.

The one job, that no matter who is in charge has, is to make sure that the lights stay on here, that we don’t stop the functioning of Government, and that we don’t turn our backs on the American people.

Yet, we are getting perilously close to that moment when there could be a shutdown. It is disgraceful that we are here debating these filler bills that are going nowhere and that we are not working on real business that will help real people in this country and help pave the way for a better future.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I would note that with Republicans being in the majority, one major accomplishment is that we have stopped a lot of bad things potentially from happening that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle might wish to push forward.

We have before us the opportunity to move legislation here that could have a positive effect on the everyday lives of all Americans, whether that is pushing back on overreach of the bureaucratic state or protecting job creators. The

choice before us in this rule is clear, and we must take action.

We must be taking actions that improve this economy and fight inflation, but, again and again, we see this administration making it harder and not easier to do business in America. It defies logic.

Apparently, there is no cost too high for this administration or my Democratic colleagues when it comes to this pursuit, not even the fact that China stands to benefit from one of these rules and the American manufacturer stands to lose. The American people know better.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to moving these bills out of the House this week. I ask my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” on the previous question and “yes” on the rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 947 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the resolution (H. Res. 178) affirming the House of Representatives’ commitment to protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 178.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. 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.

Mr. MCGOVERN. 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 will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 40 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 (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) at 1 o’clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 947; and

Adoption of House Resolution 947, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 788, STOP SETTLEMENT SLUSH FUNDS ACT OF 2023; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 98, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO “STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS”; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 38, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO “WAIVER OF BUY AMERICA REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 947) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 788) to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to “Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status”; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 38) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to “Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers”, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 213, nays 300, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 2]

YEAS—213

Aderholt	Armstrong	Baird
Alford	Arrington	Balderson
Allen	Babin	Banks
Amodei	Bacon	Barr

Ocasio-Cortez	Ruppersberger	Swalwell
Ogles	Ryan	Sykes
Omar	Salinas	Takano
Pallone	Sánchez	Thanedar
Panetta	Sarbanes	Thompson (CA)
Pascarella	Schakowsky	Thompson (MS)
Payne	Schiff	Titus
Pelosi	Schneider	Tlaib
Peltola	Scholten	Tokuda
Perez	Schrier	Tonko
Perry	Scott (VA)	Torres (CA)
Peters	Scott, David	Torres (NY)
Pettersen	Sewell	Trahan
Pingree	Sherman	Trone
Pocan	Sherrill	Underwood
Porter	Slotkin	Vargas
Pressley	Smith (WA)	Vasquez
Quigley	Sorensen	Veasey
Ramirez	Soto	Velázquez
Raskin	Spanberger	Wasserman
Rosendale	Stansbury	Schultz
Ross	Stanton	Watson Coleman
Roy	Stevens	Wild
Ruiz	Strickland	Williams (GA)

NOT VOTING—14

Blunt Rochester	Miller-Meeks	Scanlon
Boebert	Nunn (IA)	Waters
Carter (LA)	Pappas	Wexton
Kim (NJ)	Phillips	Wilson (FL)
Meeks	Scalise	

□ 1433

Mr. MOORE of Utah changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the resolution was not agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, in order to attend the funeral of a student who was a victim in the Perry school shooting in my District and due to inclement weather, I was unable to be present for floor votes today. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall No. 2, Ordering the Previous Question and “yea” on rollcall No. 3, Rule.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OBERNOLTE). The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Moore of Utah moves to reconsider the vote on adoption of House Resolution 947.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to reconsider.

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

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ELECTING A MEMBER TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 954

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET: Mr. Edwards

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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.

TAIWAN NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2023

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 540) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue more equitable treatment of Taiwan at the international financial institutions, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 540

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) As enshrined in its Articles of Agreement, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is devoted to promoting international monetary cooperation, facilitating the expansion and balanced growth of international trade, encouraging exchange stability, and avoiding competitive exchange depreciation.

(2) Taiwan is the 21st largest economy in the world and the 10th largest goods trading partner of the United States.

(3) Although Taiwan is not an IMF member, it is a member of the World Trade Organization, the Asian Development Bank, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

(4) According to the January 2020 Report on Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the United States, Taiwan held \$471,900,000,000 in foreign exchange reserves, more than major economies such as India, South Korea, and Brazil.

(5) According to section 4(d) of the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8), enacted on April 10, 1979, “Nothing in this Act may be construed as a basis for supporting the exclusion or expulsion of Taiwan from continued membership in any international financial institution or any other international organization.”

(6) Taiwan held membership in the IMF for 9 years following the recognition of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) by the United Nations, and 16 Taiwan staff members at the Fund were allowed to continue their employment after the PRC was seated at the IMF in 1980. As James M. Boughton has noted in his *Silent Revolution: The International Monetary Fund 1979–1989*,

even as the PRC was seated, the United States Executive Director to the IMF, Sam Y. Cross, expressed support on behalf of the United States Government for “some kind of association between Taiwan and the Fund”.

(7) On September 27, 1994, in testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations regarding the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, then-Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord stated: “Recognizing Taiwan’s important role in transnational issues, we will support its membership in organizations where statehood is not a prerequisite, and we will support opportunities for Taiwan’s voice to be heard in organizations where its membership is not possible.”

(8) The Congress has repeatedly reaffirmed support for this policy, including in Public Laws 107–10, 107–158, 108–28, 108–235, 113–17, and 114–139, and the unanimous House and Senate passage of the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative (TAIPEI) Act of 2019.

(9) In its fact sheet, entitled “U.S. Relations with Taiwan”, published on August 31, 2018, the Department of State asserts: “The United States supports Taiwan’s membership in international organizations that do not require statehood as a condition of membership and encourages Taiwan’s meaningful participation in international organizations where its membership is not possible.”

(10) According to the Articles of Agreement of the IMF, “membership shall be open to other countries”, subject to conditions prescribed by the Board of Governors of the IMF.

(11) In the IMF publication “Membership and Nonmembership in the International Monetary Fund: A Study in International Law and Organization”, Joseph Gold, the then-General Counsel and Director of the Legal Department of the IMF, elaborated on the differences between the terms “countries” and “states”, noting that “the word ‘country’ may have been adopted because of the absence of agreement on the definition of a ‘state’” and, with respect to the use of “countries” and applications for IMF membership, “the absence of any adjective in the Articles emphasizes the breadth of the discretion that the Fund may exercise in admitting countries to membership”. According to Mr. Gold, “the desire to give the Fund flexibility in dealing with applications may explain not only the absence of any adjective that qualifies ‘countries’ but also the choice of that word itself”.

(12) In his IMF study, Mr. Gold further observes, “in the practice of the Fund the concepts of independence and sovereignty have been avoided on the whole as a mode of expressing a criterion for membership in the Fund”. He continues, “Although the Fund usually takes into account the recognition or nonrecognition of an entity as a state, there are no rules or even informal understandings on the extent to which an applicant must have been recognized by members or other international organizations before the Fund will regard it as eligible for membership.”. In fact, when considering an application for membership where the status of an applicant may not be resolved, Mr. Gold writes “there have been occasions on which the Fund has made a finding before decisions had been taken by the United Nations or by most members or by members with a majority of the total voting power.” Mr. Gold concludes, “the Fund makes its own findings on whether an applicant is a ‘country’, and makes them solely for its own purposes.”

(13) Although not a member state of the United Nations, the Republic of Kosovo is a member of both the IMF and the World Bank, having joined both organizations on June 29, 2009.

(14) On October 26, 2021, Secretary of State Antony Blinken issued a statement in support of Taiwan’s “robust, meaningful participation” in the United Nations system, which includes the IMF, the World Bank, and other specialized

United Nations agencies. Secretary of State Blinken noted, "As the international community faces an unprecedented number of complex and global issues, it is critical for all stakeholders to help address these problems. This includes the 24 million people who live in Taiwan. Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system is not a political issue, but a pragmatic one." He continued, "Taiwan's exclusion undermines the important work of the UN and its related bodies, all of which stand to benefit greatly from its contributions."

SEC. 3. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the size, significance, and connectedness of the Taiwanese economy highlight the importance of greater participation by Taiwan in the International Monetary Fund, given the purposes of the Fund articulated in its Articles of Agreement; and

(2) the experience of Taiwan in developing a vibrant and advanced economy under democratic governance and the rule of law should inform the work of the international financial institutions, including through increased participation by Taiwan in the institutions.

SEC. 4. SUPPORT FOR TAIWAN ADMISSION TO THE IMF.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The United States Governor of the International Monetary Fund (in this section referred to as the "Fund") shall use the voice and vote of the United States to vigorously support—

(1) the admission of Taiwan as a member of the Fund, to the extent that admission is sought by Taiwan;

(2) participation by Taiwan in regular surveillance activities of the Fund with respect to the economic and financial policies of Taiwan, consistent with Article IV consultation procedures of the Fund;

(3) employment opportunities for Taiwan nationals, without regard to any consideration that, in the determination of the United States Governor, does not generally restrict the employment of nationals of member countries of the Fund; and

(4) the ability of Taiwan to receive appropriate technical assistance and training by the Fund.

(b) UNITED STATES POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States not to discourage or otherwise deter Taiwan from seeking admission as a member of the Fund.

(c) WAIVER.—The Secretary of the Treasury may waive any requirement of subsection (a) for up to 1 year at a time on reporting to Congress that providing the waiver will substantially promote the objective of securing the meaningful participation of Taiwan at each international financial institution (as defined in section 1701(c)(2) of the International Financial Institutions Act).

(d) SUNSET.—This section shall have no force or effect on the earlier of—

(1) the date of approval by the Board of Governors of the Fund for the admission of Taiwan as a member of the Fund; or

(2) the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. TESTIMONY REQUIREMENT.

In each of the next 7 years in which the Secretary of the Treasury is required by section 1705(b) of the International Financial Institutions Act to present testimony, the Secretary shall include in the testimony a description of the efforts of the United States to support the greatest participation practicable by Taiwan at each international financial institution (as defined in section 1701(c)(2) of such Act).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 540, the Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act of 2023, introduced by the vice chair of the National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

As China continues to threaten Taiwan, Congress must consider ways to deter Beijing from future aggression. The House Financial Services Committee has developed numerous bills to do just that, but countering China's military ambitions isn't our only focus when it comes to Taiwan policy.

The U.S. has long supported Taiwan's membership in international organizations where statehood is not a prerequisite. We also support longstanding policy to help Taiwan's voice be heard in these organizations when membership is impossible.

This is positive for Taiwan on the world stage and should be a priority for the United States Congress.

Unfortunately, over the past 3 years, the Biden administration has repeatedly fallen short when it comes to our Taiwan policy at the International Monetary Fund, or the IMF.

The IMF is the world's lender of last resort as well as a key institution monitoring global economic conditions. As one of the world's most advanced and innovative economies, Taiwan should be included under the Fund's activities, yet it has been left out due to ridiculous concerns over offending China.

The IMF's rules already allow Taiwan to become a member, as Mrs. KIM's bill clearly lays out in detail. That means our representation and our representatives at the IMF should support Taiwan if it chooses to apply.

Mrs. KIM's legislation would make this support explicit and ensure the Treasury Department voices our support on the board of the IMF.

Joining the IMF would also open up opportunities for Taiwan in other international financial institutions. This includes the World Bank, where IMF membership is a prerequisite.

The IMF has no fewer than 190 countries, nearly the totality of the world. An economy as vital as Taiwan should have a seat at this important table.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our Democratic colleagues for their support in keeping this a bipartisan issue, and I thank the bill's sponsor, Mrs. KIM, for her important leadership, as well.

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 540, the bipartisan Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act, sponsored by Congresswoman KIM of California and Congressman GREEN of Texas.

This bill would require the United States to advocate for Taiwan's membership and meaningful participation at the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, to the extent that admission is sought by Taiwan.

IMF membership provides several nonprofit benefits to participants, such as access to information on members' economic policies; access to technical assistance related to banking, fiscal affairs, and exchange issues; financial support in times of payment distress; and opportunities for trade and investment.

If IMF admission is sought by Taiwan, this bill would further require the United States to press the IMF to monitor and evaluate the health of Taiwan's economy; provide technical support to Taiwanese officials regarding microeconomic, monetary, and budget policies; and support employment opportunities at the IMF for Taiwan nationals.

□ 1445

To date, Taiwan has not formally requested membership at the IMF. I also understand that Taiwan does not intend to request membership this Congress and is, instead, focusing on other organizations such as the World Health Organization and the International Criminal Police Organization, INTERPOL. We respect that and appreciate the structure of this bill that positions the United States to act should Taiwan request membership.

I also believe it is critical that the United States continue to signal unequivocal opposition to the prospect of China using force in an effort to take control of Taiwan, especially as China is watching Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Democrats have been sounding the alarm, and I will repeat this warning here today: We must provide additional funding for Ukraine or we risk emboldening China's aggression against Taiwan.

While I support this bill and all efforts to prevent conflict in the Taiwan Strait, I am concerned that if Congress cannot come together to provide additional funding for Ukraine, our efforts here today will be in vain.

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MCHENRY for yielding and supporting my legislation. I also thank Representative GREEN of Texas for co-leading this bill, H.R. 540, and making it a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, H.R. 540, the Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act.

Longstanding U.S. policy towards Taiwan has supported its membership

in international organizations where statehood is not a prerequisite.

The U.S. also advocates for Taiwan's voice to be heard where membership is not possible. This principle has lasted decades across Republican and Democratic administrations, and it has repeatedly been reaffirmed in bills passed by Congress.

My bill is straightforward. It requires the Treasury Department to implement our Taiwan policy at the International Monetary Fund, or IMF.

Taiwan is not required to be a member state of the United Nations in order to gain membership in the IMF. For example, Kosovo, also not a U.N. member, has belonged to the IMF for over a decade.

If Taiwan seeks admission to the IMF, then the Treasury Department should carry out our longstanding U.S. policy and support its application. While Taiwan awaits its admission to the IMF, H.R. 540 encourages the U.S. Governor of the IMF to support integrating Taiwan into the IMF's regular economic monitoring activities and Taiwanese nationals with equal employment opportunities at the IMF.

The IMF is devoted to monetary cooperation, exchange rate stability, and the growth of international trade. Taiwan is one of our top 10 trading partners, and it has the fifth largest cash reserves of any foreign country; greater than Brazil, South Korea, Mexico, or any European country except Switzerland.

At a time when China has been threatening the work of the IMF through its nontransparent lending abroad and its lack of cooperation with other creditors, we must focus the IMF on effective international cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, advocating for Taiwan's membership in the IMF would also unlock additional opportunities for the country in other international financial institutions, as was mentioned, one of which is the World Bank which requires countries to first be members of the IMF before becoming a member of World Bank.

With Taiwan's election taking place this week, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 540 and send the Taiwanese people a strong message of solidarity and support for their democracy.

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the chair of the National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding and thank him for managing the floor today. I was supposed to do that, and I got stuck in a snowstorm and slid all the way here, but I am here and glad to be here.

Before us today are a number of bills that originated in the National Security, Illicit Finance, and International

Financial Institutions Subcommittee which I chair. I commend the sponsors for their diligent commitment to crafting meaningful policy.

Congressman MEUSER's China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023 will provide much-needed transparency to China's use of tools to impact the exchange rate, and their actions to threaten the core mission of the IMF.

Ensuring China plays by the same rules of the road as everyone else has been and will continue to be a focus of my National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee.

H.R. 803, the PROTECT Taiwan Act, has been a project dutifully undertaken by Congressman LUCAS. This legislation will send an unwavering message that if the Xi Jinping regime is seeking to provoke a war in Taiwan, China will face a new reality, exclusion from the international community. I thank Congressman LUCAS for this strong bipartisan solution to China's aggression.

Finally, as we heard from Vice Chair Congresswoman KIM, H.R. 540, the Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act of 2023, will ensure that Taiwan's voice is properly heard at the IMF. Ultimately, the decision to apply for membership into the IMF, and subsequently the World Bank and other international financial institutions, belongs to Taiwan. However, if they so choose to apply, the United States should be unequivocally supportive.

I thank the gentlewoman for her unwavering support to defend Taiwan and ensuring that the international financial institutions which my subcommittee oversees prioritize Taiwan policy at the IMF. I also thank Chairman MCHENRY for his work on the full committee.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, since the gentleman from North Carolina has no further speakers, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

This legislation from Congresswoman KIM and Congressman GREEN directs the United States to support Taiwan should the island pursue participation in the IMF.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to support this bill and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I would just reiterate that Mrs. KIM's bill is critical to strengthening both our national security and the global economy. I think it is important that we state clearly as the United States Congress our support for Taiwan.

Taiwan has one of the world's most advanced and innovative economies and should be included under the IMF's activities.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and thank my Democratic colleagues on the House Financial Services Committee for working with committee Republicans on supporting this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 540, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PRESSURE REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS TO END CHINESE THREATS TO TAIWAN ACT

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 803) to direct certain financial regulators to exclude representatives of the People's Republic of China from certain banking organizations upon notice of certain threats or danger, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 803

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Pressure Regulatory Organizations To End Chinese Threats to Taiwan Act" or the "PROTECT Taiwan Act".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING THE EXCLUSION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA FROM CERTAIN BANKING ORGANIZATIONS UPON NOTICE OF CERTAIN THREATS OR DANGER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If the President, pursuant to section 3(c) of the Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3302(c)), informs the Congress of any threat to the security or the social or economic system of the people on Taiwan and any danger to the interests of the United States arising therefrom resulting from actions of the People's Republic of China, it is the policy of the United States to seek to exclude representatives of the People's Republic of China, to the maximum extent practicable, from participation in meetings, proceedings, and other activities of the following organizations—

- (1) the Group of Twenty;*
- (2) the Bank for International Settlements;*
- (3) the Financial Stability Board;*
- (4) the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision;*
- (5) the International Association of Insurance Supervisors; and*
- (6) the International Organization of Securities Commissions.*

(b) POLICY ADVANCEMENT.—The Secretary of the Treasury, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, shall take all necessary steps to advance the policy set forth in subsection (a).

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of subsection (a) with respect to an

organization upon submission of a report to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate—

(1) that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) that contains an explanation of the reasons therefor.

(d) *SUNSET*.—This Act and the requirements of this Act shall have no force or effect on the date that is the earlier of—

(1) 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) 30 days after the date on which the President notifies Congress that the termination of this Act is in the national interest of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of H.R. 803, the PROTECT Taiwan Act, introduced by the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and senior member of the House Financial Services Committee, Mr. LUCAS.

In addition to its hostile rhetoric, China has sought to intimidate Taiwan by making large incursions into the island's airspace. In fact, according to the Global Taiwan Institute, there were 563 incursions in 2022. Between January and August 23, 2023, there were 461 median-line crossings and 560 southwest incursions. Those are a lot of incursions.

If the Xi Jinping regime seeks to provoke war in Taiwan, Congress must clearly signal the costs that will be imposed on the Chinese Communist Party if it acts against the island.

One of those costs should be China's exclusion from the international community, which is a bipartisan pressure point. Chinese leaders must understand that a threat to Taiwan is a threat to international order, and a threat to Taiwan is a threat to China's economic growth opportunities.

As a result, we think China should not be able to participate in multilateral organizations if they conduct this type of business.

We have already seen Russia's isolation on the international stage after its invasion of Ukraine. We must be clear that this is what awaits Beijing if they cross the line in Taiwan.

Mr. LUCAS' bill would make China a pariah in key organizations devoted to ensuring global economic stability. This includes the G20, the Financial Stability Board, and other gatherings

of international financial regulators. Participation in these groups should be reserved for countries that take international norms and values seriously.

A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would underscore that Beijing has surrendered its right to be included. I thank Mr. LUCAS for his hard work on the PROTECT Taiwan Act and Congressman VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas on the Democrat side for being an original co-sponsor.

Now more than ever I think we must show that deterring Chinese aggression against Taiwan is a bipartisan issue for the United States Congress. I think this bill will send that right signal.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2023.

Hon. PATRICK MCHENRY,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCHENRY: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 803, the PROTECT Taiwan Act.

I agree that the Foreign Affairs Committee may be discharged from further action on this measure, subject to the understanding that this waiver does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Foreign Affairs Committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. The Committee also reserves the right to seek an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this bill and would appreciate your support for any such request.

I ask that you place our exchange of letters into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation, and look forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2023.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House
of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 803, the PROTECT Taiwan Act, so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. I agree that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 803 at this time, you do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that you will be appropriately consulted and involved on this or similar legislation as it moves forward.

As discussed, I will seek to place a copy of our exchange of letters on this bill in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

PATRICK MCHENRY,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 803, the PROTECT Taiwan Act, sponsored by Congressman LUCAS of Oklahoma and Congressman VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas.

This bill would impose financial consequences on China if it launched a

major act of aggression against Taiwan. Specifically, this bill would require Treasury, the Federal Reserve, and the Securities and Exchange Commission to seek China's exclusion from the proceedings of the major financial institutions and international organizations. These include the G20, the Bank for International Settlements, the Financial Stability Board, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, the International Association of Insurance Supervisors, and the International Organization of Securities Commissions.

In short, this bill would deny China the economic, political, and diplomatic benefits of participation in the international organizations that ensure stability of financial markets and businesses if it were to engage in a major act of aggression against Taiwan.

This bill imposes a high threshold with regard to what kind of aggression would trigger this action. Specifically, it requires a Presidential notification to Congress under section 3(c) of the Taiwan Relations Act, which would only occur if there were a substantial threat to Taiwan. For reference, section 3(c) was not triggered during the tensions of the Third Taiwan Straits Crisis of the 1990s.

I also thank the bill's sponsor for working with Democrats to adopt changes to the bill that ensures it closely mirrors a similar law passed in the last Congress aimed at Russia following its unlawful invasion of Ukraine.

□ 1500

Accordingly, the United States is now actively seeking Russia's exclusion from these international bodies.

If China were to cross the line Russia crossed by invading Ukraine, we would similarly seek to exclude them from these international bodies.

For all of these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), the chair of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and a senior member of the House Financial Services Committee.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MCHENRY for yielding time to me on this bill.

First, before I address the topic at hand, I would like to take a moment to note that I have served with Chairman MCHENRY for his tenure in the United States Congress.

I can proudly say this is a body that everyone comes in brand new and full of fire and vinegar, but it is a body where people develop into their skills, where their natural talents are honed and sharpened, and where many of our friends become great statesmen and stateswomen.

I note for just a moment that Chairman MCHENRY, when he joined this

body, represented that fire and vinegar, that intensity.

In his time here, he has developed into a statesman, a chairman of great regard, and someone who ultimately, when he leaves this body at the end of the session, will be missed.

My colleague, and I would like to think I can call you my friend, but most assuredly I note my respect for your legislative skills.

The bill before us is a bipartisan piece of legislation, as my colleagues have noted, to send a clear message: If China intends to engage in conflict against Taiwan, then China should be prepared to withstand the consequences.

Under the Taiwan Relations Act, the President is required to notify Congress if China poses an immediate threat to Taiwan's security.

If this notification is triggered, my bill states it is U.S. policy to exclude Chinese representatives from key international organizations: The G20, the Financial Stability Board, and the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision.

A threat to Taiwan is a threat to the international order. Now, let me repeat that one more time: A threat to Taiwan is a threat to the international order.

We should make it clear that if China acts to throw the world into instability, China will be excluded from international bodies that work to uphold that very stability.

I thank my colleague from Texas, Congressman GONZALEZ, for working with me on this bill. I encourage my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This legislation from Congressmen LUCAS and GONZALEZ is designed to send a message to China, discouraging escalation of its aggression toward Taiwan.

I again note that while I agree that sending a strong signal to China regarding the United States' support for the prevention of conflict in the Taiwan Strait is important, we must also send a strong signal to Russia by providing additional funding to our fellow democracy, Ukraine.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I reiterate that Chinese leaders must understand that a threat to Taiwan is a threat to international order, and it should be a threat to their standing in international institutions.

They will not be able to operate in major multilateral organizations as if it were business as usual.

We know the impact on Russia after its invasion of Ukraine. We have to let officials in Beijing know that that is what awaits them if they cross the line in Taiwan.

I urge adoption of this bill and support for the bill. I thank my colleague,

Mr. LUCAS, for his friendship and for his kind words, as well as his important leadership on this topic.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 803, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CHINA EXCHANGE RATE TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2023

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 839) to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 839

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) Under Article IV of the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the People's Republic of China has committed to orderly exchange rate arrangements, the avoidance of exchange rate manipulation, and cooperation with the IMF to ensure "firm surveillance" of the exchange rate policies of the People's Republic of China. Pursuant to Article VIII of the Articles of Agreement of the IMF, the IMF may require the People's Republic of China to furnish data on gold and foreign exchange holdings, including assets held by non-official agencies of the People's Republic of China.

(2) In its November 2022 report, entitled "Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the United States", the Department of the Treasury concluded, "China provides very limited transparency regarding key features of its exchange rate mechanism, including the policy objectives of its exchange rate management regime and its activities in the offshore RMB market." The Department continued: "China's lack of transparency and use of a wide array of tools complicate Treasury's ability to assess the degree to which official actions are designed to impact the exchange rate."

(3) In that report, the Department further noted that "China's failure to publish foreign

exchange intervention and broader lack of transparency around key features of its exchange rate mechanism make it an outlier among major economies and warrants Treasury's close monitoring."

SEC. 3. ADVOCACY FOR INCREASED EXCHANGE RATE TRANSPARENCY FROM CHINA.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall instruct the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund (in this Act referred to as the "IMF") to use the voice and vote of the United States to advocate for—

(1) increased transparency from the People's Republic of China, and enhanced multilateral and bilateral surveillance by the IMF, with respect to the exchange rate arrangements of the People's Republic of China, including any indirect foreign exchange market intervention through Chinese financial institutions or state-owned enterprises;

(2) in connection with consultations with the People's Republic of China under Article IV of the Articles of Agreement of the IMF, the inclusion of any significant divergences by the People's Republic of China from the exchange rate policies of other issuers of currencies used in determining the value of Special Drawing Rights; and

(3) during governance reviews of the IMF, stronger consideration by IMF members and management of the performance of China as a responsible stakeholder in the international monetary system when evaluating quota and voting shares at the IMF.

SEC. 4. SUNSET.

This Act shall have no force or effect on or after the date that is 30 days after the earlier of—

(1) the date that the United States Governor of the IMF reports to the Congress that the People's Republic of China—

(A) is in substantial compliance with obligations of the People's Republic of China under the Articles of Agreement of the IMF regarding orderly exchange rate arrangements; and

(B) has undertaken exchange rate policies and practices consistent with those of other issuers of currencies used in determining the value of Special Drawing Rights; and

(2) the date that is 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 839, the China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

The China Exchange Rate Transparency Act reflects a bipartisan objective to hold China accountable for its poor economic governance.

The International Monetary Fund's articles of agreement require member countries to "... collaborate with the Fund and other members to assure orderly exchange arrangements and to

promote a stable system of exchange rates.”

In other words, to remain a member of the IMF, a country should avoid manipulating exchange rates to gain an unfair competitive advantage over other member countries.

According to the Treasury Department’s November 2022 Foreign Exchange Report, “China’s lack of transparency and use of a wide array of tools complicate Treasury’s ability to assess the degree to which official actions are designed to impact the exchange rate.”

This is just another barrier created by China’s economic governance that prevents us from gaining basic insights into the world’s second largest economy.

This opacity threatens the core mission of the IMF, which was established to help monitor exchange rate agreements.

It is ironic that China is always the one who demands a greater voice at the IMF, even if its actions undermine the fund’s ability to be effective.

For too long, we have seen China dismiss international rules of the road. From debt restructuring in the developing world to massive Chinese export credits, China has refused to work with other economies to find global solutions.

Mr. MEUSER’s bill will help prevent China from undermining yet another key area of cooperation—the IMF’s monitoring of exchange rates.

It will require the Treasury Department to push for greater transparency in China’s exchange rate management during the IMF’s economic reviews of China.

The bill would also make future reviews of Chinese shareholding in the IMF contingent on Beijing becoming a more responsible player in the international monetary system.

We need Treasury to take a firm stand at the IMF and insist that China adhere to the exchange rate policies of other advanced economies, or at the very least, disclose what those policies are.

This is important for the global economy, and it is certainly important for the American economy and American workers.

I thank Mr. MEUSER for his leadership on this bill and urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 839, the China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023, sponsored by Congressman MEUSER.

This bill requires the United States executive director at the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, to use its voice and vote to advocate for increased transparency regarding China’s exchange rate policies.

This is important because China has a history of devaluing its currency, the

yuan, against the dollar, making its exports unfairly cheaper, and thereby harming small businesses in the United States.

This bill would further impose greater accountability on China by requiring the United States to press the IMF to report whether China’s exchange rate policies affect the value of SDRs and to consider China’s performance as a responsible partner in the international monetary system when evaluating China’s voting power at the IMF.

President Biden’s Treasury Department has already increased transparency of China’s practices, including by placing it on a watch list for its failure to publish foreign exchange intervention and key features of its exchange rate setting mechanism.

This bill would reinforce the Biden administration’s actions to further push for greater transparency and accountability in this regard.

These are sensible actions Congress can take to prevent China from using its currency as an economic weapon.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER) to explain his bill.

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman MCHENRY very, very much. I appreciate his leadership on our committee and on this bill.

I do rise in support of my legislation, the China Exchange Rate Transparency Act, H.R. 839, a bipartisan initiative supported by Representatives DONALDS, LOUDERMILK, NICKEL, LAWLER, LEE of Nevada, and DE LA CRUZ.

This legislation confronts the People’s Republic of China’s often deceptive and autocratic exchange rate policies and regular disregard for financial transparency on the international stage.

With this legislation, we are directing and challenging China’s opaque and often manipulative practices in foreign exchange markets, including their policy of accumulating massive foreign currency reserves and depreciating their currency, which undercuts the competitiveness of U.S. exports. By mandating the U.S. executive director at the IMF to use the voice and vote of the United States to advocate for increased exchange rate transparency from China, we are not just advocating for fairness—we are fighting for the integrity of the global economy.

The Department of Treasury’s reports from November 2022 to 2023 lay it out clearly: China’s exchange rate practices are too often shrouded in secrecy, undermining not just the U.S. but the entire global trade system. It is time we confront China’s persistent gaming of international norms. They have been playing by their own rules for too long, and it is detrimental to global economic fairness and stability.

This legislation is not about only singling out China. It is about ensuring

that all IMF members, including China, adhere to the rules that they have agreed to. China has promised to maintain orderly exchange rate arrangements without manipulation. It is our job to hold them to that promise and to ensure they do not continue to exploit the system to their advantage.

We are taking a firm, no-nonsense approach to a complex issue, emphasizing our commitment to fair trade and a transparent global economic system.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023, H.R. 839. This legislation stands for accountability in international finance, fair trade practices, and the stability of our global economy.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, this legislation builds upon the Biden administration’s efforts to increase transparency and accountability of China on key features of how it sets its currency exchange rate.

It is critical to continue to apply pressure on China in this regard because weaponizing its exchange rate will directly harm the United States’ small businesses selling their products and services here in the United States.

For these reasons, I again urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I reiterate that Mr. MEUSER’s bill will help prevent China from undermining yet another key area of cooperation; and that is the IMF’s monitoring of exchange rates.

Exchange rates affect the cost of goods and services in every district in America. Whether or not China is adhering to international norms affects our economy, it affects the global economy, and we need to address that.

We have legislation that enables us to address that. It enables us to speak in a bipartisan way that China’s currency manipulation we will not stand for as a statement of American policy.

This bill will require the Department of the Treasury to push for greater transparency in China’s exchange rate management during the IMF’s economic reviews of China. That is the way we are going to do it.

We have sound policy. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I thank my Democratic colleagues and Republican colleagues on committee for working together on this bill, as well as Mr. MEUSER of Pennsylvania for his leadership on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. VAN DUYNÉ). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 839, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

OFAC LICENSURE FOR INVESTIGATORS ACT

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6370) to require the Office of Foreign Assets Control to develop a program under which private sector firms may receive a license to conduct nominal financial transactions in furtherance of the firms' investigations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6370

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "OFAC Licensure for Investigators Act".

SEC. 2. SENDING AND RECEIVING OF NOMINAL AMOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control shall, not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, establish a pilot program under which a private sector firm may receive a license to conduct nominal financial transactions in furtherance of the firm's investigations.

(b) COORDINATION.—When establishing and carrying out the pilot program required under subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control shall coordinate with the Director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network for the purposes of supporting activities of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network Exchange, as described in section 310(d) of title 31 of the United States Code.

(c) REPORTING ON ACTIVITIES.—Each private sector firm that receives a license described under subsection (a) shall submit a detailed monthly report to the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control on the activities of the firm conducted under such license.

(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On the date that is 1 year after the date on which the pilot program is established under this section, and annually thereafter until the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date the pilot program is terminated, the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control shall submit a report to the Committees on Financial Services and Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Foreign Relations of the Senate containing—

(A) the number of licenses requested under the pilot program;

(B) the number of licenses granted under the pilot program; and

(C) a broad discussion of the utility of the pilot program.

(2) CLASSIFIED BRIEFING.—After submission of each report required under paragraph (1), the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control shall provide the Committees on Fi-

ancial Services and Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Foreign Relations of the Senate with a classified briefing containing—

(A) additional detail on the applicants for a license under the pilot program;

(B) identification of the firms granted a license;

(C) information on the operation of the pilot program, including how long each license lasted and the personnel needed to manage the pilot program;

(D) information gleaned by the Office of Foreign Assets Control from running the pilot program;

(E) the utility of that information;

(F) any obstacles to the operation or utility of the pilot program; and

(G) any recommendations for improving or extending the pilot program.

(e) TERMINATION.—The pilot program established by the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date on which the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control establishes such program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6370, the OFAC Licensure for Investigators Act, introduced by my friend, the ranking member of the National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee, Mrs. BEATTY.

The gentlewoman from Ohio has been an adept legislator in committee and great as an ally and fearsome as a foe. It has been good to work with her on solid policy.

I think this is an important matter for us. Illicit finance internationally and domestically is something we want to tackle, and we want to tackle this through solid policy that can be passed in a bipartisan way.

Since Hamas' October 7 terrorist attack on Israel, we have witnessed the ramifications of bad actors using the financial system to further their acts of terrorism.

This bill would enhance the tools in Treasury's arsenal to go after sanctioned individuals and entities while also holding them accountable in their financial activities.

There is already a well-established practice in traditional financial investigations where a law enforcement agency can request that financial institutions keep open criminal accounts in

order to help track the illicit flows of money.

This bill mirrors that practice.

The bill requires the Secretary of the Treasury to develop a pilot program administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control to allow private sector firms under a temporary and specific license to conduct nominal financial transactions to and through sanctioned entities to further their investigations.

OFAC, the Office of Foreign Assets Control, is a very important tool, one of our most powerful tools of protecting free people around the world and the flow of funds and tracking those flow of funds.

OFAC's licenses are authorized to OFAC to engage in transactions that would otherwise be prohibited. Mrs. BEATTY's bill would allow, for example, blockchain analytics firms to work with OFAC to trace wallets controlled by bad actors. The power of blockchain lies within its immutable ledger that cannot be altered and allows analysis firms to see the movement of value every step along the way.

Mrs. BEATTY's bill is a crucial step in the right direction. The Treasury Department will be required to keep Congress informed of OFAC's activities and findings under the license. With strict oversight and Treasury's ability to continue to follow the money and follow the value, the United States will be better positioned to go after terrorists and other bad actors and entities.

I thank Mrs. BEATTY for her legislation and for her important work on this topic, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,

Washington, DC, January 5, 2024.

Hon. PATRICK MCHENRY,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCHENRY: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 6370, the OFAC Licensure for Investigators Act. Based on your commitment to incorporate agreed edits into the suspension text, I agree that Foreign Affairs may be discharged from further consideration of the bill, so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

This agreement is made with the understanding that it does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, or prejudice our jurisdictional prerogatives on this measure or similar legislation in the future.

Thank you for agreeing to place our exchange of letters into the Record during Floor consideration. I look forward to continuing to work together as this bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,

Washington, DC, January 4, 2024.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 6370, the OFAC Licensure

for Investigators Act, so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. I agree that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 6370 at this time, you do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that you will be appropriately consulted and involved on this or similar legislation as it moves forward.

As discussed, I will seek to place a copy of our exchange of letters on this bill in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

PATRICK MCHENRY,

Chairman, Committee on Financial Services.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 6370, the OFAC Licensure for Investigators Act, which is cosponsored by Mr. NUNN of Iowa. I also thank the chairman and my friend for his support.

The global regime to counter money laundering and terrorist financing is becoming increasingly effective at detecting and deterring the abuse of our financial markets. However, we must stay ahead of the bad actors, who in many cases are moving into darker corners of the financial system and using technologies and methods that are harder to trace.

Private investigative firms, some with unique technologies and analytic methods, should be enlisted to help banks and governments, among others, identify the criminals and the terrorists, their bank accounts, and their typologies.

Today, these private firms are limited in how far they can see into a bad actor's operations. One of those limitations is due to sanctions, which appropriately prevent parties from engaging with sanctioned targets. However, as a result, whether in analytic firms or large bank intelligence units, the good guys have to stop their investigations upon finding evidence that suggest that a wallet or account or address may be associated with a sanctioned individual or entity.

There is a workaround today, but it is far too limited. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or OFAC, provides licenses to individual parties and transactions which allow for narrow exceptions to its sanctions program. My bill requires OFAC to design a pilot licensing program that would allow investigators to apply to OFAC for permission to get a step further and engage with sanctioned persons under certain conditions to gain more visibility into opaque networks and practices.

The investigators could only use nominal amounts but would be able to trace where the money goes. Ensuring that there is robust oversight in this process, the bill mandates that recipients of these specific licenses must report to OFAC monthly on their findings.

This program would be similar to when government officials ask financial institutions to keep open suspicious accounts so the government

could then go and watch the transactions, and while they are doing that, they are able to follow the money.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this innovative and bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to engage in a colloquy with the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Madam Speaker, I have heard concerns from Members about the definition of "nominal transactions" in the bill. As we saw in OFAC's August 22 designation of Tornado Cash, U.S. persons may have received unsolicited nominal amounts of virtual currency from Tornado Cash. These nominal amounts could be as small as a fraction of a penny. The term "nominal amounts" is a term of art within OFAC, but, understandably, Members are worried that this license could allow for the financing of terror activities.

Prior to today's floor proceedings, OFAC and my staff discussed capping licenses at \$10. A fraction of a penny spread across \$10 could provide an immense amount of data on illicit actors and their funding mechanisms.

I think it is important to reiterate on the record for Members that this bill is not intended to allow a license for greater than \$10. Is that something that the gentlewoman would agree with?

Mrs. BEATTY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCHENRY. I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY).

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I say to the gentleman that I would. I think that is a very fair question to ask. Let me just assure you that it is also my intent, as the sponsor of this bill, that the term "nominal" in this context should not be interpreted to be more than the \$10 as you referenced, and I certainly understand why that concern came up. As you know, this bill is intended to enhance our efforts to stop terrorist financing. The kind of investigation that this bill is trying to allow for doesn't need more than a few dollars—or nominal, not to exceed \$10—to be effective. We have seen this before, so I am very comfortable assuring you that we would define it as \$10 or less.

I thank the gentleman for clarifying this. I, too, want to put on the record that it would be defined as the \$10 mark, and I certainly thank the gentleman for his support on this legislation.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I thank the bill's sponsor for this and for her addressing an important matter, which is money laundering internationally and at home is a severe problem. It is a severe problem with regulated financial institutions, and we have longstanding laws and rules and folks that are engaged in Justice and at Treasury that are highly adept at this.

We have new technologies that emerge each day and new approaches

to launder value or money. The movement of digital money is complex. With blockchain technology it makes it much easier because then you basically can follow what is on the blockchain, and it is there for the public to see and for our experts in government to follow very well.

We want to make sure that they are given the full tools to track that illicit finance wherever it may be using the best techniques and technology available to anyone in the world. We want to make sure that we stay on top of this and curb illicit finance the best that we possibly can.

We have the best laws, the best rules, and the best people working to protect our people here and abroad.

Madam Speaker, I thank Mrs. BEATTY for her leadership here on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

My colleague, Mr. NUNN, and I have devised a smart pilot program that would allow for private-sector investigators to engage in small-dollar transactions with sanctioned persons in order to gain valuable information about how networks and activities of those bad actors work.

I am pleased to say that we have agreed on the nominal amount of \$10, and by creating a licensing program for such a person, both business and government will benefit from the information gained, improving visibility into criminal and terrorist financing networks. That is what this bill is all about.

Madam Speaker, for those reasons, I again urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I would just reiterate that Mrs. BEATTY's bill is a crucial step in the right direction, and the Treasury Department will be required to keep Congress informed of OFAC's activities and findings under the license.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6370, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1530

BORDER CRISIS IS KILLING OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, for the new year, I have done a survey with my constituents and asked what the issues are that they want to be focused on in 2024. The top answer they submitted in my northern California district was the border crisis, a Biden and Democratic Party-created crisis.

Republicans and Democrats agree there is a crisis at our border, and it is President Joe Biden's fault. During his first 100 days in office, he took 94 executive actions on immigration, including halting the construction of the border fence.

Under his administration, there have been 8 million illegal border crossings nationwide and over 6.7 million encounters at our southern border. The Biden administration's continuous open border policies are to blame for this historic crisis.

We need action now. We need it yesterday. We must pass, over in the Senate, H.R. 2, the strongest border security bill in congressional history, immediately. We must complete the wall, change the asylum rules to not be such a joke and prevent millions of illegals from being attracted here by a magnet, streamline deportations, and end parole in the United States.

We cannot continue to allow this to stand any longer. It is killing our country and our economy.

POLICY SOLUTIONS TO THE BORDER CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEAN of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, before I yield time to my colleague from Utah, I want to quickly highlight and reiterate the importance of what we are doing here as the House GOP.

House Republicans, during the holiday break, took the time, over 60 of us,

to go down to the border to be able to share what is truly going on. We get to hear, hopefully, today a little bit more about this.

At no point in our Nation's history has the situation on the southern border reached the levels of policy failure, humanitarian disaster, and security threat that it has under the Biden administration.

Many of my House Republican colleagues witnessed firsthand the tragedy at our border last week. It is out of control, and the Biden administration has completely dropped the ball on this issue and threatened the safety of every American community in the process. The issue is, it is more simple than this.

To President Biden, the gig is up. You took office and thought: Let's just reverse everything that the Trump administration had been doing. Let's not necessarily evaluate whether it was successful, whether it was the right policy. Let's just kind of use our executive pen to reverse everything.

It is very simple to consider Migrant Protection Protocols, the remain in Mexico policy, catch and release. These are simple policy changes that would have an immediate positive impact.

Many of my colleagues were able to see this, to witness this, again, firsthand this past week, and I look forward to hearing from Representative BURGESS OWENS from the great State of Utah for more on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS).

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I recently joined Speaker JOHNSON and more than 60 colleagues to visit the southern border at Eagle Pass, Texas, one of the busiest Border Patrol entry points. What I witnessed was nothing short of an invasion, an invasion facilitated by the purposeful policies of the Biden administration.

It was my second trip to the border since the spring of 2021, and regrettably, the situation has only gotten worse.

Two years ago, I encountered a heart-wrenching tragedy of an unaccompanied autistic 7-year-old child, a little girl who was trafficked by the Mexican cartel. My guess is the Biden administration is clueless as to the status of this vulnerable young lady. My guess also is that she is now 1 of the over 100,000 unaccompanied children who have been trafficked through the Biden administration's open border and now lost. The 100,000 innocent children lost to our system highlight the heartless administration that does not care about the innocents.

The crisis doesn't end here. Over 100,000 Americans, primarily aged between 19 and 48, have fallen victim to fentanyl, a deadly weapon shipped from China to Mexico, processed, and then smuggled across our borders. More Americans have lost their lives in a single year than the two 20-year wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan combined.

As these Americans are being poisoned across our country—by the

way, this is across party lines. It doesn't matter what our race, creed, or color might be. Take one, and we have lost another child.

As we are losing Americans, over 100,000, at this one port of entry, Eagle Pass, they are making over \$34 million per week through this trafficking of fentanyl.

President Biden did not inherit this crisis at our southern border. He purposely created it by rolling back the successful Trump policies and then refusing to enforce U.S. immigration laws. In his first 100 days, he took 94 executive actions on immigration, resulting in 1.8 million illegal crossings since January 2021.

That is why I joined my House Republican colleagues to pass the Secure the Border Act of 2023 7 months ago, which offers commonsense solutions to the Biden border crisis. This legislation demands the completion of the border wall, an end to catch and release, an increase in Border Patrol agents, a halt to the flow of deadly fentanyl, and protection of our innocent children from human traffickers. It places the safety of the American people first, a sentiment shared by citizens throughout our country who are tired of Washington's inaction. However, the Senate Democrats refuse to bring it to the floor for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to immediately pass H.R. 2, send it to the President's desk, and stand up for the safety, security, and sacred laws of our great Nation.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative OWENS for his firsthand look.

I spent time at the border—I believe it was in the late spring—and the same situation continues on. The solutions are right in front of us, and we just need the Biden administration to recognize that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time to be able to weigh in on these issues in a little more relaxed manner here and spend some time.

I want to talk a little bit about legislation we are working on here known as S.J. Res. 38. In this case, it would ensure our taxpayer dollars are used to buy American-made products, something that has had bipartisan support, nonpartisan support, in the past around here.

Certainly, when we are talking about having something domestically produced or buying it from a foreign competitor or ally, one thing we shouldn't be doing is buying more and more things from China.

What is the sense of exporting so many of our dollars over to somebody who is such an adversary in so many things on the world front, with the funding of countries that are helping to sponsor terrorism and the unrest they are helping fund in the Middle East? There are constant threats to Taiwan and the other islands in the South

China Sea that are possessions of Japan and others, constant aggression on that. They sink many other smaller countries into huge debt by dangling out loans they know they can't repay, and pretty soon, they can take over the resources of that country.

As the United States of America, we can produce anything we want here. We can produce it well, usually of the best quality, using the best practices, by far, yet what are we doing? We are hamstringing our own ability to strengthen our own economy with the energy we need to produce in order to do that, with environmental policies that 50 years ago were well intentioned but have been completely weaponized against industries and farming, mining, and timber. The West burns each year massively. In California and Utah, it is endless.

A lot of this currently comes from Biden administration policies, and I jump back 3 years to 8 years to the Obama-era policies that have put us in this spot.

Currently, President Biden wants to shoot down the waiver to eliminate the buy in America requirements for, in this case, electric vehicle chargers. That is what this bill, S.J. Res. 38, is about, which would be purchased under the Infrastructure and Jobs Act, another boondoggle itself.

If the money is going to be forced to be spent, and we have to buy these electric chargers for electric cars, at least can we have them be American produced, American made.

Don't get me mixed up with the electric car crowd. I don't think we should be forcing that on anybody. At the same time, they are tearing down the California power grid with the dams they are removing on the Klamath River up in the north part of my district and one across the border, and then threatening the Snake River farther up and one down in Mendocino County.

It is just one thing after another, getting rid of hydroelectric power and also the ability to store water and for the water to be retained during flood control season and for some recreation—yes, even water available to let out for fish when they need to. When they tear these dams out, we lose that green, renewable, clean, CO₂-free power by these policies.

An addendum to that, CO₂ is not a problem. It is only 0.04 percent of our atmosphere. The left wants to keep playing these games like we are talking about here. They want to export jobs to China to build these electric car chargers. They want to tear down the dams that produce CO₂-free, green, renewable power and try and build even more batteries and more windmills that chop up the birds and only run when there is a little bit of wind and the solar plants that only run during the daytime when it is not a cloudy or rainy or snow-covered day. It is amazing how dumb these ideas are.

In 2021, the Democrats included \$7.5 billion of taxpayer money for electric

vehicle charging stations in their pie-in-the-sky idea that we are going to electrify everything in the next few years. This is the Infrastructure and Jobs Act.

I don't support the forced purchase and proliferation of electric vehicles, but doggone it, if we are going to do this, we need to buy American.

Why do we have to steamroll our own laws? Why is the administration backstabbing our American manufacturers and sending billions over to China and other Asian markets?

In the process, it also destroys our immigration laws and fosters more chaos at the border when we have this continued policy by the Biden administration of basically ignoring the border.

As mentioned earlier, 64 of my colleagues went to the border. I have paid a couple of visits myself in Arizona and California and such. It is indeed chaos. They are just walking right past you when you go visit the border. Some of these are nice folks from Central America, families and such. We keep putting out the magnet, the green light to come across.

We have talked many times about the numbers coming across the border, like 10,000 per day just in the month of December, 300,000 for a month.

The burden is being borne even by our Democrat-run cities, even they are starting to cry uncle. We have the Governor of New Jersey saying we need to check with these bus companies and see where they are all coming from. No, you need to check over here at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. That is where the policy is coming from. It isn't bus companies from Texas or Florida or something. That is who you need to be talking to because that is where the problem is.

Indeed, the administration is shifting from pushing our jobs overseas to then having our jobs here filled by people who are coming here illegally. It is the chaos they have had at the border coupled with these other policies and fentanyl coming across the border.

Who knows what kind of terror cells are being built by people coming across the border illegally and the gunrunning and everything else that can happen? It has even resulted in the housing of illegal immigrants in our National Park System, including a national park right there in New York City, so people can't use it.

Now, you have seen the stories more and more recently that they are going to be housing them in schools. Kids are getting kicked out of schools in New York right now because they have a supposedly temporary problem where they have to house them in the gym. The kids can go online, back to Zoom learning, like during the height of COVID, which was manipulated in my own home State of California, which took an extra year to allow kids back into school.

□ 1545

What a mess. Why are these people entrusted with power?

When you talk to the American public, this is all preventable. We don't have to live like this, when we are talking energy, when we are talking domestic production. No, we would rather export it, I guess, and have kids in Africa mine the products in order to have your electric car and electric gadgetry.

The National Park Police have testified that these encampments on our National Park lands endanger the people that would normally enjoy and use them. Also, in the wintertime, these areas can end up being a floodplain, like the one in New York City, endangering the illegal immigrants that are being attracted—until recently, when it seems maybe the light is starting to turn around for the Governor of New York and the mayor of New York City and such.

I don't know. I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, we have a porous border. We have a massive problem with the encounters that we have at the border here that are overwhelming our demoralized Border Patrol folks. How are they supposed to do their job?

On my visit down to Arizona, they actually had, and still have today, government-provided vans go over and just pick people up at the gaps in the border and get them to the processing center sooner. We know that 85 percent of them are not going to be heard at their asylum trial any time soon.

One thing after another is wrecking our economy, wrecking people's confidence in government, and the ability just to conduct their own lives. There is no reason we need to have such costly ways of doing business with energy, with procuring food; everything else that is happening under this Biden administration.

Mr. Speaker, just 3 years ago, things were looking pretty good on the cost of fuel, cost of groceries, and employment until they used COVID as a weapon to attack our economy at that time and tried to make it look bad in order to win the 2020 election.

We have a lot of complex issues, but the solutions really aren't that tough when you get down to it: enforce the border laws that we have.

We don't need comprehensive immigration reform. We already know what we are supposed to do about the border. We just need to enforce the laws that we have and have common sense applied to asylum.

At the same time, let's not exploit American jobs that we could be doing if we have to produce these electric vehicle charging stations. At least let Americans produce them instead of sending them to China.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for speaking very plainly and very simply. These solutions are right in front of us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the CMS' proposed Medicare cut of 3.37 percent.

Just to put this in perspective, when a physician sees a Medicare patient, they do it because they care about patients. They do not do it for money, because it doesn't make financial sense.

Let me give an example here.

You own a hardware store and you want to sell hammers. It costs you \$1 for each hammer. Say, the hammer is on Medicare, or you have to buy the Medicare, and you have to sell it for 60 cents.

How long do you stay in business? It doesn't make sense.

So as we move time and time and time again, the number of physicians who are able to take Medicare patients, out of the goodness of their heart, is falling and falling. You actually lose money on Medicare or Medicare patients that has to be taken up through cost shifting for regular insurance.

When I ran a private practice, I stayed up many, many nights, Saturday nights, searching for paper clips, making sure that I knew where every penny went. I just had to make sure that my staff and the bills got paid before I ever got paid.

My practice was heavily Medicare, so I did not take a salary many, many times because the numbers did not work. In fact, adjusted for overinflation for the last 20 years, Medicare physician fee schedules have dropped 20 percent, and this is in light of the massive inflation we have had over the last 2 years; even worse.

Mr. Speaker, what other profession expects to get a pay cut every year?

This has to stop.

These are the people who are actually up in the middle of the night taking care of your grandmother who has appendicitis, taking care of your daughter, taking care of your child with a broken arm. They are the ones doing this, and here we are rewarding them because they basically have to take government pay patients by cutting and cutting and cutting.

One of ObamaCare's directives was to starve private practices to force physicians to work in hospitals or big conglomerations.

How did they do this? They cut their pay every year while hospitals, although not as much so, got raises every year.

So what does this do? It pushes physicians out of private practice because they can't pay the bills.

Mr. Speaker, I left my private practice when my partner said: We can't do this anymore. We are going to be acquired by a hospital.

Mr. MURPHY: We can't provide the care to the patients that they need.

Why is it a bad model? Private-practice physicians are different birds than employed physicians. It is just very simple. It is a well-known fact in medicine. Those employed physicians tend to be less efficient, cost more, and tend to work more on the clock.

Those who are in private practice put a taproot down in a community. They have stayed there, and they are some-

one's doctor for 20, 30 years or more. This is not happening now. They have made transitory medicine the rule, not the exception.

The cuts that are going to the Medicare fee schedule absolutely need to stop. This is why I introduced H.R. 6683, the Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act.

This legislation will stop this year's cuts while we work on a permanent solution. This is not something that needs to happen year after year after year where we are cutting and cutting the people who actually take care of patients.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress to help work with my colleagues to help fix Medicare. We are facing an absolute calamity with the shortage of doctors, especially surgeons, in the next 3 to 5 years. Those who are reaching retirement age, instead of working like most physicians do, are finally throwing up their hands and saying, we are done.

Sadly enough, the ones coming out of medical school now—because of some of the processes now were not working hard enough—are not nearly coming out in the numbers and the efficiency to take the place of those retiring.

Every day, we now add 10,000 new patients to the Medicare rolls. You are expecting doctors to continue to take more and more Medicare, earning less and less and less. They are going to go out of business or have to go into employment, which we all know is a worse way of taking care of patients.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 6683 and help us try to keep medicine back on track.

Thank you.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Murphy and I sit on the same committee, Health in the Ways and Means Committee, and if his remarks seem personal, it is because they are. He has had such a close experience with this, and no one makes the point better that all of our providers' costs continue to go up because of bad the monetary policy that we have seen, particularly in the last few years. When we constantly tell these providers, You are going to have to do more with less, they have to make decisions, and this is ultimately the worst possible thing for our patients.

The crowding-out effect that we have going on in our economy right now, particularly with things related to government funding, there is no situation where it is worse than this. The inability for us to get after our true debt and deficit drivers will continue to crowd out, so these types of cuts are forced on providers, and we have to be willing and adult enough to be able to figure that out.

So thank you for that, Dr. Murphy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am rising today to advocate for America's patients and their physicians.

Over the past 3 years, doctors across the Nation have more than stepped up to the challenges that they have encountered, COVID, often risking their own health and safety to protect our communities. That not only includes the physicians; that includes the nurses, the technicians, and everyone in America's hospitals. However, when Congress left town in December, we once again let down America's doctors by allowing a 3.37 percent Medicare payment cut to hit January 1.

As a cardiothoracic surgeon for 15 years, I have seen firsthand the consequences of cuts like these. What are the consequences? Access to quality healthcare for rural America that I represent, underserved urban America, the American people.

The payment cut to physicians will impede patients' access to care while increasing the gap between physician expenses and reimbursement rates.

I want to associate myself with Dr. Murphy's comments. Costs are dramatically going up, and, if that continues, more and more of America's physicians will not take Medicare. I didn't say Medicaid. I said Medicare.

Given the existing shortage of physicians in the United States, the combination of declining reimbursement and rapidly rising costs threatens to drive more doctors out of the profession, particularly, as I mentioned, in rural and underserved urban America.

It has led to a lot of consolidation, as Dr. Murphy mentioned—physicians being consolidated into a large medical practice or employed by large hospital systems.

Fortunately, we have a window of opportunity to right this wrong and support the thousands of hardworking men and women serving millions of Medicare beneficiaries. We must stop the bleeding and eliminate the full 3.37 cut by January 19.

Congress must also implement a permanent solution that will halt the downward spiral of physician reimbursement and provide much-needed and deserved stability for America's doctors. Again, if we want access for America's seniors to the Medicare program, we have to act. We have to act soon.

Again, it is not just physicians out there not taking Medicaid. They are not taking Medicare. I have elderly in-laws and an elderly mother. They have experienced this.

In fact, we had a hearing in the Committee on Energy and Commerce a couple of weeks ago. There was an economist there. He couched it in a way that was positive. He said, Well, 60 percent of America's seniors are not having trouble finding a primary care physician.

When it came around time for my questioning, I said, Well, I want to rephrase that. Forty percent of America's seniors are struggling to find a primary care doctor. That is a big number, folks. Forty percent of America's seniors are struggling. Their physician retires. Their physician moves.

Trying to find a new primary care doctor is a big challenge. We cannot let this continue—again, urban America and underserved areas, rural America that I represent.

In 2023, for a more permanent solution, I introduced the bipartisan Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act, which would tie the annual physician fee schedule updates to inflationary measurements, the Medicare Economic Index, or MEL. That is both fair and efficient. It has been promoted. Almost every medical society in America thinks this is a good idea.

I don't have the graph in front of me but let me just tell you what it shows. Outpatient and inpatient hospital care gets an update based on inflation every year. Providers do not. As Dr. MURPHY outlined, it has been at least a 20 percent cut just based on that in the most recent history, and even more if you factor in the massive inflation—which thankfully is down—that we had last year and the year before.

The current path toward further consolidation, physician burnout, closure of medical practices must be corrected. If we don't correct this, the problems I outlined are going to continue.

I urge congressional leadership to address this critical issue, and I will continue to advance patient-centered solutions that empower patients and support innovation to ensure that all Americans have access to quality, affordable healthcare.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, Dr. BUCSHON, for another incredible perspective on this looming issue that seems to just be year over year over year, and we cannot continue to put our medical providers in this situation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah, Vice Chairman MOORE, for yielding and for claiming this time this afternoon to discuss these important issues facing our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, as the music note dropped in Nashville and Americans rang in the new year on January 1, we woke up in the morning to horrifying news. 302,000 illegal immigrant encounters had occurred at our southern border, the most in any single month ever, in December 2023. To put this number into perspective, that is more than the entire population of Knoxville, Tennessee, which is the third largest city in my home State of Tennessee.

□ 1600

Keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that out of the 302,000 illegal immigrants encountered at the southern border, none of these includes the illegal immigrants who successfully evaded our Customs and Border Patrol agents.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, it is actually much worse. In fact, in fiscal year 2023 which ended on September 30, so it doesn't include the record-breaking

month of December, Customs and Border Protection reported 2.48 million illegal immigrant encounters, and there were over 1.1 million known got-aways. That includes 169 people who were stopped trying to cross the border in fiscal year 2023 whose names appear on the terrorist watch list, which is more than in fiscal years '17, '18, '19, '20, '21, and '22 combined. Or to put it another way, the entire Trump Presidency plus Biden's first 2 years.

Additionally, border officials seized 27,293 pounds of fentanyl in fiscal year 2023. That is a whopping 464 percent increase from 2020 and, obviously, points out the failure of the White House and the Department of Homeland Security to enforce our Nation's laws.

Their desire for open border policies is wreaking havoc on an entire generation of young people in my home State and across our country who are dying from fentanyl overdose at an alarming rate.

From halting border wall construction to ending the successful remain in Mexico program implemented during the Trump administration to ending title 42 powers that kept illegals out of the country, the White House continues to send a message to the world that our borders are wide open.

Thankfully, there is a solution that would make for a great new year's resolution. The House Republicans passed H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act of 2023. It would end the catch-and-release policy, pay more for Border Patrol agents, restart important border wall construction, and strengthen and streamline the asylum process.

The bottom line is we must enforce the laws already on the books and pass new ones that put an end to the skyrocketing illegal immigration disrupting every corner of America, including my home State of Tennessee. Unfortunately, until then, every town in President Biden's America will be a border town.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I echo the gentleman's sentiments, and I will continue to speak on it today. The solutions at the border are simple. We have got actual data that can just be reimplemented and we can get rid of the politics involved and just do something right by our Nation. We look forward to an opportunity to leverage this moment to get this border policy through. The things in H.R. 2 make absolute sense.

I am looking forward now to the remarks of my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the vice chairman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, last week, I joined the largest congressional delegation in history to visit our southern border. What we saw is absolutely alarming. It is alarming to me personally and will be alarming to every American. We saw a Border Patrol station that has been

under constant siege for months. We saw a community in Eagle Pass dealing with the strain of over 300,000 migrants crossing the border in the past 30 days. We saw an emboldened cartel that continues to smuggle drugs and human trafficking into every community in America.

Speaking to Border Patrol agents and local sheriffs, it is clear that President Biden's open border policies have led to this national security crisis.

In the past 3 years, we have seen the number of attempted entries by individuals on the terrorist watch list skyrocket to over 100 a year with 1.5 million got-aways reported by the Border Patrol. That number is surely larger. We have seen an increase in drug smuggling with substances like fentanyl, methamphetamine, and heroin entering our Nation at record levels.

Moreover, we have seen reports of public schools being used as holding facilities for migrants instead of being used for American students who are already suffering from historic learning losses after the COVID pandemic.

All of this amounts to a pattern of failure brought on by the Biden administration's refusal to address the border crisis head-on.

Half measures will not keep Americans safe. It is time for the Senate to pass H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, and begin working in good faith to protect our communities.

For far too long, my constituents have been poisoned by fentanyl analogs that are created in China, made into pills in Mexico, and brought into the United States through an open southern border.

It is time to enforce our laws. It is time to reinstate the remain in Mexico policy. It is time to give Border Patrol agents the tools and the resources that they need to protect our border and to protect the sovereignty of our country. It is time to secure our Nation.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. JOYCE for coming down over the holiday break.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for hosting this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss CMS' Medicare physician fee schedule which threatens seniors' access to healthcare, exacerbates vertical consolidation within the market, and will further drive patients toward higher cost sites of service.

Physician costs are growing, but their reimbursements are shrinking yet again.

In America, we all want the same thing when it comes to healthcare. Whether you are a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or whatever, you want accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare. Everyone wants that.

This is causing all three to suffer. Accessibility is decreasing. More physicians and more physicians are no

longer accepting Medicaid and are no longer accepting Medicare.

The issues are accessibility, affordability, driving patients to higher cost sites, and, of course, quality.

Quality goes down when we lose quality physicians, and we are losing them. They are getting out of the practices because they can't afford to stay in the practices. In fact, Medicare doctor payments have been cut by almost 10 percent over the last 4 years. This is simply unsustainable.

Fortunately, we have a window of opportunity to right this wrong and support the thousands of hardworking men and women serving millions of Medicare beneficiaries. Over the holidays, I spoke with doctors in my district who are preparing to make painful decisions including service reductions and hiring freezes.

For patients, this means an inability to get even basic healthcare services close to their homes or longer wait times as overwhelmed staff race to keep up.

That is why I am working closely with my bipartisan colleagues on a permanent solution, but we need to stop the full 3.37 percent cut and ensure that physicians have the financial support necessary to care for our seniors.

This is the United States of America. We have the greatest healthcare system in the world, and we are ruining it.

Again, I don't care if you are a Republican, Democrat, Independent, red, blue, or green. I don't care. We all want the same thing. We want accessible, affordable, quality healthcare. This is ruining it. We have got to compensate our physicians.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his remarks emphasizing the need for good healthcare.

I hear this from several of my friends, family, and constituents back home. I think one of the most alarming things that we are seeing right now in the healthcare provider world is that—when I grew up, a lot of my friends' parents were physicians. They would always encourage their child to go into medical school and pursue a career that they loved so much. This may just be an anecdote, but I am literally seeing that next generation of current providers saying: Try something different.

Again, that may just be my experience. I don't think it is because I have heard a lot of it from other colleagues of mine. We can't look back at this time and say we didn't address this issue of not doing right by our providers, by our rural healthcare and making sure that they have what they need to be able to navigate the costs that are continually increasing and being able to provide for their patients.

As Dr. Murphy also talked about, we have to have private practices being able to stay nimble and focused on their specific community and not just build big conglomerates. Small business is the backbone of our Nation, and

that needs to exist also in our healthcare market.

As I close here, let me just turn to the other topic that we talked heavily about today which is the border. I spent some time at home the last few weeks, and as I met with and had different forums back home with constituents, I explained to them that one of the biggest problems is the way that policy works in Washington, D.C.

It is in a very partisan and difficult circumstance back here. I don't think anybody on either side of the aisle would disagree with me that it becomes very difficult. When we factor in the Senate that requires a 60-vote threshold—every bill needs to be bipartisan in the Senate—that requirement isn't here in the majoritarian rule House, but that is what we live with. Particularly when there is split government, then we have difficult decisions and difficult things to navigate.

The point that I made to them was that with my Democratic colleagues, we often can find the first three or four provisions of a particular issue that we agree with, but then that is when it becomes difficult because if Democrats want the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh item, then they will say, no, we are not going to vote on any of the things we agree on until we get some of these things we want, even though we agree on the baseline.

We do it too. We have certain things that we want to make sure we get so we are going to leverage that so we don't get the basics done.

I can't think of a scenario where this applies more than our border crisis right now. I don't want to make this political. I remember a little while ago when there were 34-odd migrants that suffocated in the back of a truck. It was like a blip on the news feed. It was so quick. It came out as a news cycle. That is the danger of what is going on right now. We have empowered the cartel networks that we should be united against. We have empowered the cartel networks to own the border.

I heard a staggering statistic—I don't have the number in front of me—on what we have calculated on how much money those cartels are making on a weekly to monthly basis. It is terrifying because that number is going directly into the drug trade.

The fentanyl crisis is one of the biggest impacts this has on our community. I held this huge roundtable back in Utah with the caretakers, law enforcement, and advocacy groups. It was a very nonpartisan conversation, and it was so, so concerning on what was going on.

This is what I want to tell the American people: We actually agree that we should do a lot of the elements in H.R. 2. We should shore up that protection and border security. However, then we need to make sure we streamline the visa process, and we need to make sure we get a stronger workforce here.

I am here to tell you, Mr. Speaker, we actually largely will agree on that

aspect of a comprehensive immigration reform.

□ 1615

My biggest criticism of President Biden and his administration has been that he immediately removed or reversed the Migrant Protection Protocols, the remain in Mexico policy that the Trump-Pence administration had done. "Well, we are a new administration. We have to reverse all those things."

A lot of the energy things were done by executive order. It was also this border policy. I think we are seeing now it is okay to have made a mistake if you are willing to be the adult and say: "Look, we actually should reimplement some of this stuff."

It is what the American people need. It is what the polling will tell us. It is what we largely agree, that there are some basic things that we can get done.

I think not telling the cartels: "Hey, if you just get folks to the border and get them across, they are going to get lost in the system. You are going to be in there, and you are going to be fine." That is what they are telling them. The immigrants who are coming here, it is not the experience they are having because they get lost in the system and then are forced to go into the drug trade or forced to be part of the workforce of the Sinaloa cartel once they rush the product through the borders however they get it, whether it is a port or nonport. I don't care how it comes through.

Once that product gets here, then these individuals get leveraged to do that because they have no other options because they were lied to by the cartels.

If we can agree on some basic stuff, let's implement it. If we shore up and get back to times that we saw in previous Presidencies, we can then go and actually work on some of the other immigration policies that also need reform.

I am committed to doing that, and I hope that we can address that. If we leave the border with this type of policy that we have seen create a beacon for these cartels, then we will not be able to accomplish anything.

If it has to be done all in one bill, that is unrealistic because it is just a bigger beacon. It is just more opportunity for the cartels to try to get more people through, and it is nonsensical.

I hope for every opportunity to tell the Biden administration that this is actually better for you politically. I hate to say it, but this is what the American people need.

That is what my colleagues are trying to emphasize. That is why over 64 of my colleagues last week spent time down there. The same things that I saw months ago when I visited Eagle Pass are continuing. They are not getting better. There has to be policy change.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues for attending today's Special

Order and sharing their thoughts on these very important issues, and I yield back the balance of my time.

PROTECT AND ENHANCE SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, we are here this afternoon to discuss America's number one anti-poverty program for the elderly and the number one antipoverty program for children. It is Social Security.

I commend my colleague from the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. MOORE, for his work on the committee, but here is the issue, Mr. Speaker: This Congress that we are all a part of has not enhanced Social Security now going on 53 years. 1971 was the last time the United States Congress, which has the responsibility, enhanced Social Security for any of its recipients. Mr. Speaker, 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security, and since 1971, Congress has not taken any action.

I am joined by my colleagues today as we come to this floor and beseech our fellow colleagues to do one simple thing: Vote. That is our responsibility.

We have a very specific plan that we have put forward. There is also this other plan that is out there, some sort of debt commission that is going to get behind closed doors and decide what they will cut with respect to Social Security.

The American public overwhelmingly—Democrat, Republican, and Independents—all say we do not need cuts to the very essential programs that we rely on as a country. For more than 40 percent, Mr. Speaker, of all Americans, Social Security is the only pension that they have, and Congress hasn't acted in more than 53 years.

We need to enhance the program. We need to enhance it in a way that makes sure that everyone gets an across-the-board increase, especially for 5 million of our fellow Americans, mostly women, who get below-poverty-level checks from the government of the wealthiest nation in the world because Congress has not taken the time or the effort.

Who are these people? They are your brothers, your sisters, your aunts, your uncles, your neighbors, the people you go to church with.

Where does this money go? Right back into every single Member's district.

Mr. MOORE of Utah has 110,000 Social Security recipients in his district. Every single Member of Congress is getting a card that tells them how many recipients they have in their district, what they receive, whether they are dependents, spouses, or disabled.

That is what we are focused on. We want a vote, Mr. Speaker, because the

American people demand it. That is why I am joined here for this Special Order hour on this floor by so many of our colleagues. There are so many of us that we hope everyone will recognize their time and have consideration for their colleagues, but I will also point out the more than 350 groups across the Nation that support the Social Security 2100 Act, including the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Social Security Works, the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, Paralyzed Veterans of America, the National Education Association, and I could go on. Instead, I am going to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), a leader on the Subcommittee on Social Security.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my brothers and sisters on behalf of more than 124,000 of my constituents in north Jersey in the Ninth District who rely on Social Security each and every month. They rely on it.

To some, as in the entire country, that is their only means of income, of survival. That is how Social Security was established in the 1930s and implemented a few years later.

Social Security is one of America's greatest success stories. I remember the first time I ran for Congress in 1996. I walked into a room prepared to deal with housing codes and public housing, but the only questions folks asked me: "Where do you stand on Social Security?" "Do you want to privatize Social Security?"

Social Security is a success story. After nearly 90 years, it still stands as a monument to decency and dignity and the birthright of hardworking Americans, yet throughout its storied history, Mr. LARSON, it has been under attack. Even in 1935, it was the subject of attacks and lies from day one.

The Republican Study Committee, which represents three-quarters of House Republicans, proposed slashing Social Security benefits by \$718 billion. The GOP leadership wants to create a so-called fiscal commission in our government funding bill. That is a wolf in sheep's clothing.

I am proud to join my friend and colleague, Congressman JOHN LARSON, in a letter opposing this cynical ploy to slash Social Security and Medicare.

Without aggressive action, Social Security lurches toward insolvency. Congress has a sacred responsibility to fight for its future. The same question asked 26 years ago is asked of me today. That is why I am standing with Mr. LARSON on his Social Security 2100 Act, to ensure the long-term strength and solvency of Social Security.

The Social Security 2100 Act provides paid-for benefit enhancements while not raising taxes on middle-class families. It is a no-brainer.

Our bill ends the painful 5-month disability waiting period. Who can justify that in this day and age?

It would ensure Americans suffering with permanent disorders like Huntington's disease get the help they need without red tape or delay.

The bill eliminates the windfall elimination provisions so that firefighters, police officers, teachers, and others get the full benefits that they have earned.

With the Social Security 2100 Act, we are fighting for our seniors who have worked their entire lives and rely on Social Security to make ends meet. We are fighting for working families so that no one who pays into the system over a lifetime ever retires in poverty.

We must get this done for the American people, Mr. Speaker. There are no excuses.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, there is no person on the committee who has fought harder for the repeal of WEP and GPO and who understands the significance and impact that Social Security has on so many of her constituents and constituents all across this country than Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON for being the chief advocate for reforming our Social Security system. It is high time that Congress acted to preserve those benefits for people who have earned those benefits by paying into the system over their working lives.

I want to touch on another issue that concerns me with respect to Social Security, and that is that we see an increasing number of people who rely on those benefits. Since 2010, the number of individuals who rely on Social Security has increased over 21 percent. Over that same period of time, Social Security's administrative funding for basic operations has fallen by 17 percent after you account for inflation.

Those shortages—that is, more people needing services but the budget being cut—have caused a significant delay across Social Security for our most vulnerable populations, including those who are awaiting disability benefits.

I have a constituent from my district who has been working with my case-work team in my district office for more than a year and a half. This individual had a stroke and applied for disability benefits with Social Security in August 2022 after becoming paralyzed. He was denied those benefits in June 2023.

□ 1630

He appealed his decision that same month and didn't receive a response from Social Security until November of 2023, stating that his application needed additional review. After 17 months without any form of income, his case was finally approved just this week. Americans should not have to wait this long to see these necessary earned benefits.

Instead of working with Democrats to ensure that Social Security has a better capability to serve constituents like that one, my Republican colleagues proposed devastating cuts to Social Security. Additional cuts to an

agency that is already struggling with a significant backlog would be catastrophic for seniors and individuals with disabilities. After they do these budget cuts, then my Republican colleagues want to turn around and blame the staff at the Social Security Administration for not being able to handle the backlog.

Unfortunately, the story that I told about my constituent is not unique. There are countless Americans who suffer from disabilities and are unable to get their benefits in a timely manner. These Americans deserve better.

I again thank my colleague, Mr. LARSON, for leading the charge on reforming the system, on holding up our end of the bargain to people who have paid into the system over their entire working lives.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I again want to point out that both Ms. SÁNCHEZ and Ms. MOORE, who will be speaking next, understand completely that Social Security is an earned benefit. It is often referred to on the other side as an entitlement. It is hardly an entitlement. Every American knows when they look at their paycheck that it says FICA. That stands for Federal Insurance Contributions Act. Whose? Yours.

GWEN MOORE understands that, and that is why she has been fighting on this committee to make sure that we not only extend the solvency, but we enhance the benefits.

Imagine this, Richard Nixon was President of the United States the last time Congress enhanced any benefits to Social Security. Do you think things have changed a little bit over those years?

Every single member of the public ought to be outraged by this. It is not anything the President can do with executive order. It is not anything that is going to happen through the judiciary. It is only through the United States Congress.

What are we asking of the Congress? We are asking them to vote.

That is what GWEN MOORE does every week on the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LARSON for holding this Special Order on the importance of enhancing Social Security.

Mr. LARSON talked about how things have not changed for the last 80 years since Social Security has been in existence. I will tell you one thing; Social Security has not changed its emphasis and focus on allowing our workers to retire and age in dignity and not in poverty. We should and can enhance the program so that it will be solvent and useful for current and future beneficiaries.

Take, for example, some provisions that I have included in the Social Security 2100 Act. That is to provide beneficiaries receiving payments for 20 years or more an enhancement. As our population lives longer, more and more

people may end up living out their savings, especially women. As our students continue to face the daunting cost of pursuing higher education, it is critical that we reinstate the student benefits of retired, deceased, or disabled workers. These reforms would be particularly meaningful for students of color and low-income families.

Before closing, I add my voice in supporting how important it is that Social Security 2100 recognizes that caregiving is, in fact, uncompensated work. In the United States, 43.5 million people, mostly women, work as unpaid caregivers to their children, aging parents, or to an adult family member with a disability, and they don't receive a single dime. The value of that unpaid caregiving is estimated at over half a trillion dollars annually.

This bill provides caregiver credits to ensure that people, mostly women, are not penalized when it comes time to claim their Social Security benefits for taking time out of the workforce to care for children or other dependents.

I thank Mr. LARSON for his continued commitment to preserve and enhance Social Security.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MOORE.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania has done just an incredible job on the Ways and Means Committee, again advocating on a regular basis, especially for the more than 5 million fellow Americans who get below-poverty-level checks from Social Security. We are not here just to extend the solvency of Social Security. We have a plan that the President of the United States supports, that is fully paid for. It is paid for by having people—are you ready for this?—who are making over \$400,000—that is about six-tenths of 1 percent of the American people. Raise your hand in the gallery if you are making more than \$400,000.

By doing just that, we will both extend the solvency and enhance the program that is fully paid for and make sure the trust fund stays intact. That is what the gentleman from Pennsylvania fights for.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON for hosting this Special Order hour so we can discuss the importance of this country's most effective anti-poverty program.

Social Security is an earned benefit. It is the insurance people pay for with every paycheck, and it is the bedrock of retirement security, with benefits guaranteed to nearly all seniors.

In my district in the City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia, there are about 120,000 Social Security recipients who receive \$194 million in monthly benefits. That includes many of our Nation's most vulnerable, including retirees, folks with disabilities, and children.

Social Security's guaranteed benefits keep many recipients from all demo-

graphic groups out of poverty, but these protections are especially vital to Black and Brown Americans. Without Social Security, 21.7 million more adults and children would be below the poverty line. That is why Democrats are consistently fighting to stop Republicans' attempts to dismantle this vital program.

Time and time again, Republicans have put forth plan after plan to cut Social Security benefits and raise the minimum retirement age. In the current Congress, they proposed a fiscal commission to address the national debt, which we all know is just a backdoor way to cut essential programs like Social Security and Medicare.

However, in contrast to Republicans, Democrats are offering a proposal that would protect and expand the Social Security program. That is why I am proud to support Congressman LARSON's Social Security 2100 Act. This transformative legislation would permanently increase benefits by 2 percent across the board on average for all Social Security beneficiaries for the first time in 52 years. We would pay for this bill by ensuring millionaires and billionaires finally pay their fair share into Social Security.

The American public is on our side when it comes down to protecting and expanding Social Security. Poll after poll finds that the vast majority of Americans believe Social Security benefits should not be reduced in any way and support a proposal to increase benefits. That is why I remain steadfast in opposing any and all cuts to Social Security, and I will continue to work with my Democratic colleagues to protect, expand, and deliver Social Security benefits to all those who have earned them.

Again, I thank Congressman LARSON for hosting this Special Order hour and thank him for his consistent leadership.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I, again, thank the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Social Security Works, the Alliance for Retired Americans, the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, and AARP, which came out most recently condemning the so-called commission that is coming down the pike.

Every American should be aware of this. When they are talking about a debt commission, what they are talking about is cutting Social Security, a commission that goes behind closed doors and without public hearings decides what is going to be the future of Social Security.

Americans—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—support Social Security and enhancing it. Nobody knows that better than STEVE HORSFORD, who represents more than 150,000 Social Security recipients in his home State of Nevada.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD).

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut

(Mr. LARSON) for bringing us together for this important Special Order and to thank him for his tremendous leadership on Social Security as the ranking member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security and for introducing the Social Security 2100 Act, which I am proud to be an original cosponsor of.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the urgent need for us to take action to protect and to improve one of the most important programs in our Nation, Social Security. It is shameful that it has been more than 50 years since Social Security benefits have been improved.

Social Security is vital to making sure our senior citizens, the disabled, and many children in Nevada and all across the country are able to keep a roof over their heads and to keep food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, there are 149,700 Social Security recipients in Nevada's Fourth Congressional District, which I am honored to represent. This includes 113,832 retirees, 8,380 children, 11,279 widows and spouses, and 16,209 disabled workers. Collectively, they receive \$248 million in monthly benefits in our district alone.

When beneficiaries receive their Social Security checks, what do they do? They turn around and spend that money in our communities, helping to churn the local economic engine.

I know some of my colleagues on the other side will say we can't afford it. Well, the truth is, we can't not afford it. By simply ensuring millionaires and billionaires pay just their fair share of FICA that everyone else who works every day does, we can absolutely afford it. With these funds, we can increase benefits for all recipients by 2 percent, which would be the first general increase in Social Security in over 52 years. You tell my constituents we can't afford it, and meanwhile they are struggling to afford their rent and their food.

Something else that I hear a lot about from my constituents is the fact that this bill, as proposed by Congressman LARSON, repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision, the WEP, and the Government Pension Offset that currently penalizes many workers who have worked in the public sector, including teachers in Nevada.

□ 1645

Mr. Speaker, I have one of the most diverse districts in the country, and I also have a significant military presence and many veterans who live in my district.

Social Security's progressive benefit formula is particularly important for groups that tend to earn lower wages during their working lives, which include African Americans and Latino families. For example, in 2020, average earnings were about \$41,000 for African Americans and \$38,000 for Hispanics.

The progressive formula means benefits replace a higher share of preretirement earnings for low-wage workers.

People of color are less likely to work for employers who offer pensions and less likely to receive pension benefits in retirement, which weakens their security.

In 2014, 30 percent of African American seniors, 19 percent of Latino seniors, and 25 percent of Asian American seniors received income from pensions or retirement benefits other than Social Security. This compares to 47 percent of White seniors.

Mr. Speaker, many of the Latino and Black seniors in my district and all across the country rely on Social Security for all or nearly all of their income.

After decades of hard work, they deserve the benefits that they have earned, and they deserve a program that keeps their benefits in line with inflation and the cost of living.

By preserving and expanding benefits, Social Security 2100 would increase retirement security for people of color who have worked hard and who depend upon Social Security in their retirement.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, nearly one in five adult Social Security beneficiaries are veterans. Military servicemembers pay FICA, earning future retirement, survivor, and disability benefits. Seriously injured veterans may be eligible for Social Security disability benefits.

Over 8 million veterans received Social Security benefits in 2022. This is more than 5.41 million veterans who received disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Social Security 2100 Act will extend the Social Security trust fund until 2066 and increase benefits for every recipient.

Only we, the Congress, can make the necessary changes to protect and enhance Social Security, and we must take that action.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this side of the aisle to put people over politics and to protect Social Security.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nevada. When he spoke, I was reminded of John Lewis, our fellow colleague on the Ways and Means Committee, who said that, in fact, Social Security is the civil rights movement.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN), someone who understands, with the birthday of Martin Luther King coming up this Monday, our celebration of that, and one of our leaders who truly understands the fierce urgency of now and what it means to have to pass Social Security for the constituents that we represent who need it the most.

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker, the overwhelming majority of Americans—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike—are clear in their support for Social Security. In fact, nearly 9 in every 10 Americans oppose cutting Social Security.

That is because for the last 88 years, Social Security has helped millions of

Americans retire from a lifetime of work with the dignity that they deserve.

Despite the undeniable success and popularity of the program, House Republicans have remained relentless in their fight to dismantle and defund it.

What is worse, Mr. Speaker, is Republicans turning their backs on a fundamental promise to the American people—a sacred trust—where contributing to Social Security means the same safety net that supported our grandparents will be there to support us in retirement.

House Democrats still believe in that sacred trust. We want to uphold our end of the promise. That is why I am proud to support and join Congressman LARSON and members of the House Democratic Caucus in supporting Social Security 2100 to increase seniors' benefits, protect against inflation, and strengthen the program for generations to come.

I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for his relentless, tireless leadership on this vital issue.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Massachusetts.

I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY). Together, we have gone across the State of Connecticut as we have talked about Social Security and its importance and significance.

Nobody understands it better, especially its impact on teachers and firefighters and police officers and municipal workers who have long been prevented through WEP and GPO. Under this bill, that all changes because of his efforts.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I begin by thanking my colleague, Congressman JOHN LARSON, for his thoughtful, courageous leadership on this issue, crafting Social Security 2100, which is the only comprehensive, paid-for measure which enhances Social Security and averts the 2034 cliff that this country is going to encounter if Congress does not act.

As Mr. LARSON stated, when the social insurance program was created in 1935, signed into law by Franklin Roosevelt, it was created as an insurance program.

Congress, over time and on numerous occasions, has reformed the bill to protect the basic promise, which was made by the Congress and by President Roosevelt, to make sure that people who are retired, children who have lost a parent, and in recent times, people with disability are protected from the vagaries of life.

Again, we have stepped forward and taken care of challenges, fiscal challenges, that the law has encountered.

What JOHN's bill would do, in essence, is extend the solvency of Social Security to 2066. We would avoid the cliff that we are going to hit in 2035. It would not gouge or cut any benefits.

The Republican Study Committee is talking about raising the retirement

age. That is a Social Security cut for people who have paid into this program out of payroll year in and year out.

It increases the benefits by 2 percent on average for all beneficiaries. It rebases the program so that people will not receive Social Security and be below the poverty line.

It is exactly, in other words, what this country is looking for, a program that affects every single American, every single family member.

Everybody cares about Social Security. It is our job, just like prior Congresses when they have been approaching these fiscal challenges, to act.

What we need is for JOHN's bill to be taken up and voted on. We don't need commissions that are going to take this bill behind closed doors with no transparency, which again is exactly the opposite of what the people of this country want.

They want to see what we are doing because this affects them and all those years of insurance payments that they have put into this program.

We need to take up JOHN LARSON's bill, Social Security 2100. Again, I implore the leadership of this Congress to move and to act and to not go down the path of a nontransparent commission, which is going to shut out the American people. That is not how we fix Social Security.

I thank Mr. LARSON for his leadership. Let's move forward on Social Security 2100.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the female dean of the United States Congress, who has more than 143,000 Social Security recipients in her district and has been a tireless fighter for Social Security before I even came to the United States Congress. We applaud her efforts.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member LARSON for yielding time and for his noble, tireless work safeguarding Social Security for the benefit of all Americans.

For nearly a century, America has made a sacred promise—those who work hard throughout their lives will benefit from the fruits of their labor upon retirement.

Social Security promises a safe and secure retirement for tens of millions of Americans during their golden years. Without action, that promise is at risk.

I hear from thousands of retirees across Northwestern Ohio who want to see a responsible solution to refinance Social Security going forward. One in five Social Security beneficiaries are veterans.

Let me observe that the billionaire class must join the vast majority of Americans in paying their fair share into the system itself.

By making that happen, the Social Security 2100 Act, championed by Congressman LARSON and all of us, will increase benefits for current and new

beneficiaries, protect retirees against inflation, and repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision.

We must push for a vote on the House floor as soon as possible. The Social Security 2100 Act is one of the most important bills before this Congress.

There are 182 House cosponsors of this bill. I ask Speaker JOHNSON to please move this bill to the floor for a vote.

Social Security is an earned benefit, and America made a promise to workers, and Democrats are committed to making good on that promise.

I am the granddaughter of immigrants. They worked at the lowest wages and the worst jobs—first fired, last hired. They simply could not have existed if it were not for Social Security. The same is true for my parents.

You see, Social Security is not just a program. It is a trust, a sacred insurance trust, and that trust is intergenerational. I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON for his dogged, persistent efforts to move this issue forward.

I may be the only Member here in this Chamber tonight who was present in the 98th Congress in April of 1983 after I was first elected to Congress and soon after became a deciding vote in April of that year for the refinancing of Social Security for the next generation.

What an unforgettable moment that was. I sat right in that seat right there, and I stood and I cheered because we had fought so hard for that in the prior election.

That close, eventful vote, so extremely important to refinancing Social Security for the first time in a generation, passed. Now, Congress must meet its responsibility for the succeeding generation.

The Speaker of the House back then was Tip O'Neill of Massachusetts. We had a Republican President, Ronald Reagan.

There had been a commission to preserve Social Security and Medicare before I became a Member of Congress.

In the same way Congressman LARSON has led this effort, this House had a member from Florida, Claude Pepper, who chaired the Aging Committee.

They called him Red Pepper, and like Congressman LARSON, he was a heart-and-soul Democrat from the inside and out and just a great guy.

We were able to move passage of the refinancing of Social Security for the next generation, and I knew that I had helped do that as a younger Member.

At that time, the country was also in a deep recession, and we knew that Social Security as an earned benefit was paid through hard work, and it deserved to be lifted again.

It also insures children whose parents or guardians have died. Two-thirds of families in my district rely on Social Security or Medicare benefits, and they are truly lifelines for millions of people.

Medicare has worked too, and we need to do what is possible to make all

healthcare more affordable for the American people.

We know the Social Security insurance program is something America can renew for all our families. We know it works, it is proven, and it lifts all boats.

From an economic standpoint, to pull the rug out from under Social Security would cause not only harm to individuals but economic harm in every Congressional district in this country.

People use Social Security to buy food, to pay their utility bills, to pay copays on their medical services, and for the basics of life.

These aren't families that squander money, but they have earned retirement security, and they watch every penny.

We in Ohio want to express a special thanks to Congressman LARSON for including in the bill the Windfall Elimination Provision, which harms our working families so very much. This issue does not impact every single State, but believe me, it really impacts Ohioans.

Again, I thank my colleagues for being here tonight with us who championed protecting this earned benefit and social safety net, and I and all of us here stand with America's working people and retirees to protect and improve Social Security.

Though each of us represents different communities, we, all together, represent America. We know that with the unwavering leadership of Congressman JOHN LARSON, he will lead us to a day where Social Security 2100 is the law of the land.

I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON for his perseverance and for helping to move our Nation forward to protect the hard-earned benefits for generations to come.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Connecticut has 20 minutes remaining.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, we have 20 minutes remaining, and we have about 12 people who are sitting here, so I hope our colleagues are mindful of that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who has more than 98,000 Social Security recipients in her district who receive more than \$143 million monthly in that district, as we indicated just how vitally important Social Security is as an economic development plan as well.

□ 1700

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut for yielding. He is long serving and longstanding, and I have been together with Mr. LARSON on this issue it has to be two decades, and I can only thank him for realizing that people will simply die—I am going to

say that—without the lifeline of Social Security. He has recognized that, and that is why we are in the fight.

That is why we have to continue the fight. That is why we have to come back in the next Congress and get this done because if it is not done in this Congress—we must get it done. We must get it done.

Let me give you breaking news. Let me tell you why we are all on the floor, why there are 12 Members on the floor and there were others on the floor previously. This is a national crisis. The House Republican Study Committee, a caucus of 176 House Republican Members, has proposed multiple harsh cuts to Social Security in the fiscal year 2024 budget. Although the budget is vague on details, they will be holding—and may have held—a press conference, and reporting has come out that they intend to cut your Social Security. They intend to violate the very special sacred trust—yes, do violence to the sacred trust that from the days of President Roosevelt every American—except those, of course, that were in some of the professions of people of color that we had to fix—every American felt that they could live, that they could survive because of Social Security.

I want to thank JOHN LARSON for championing together on the Social Security 2100 Act to be able to bring about an increase of benefits of 2 percent across the board on the average for all Social Security beneficiaries for the first time in 52 years; improve the cost-of-living adjustment so it reflects inflation; increase benefits to boost lower income seniors; improve benefits for middle-income widows and widowers; restore student benefits up to age 26; increase access to benefits for children living with grandparents and other relatives; and celebrate—celebrate repealing the windfall elimination provision, which means in the government pension offset that currently penalizes public servants.

I can walk the streets of the 18th Congressional District, and when all of these hardworking public servants are saying: Have you helped me? I can say yes. We will end the 5-month waiting period.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to join Mr. LARSON in vigorous support of the Social Security 2100 Act and to be able to say that we are here because there is a crisis because there is purposeful intent to snatch Social Security from the hands of beneficiaries, including children. I want to stand with you in the passage of H.R. 2100 because I want the lifeline to continue. I want the story of President Roosevelt to continue in the hands of Americans, people of color, those who have started in life in a low income and those who may end life in a low income but have as their lifeline Social Security.

I am standing with you.

Mr. Speaker, since 1935, the Federal Government has provided Social Security coverage to the American people and kept the

promise that a lifetime of work will be rewarded with the peace of mind, certainty, and a sense of stable retirement.

Social Security has transformed what it means to grow old in this country. This system allows our citizens to retire gracefully and with honor.

Social Security is the United States' most effective anti-poverty line.

Social Security keeps 22.5 million Americans, including children above the poverty line.

There are 98,576 Social Security recipients in Texas who receive \$143 million in monthly benefits. 8,118 of those are children who rely on our support to go to school every day and live safe and secure lives.

In the 18th Congressional district, Social Security recipients inject more than \$97 million into the local economy annually; nationwide, this figure is \$775 billion.

It is Congress' responsibility to keep that promise and to fund Social Security for all Americans. Congress must also ensure the benefits keep up with Americans' expenses—today, tomorrow, and forever.

Social Security is a lifeline for many. Social Security has been a stable and secure source of income for millions of seniors and families, many of whom desperately need it.

As our population ages and increases in size, we must protect the benefits that we have become accustomed to for current Social Security recipients and all future recipients.

We must work together to strengthen and protect Social Security, which is why I am a strong supporter of H.R. 4583, the Social Security 2100 Act.

Far too often, it is overlooked the seismic impact that Social Security has had in shaping our national economy and the structure of life chances for hundreds of millions of Americans through the years.

According to the 2022 Social Security Trustees report, if Congress does not act to correct Social Security funding issues, retirees will start receiving reduced benefits starting in 2034.

Reduced benefits would force millions of Americans into poverty.

For about half of senior beneficiaries, Social Security provides a majority of their income.

These seniors have worked extensively and paid into the Social Security system like they were asked to.

They held up their end of the bargain.

Congress must ensure that we are able to hold up our end of the bargain.

H.R. 4583 would increase social security benefits, improve the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLIA), ensure no one retires into poverty, and repeals provisions that currently penalize many public servants.

We must continue to support our seniors, veterans, and children who all benefit from Social Security.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital legislation.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentlewoman for her continued input and support over the last several decades.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT), who has been key as an original cosponsor of the Social Security 2100 Act and also for his passion about the people in his district who are in such need

of Social Security to make sure that it is there today, tomorrow, and in the future.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire of Mr. LARSON, if he would yield for a quick question.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Sure.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. It is my recollection, I could be wrong, but I think it was in the year 2014 that you first came out with the Social Security 2100 Act. Am I correct in that?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. That is correct.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. So here we are 10 years on, and I want you to know I was an original cosponsor of that in 2014, and I was proud to do it, and I thank you for dreaming this whole idea up because it is so important.

We know that it is the retirement of the baby boomer generation, this glut of population going into retirement that is the problem. We know that 2035 is the current doomsday year when we are not able to pay 100 cents on the dollar on claims. It is not a surprise that this has been coming because we knew about the baby boomer generation, and that is why you came up with this 10 years ago because it is not a surprise, and we have to prepare for it.

Mr. Speaker, I speak here not of behalf of myself but on behalf of 176,000 beneficiaries of Social Security in my Congressional District in northeastern Pennsylvania, the vast majority of which are seniors, and the answer is we can't do nothing. We know what happens if we do nothing and we just get closer and closer to the 2035 cliff or whatever year it is going to be.

I am sorry to say that if we do nothing, we end up with the Republican answer, and the Republican answer again and again and again is cut benefits and raise the retirement age. That is what happens if we do nothing.

Cut benefits? Cut benefits? This is a program that is one of the most successful government programs—it is not even a government program; it is an insurance program. It is one of the most successful things that the government has done for American citizens in the history of our republic.

We have kept millions of people from dying in poverty as seniors in this country. We know that right now in excess of 30 percent of seniors receiving Social Security benefits have no other viable source of support. If you take it away from them, they will die in poverty.

We know that probably the most outrageous thing of all is it breaks a promise if you cut benefits. The promise was that you work your whole life, you pay in the premiums and your FICA, you pay in your whole work life, and you will be protected from poverty in your senior years. This would break the promise to cut the benefits.

Raising the retirement age? It has already been described as a cut. It is a cut. It is a change. All of a sudden you have to work longer and longer and longer. To those of us who sit behind a

desk for a living it is not that big of a problem, but there are people who have to lift and carry and climb and dig. And to make them do these things into their senior years just because we refused to do anything about this impending fiscal cliff, it is not right, it is not ethical, and it is not American.

Every time you hear the words “fiscal commission,” oh, we should have a fiscal commission, ladies and gentlemen, put your hands on your wallets when you hear those words “fiscal commission” because that is all they ever have proposed with fiscal commissions, cutting benefits and raising the retirement age.

The right answer is the Social Security 2100 Act. We have to adjust the cap so it makes sense so that it is egalitarian so that all Americans are included so that we can raise the benefits by 2 percent for the first time in over 50 years. We have to adjust this cap. We have to pass this bill. We have to put people over politics and protect Social Security.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman for his remarks, and I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LIEU).

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative LARSON for his terrific leadership on Social Security. Many people here have been hearing about Social Security 2,100.

I just want to talk a little bit about what is actually in this amazing bill. It increases a number of benefits, including increases benefits 2 percent across the board. It improves the cost-of-living adjustment. It increases benefits to boost lower income seniors. It improves benefits for widows and widowers. It restores student benefits up to age 26. It increases access to benefits for children. It repeals the windfall elimination provision. It ends the 5-month waiting period. It increases benefits by an additional 5 percent for the most elderly. It provides caregiver credits and ends the disability benefit cliff.

How does it do that? It does it by ensuring millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share, and it closes a loophole of avoiding FICA taxes, and it puts an investment income tax only for people making over \$400,000.

This is an amazing bill. It is time we pass Representative JOHN LARSON’s Social Security 2100 Act to preserve Social Security for this generation and generations to come.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. NORCROSS).

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LARSON for being the voice of Social Security and the voice of the future.

I rise today for almost 150,000 recipients in my district in southern New Jersey, the First District, for those American families who have worked hard, played by the rules, and paid their taxes, as we all do.

For so many Americans, Social Security is all they have at the end of their

career. Since 1935, Social Security has provided stability, security, and protection for America’s seniors. That protection and stability is needed as we stare down that looming retirement security crisis in 2035, literally 100 years since Social Security started.

One in three Americans have less than \$5,000 saved. Fewer workers have access to a pension. Stagnant wages make it harder for people to save. Rarely do I say there is a good side or a bad side because it is usually in the middle. Well, there is no gray here. Social Security is clear. We need to protect it and expand the system that saves seniors or soon-to-be seniors.

Americans expect a future, and they earned a future where they can retire with dignity, and we need to work hard for them. The GOP once again is threatening to cut Social Security for people who don’t have anywhere else to go. The fear that our seniors are going through when you hear about that fiscal commission is nothing short of cruelty. That is why I am proud to be a sponsor of John’s Social Security 2100 Act. I will always fight for those seniors.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, for 40 percent of all Americans on Social Security the only benefit that they receive is Social Security, and that is why the gentleman’s point is so well taken.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. TRUSS).

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. LARSON, the ranking member of the Social Security Subcommittee for his leadership on this issue and for organizing this important Special Order to talk about the work that Democrats are doing to protect and expand Social Security and thank him for doing a telephone town hall with me for the people in District One so that they could ask questions about what is happening and how this measure would help.

In my district there are 113,000 Nevadans—that is District One in Las Vegas in Henderson—who rely on Social Security just to make ends meet. It represents the U.S. Government at its very best. In fact, it is one of the most successful programs in our history, and it is vital that we protect it for future generations.

Now, while we are here talking about what the Democrats want to do to protect and expand it, the Republicans, even as we speak, are continuing to threaten Social Security.

Now, Mr. JOHNSON is new at his job of Speaker, but he is not new to this issue. As the former chair of the Republican Study Committee, he repeatedly called for Social Security benefits to be reduced.

In fact, this year’s Republican Study Committee budget would cut benefits by 13 percent and at the same time raise the retirement age to 69, providing seniors with fewer benefits for more work. Raising the retirement age would disproportionately harm low-

and middle-income seniors who rely most heavily on Social Security, forcing them to delay their well-earned retirement often from backbreaking jobs.

Furthermore, the Republicans’ terrible Labor-HHS appropriations bill would cut Social Security funding by 30 percent, closing 240 offices around the country and extending wait times for service.

□ 1715

We cannot let Republicans do this and play games with Social Security. That is why I am very proud to be an original cosponsor of Mr. LARSON’s bill. You have heard the ways that it protects and expands Social Security. We need to bring it up, we need to pass it, and I stand strongly in support of that.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES).

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative LARSON for bringing us together.

Extremist Republicans are once again pushing to end Social Security as we know it, a critical program that supports 67 million people nationwide, 93,000 of them in my district.

Make no mistake, cutting Social Security will not help the average American, but instead, it will line the pockets of wealthy corporations while seniors and children suffer.

Americans work and pay their entire lives to access Social Security. It is their lifeline. Every single day, Mr. Speaker, I hear from Inland Empire residents asking to protect and expand Social Security.

Just in 2022, when we gave an 8.7 percent COLA increase—which was, by the way, the largest increase since the Reagan era—my constituents were delighted to have this increase.

This is what we must focus on, increasing benefits for the poor citizens that have paid into this program. They are not asking for a handout. They are asking for a program to be reaffirmed, and that is why I support the Social Security 2100 Act.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD).

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that during this Special Order hour on Social Security, it is only Democratic Members of Congress who have volunteered to speak. Heck, this GOP-controlled Congress isn’t getting anything else done, so why don’t we take up Social Security 2100.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of Social Security 2100 and that I have been every single term that I have been here, because I believe that Social Security is a promise. You spend a lifetime working hard and paying into the system so that you can retire with some dignity and security. It is not just something that seniors depend on, it is something that they have earned.

They aren’t getting rich on it. For most, it gives our seniors a bare-bones economic existence, but it is vital to

them. That is why I have made it my mission to protect and strengthen this critical program.

Protecting and strengthening Social Security means standing up to extremist proposals from the GOP, ones that have laid out cuts or privatization proposals that call for sunseting the programs every 5 years and statements that suggest that we “pull Social Security up by the roots and get rid of it.” Outrageous.

The GOP is hell-bent on destroying the only economic security that is available to most of our retirees. That is why we need Social Security 2100. This bill would increase benefits across the board for Social Security beneficiaries and would improve the cost-of-living adjustment formula for keeping up with inflation.

Social Security 2100 would provide a tax cut for working- and middle-class beneficiaries; it would end the waiting period for receiving disability benefits; and it would provide caregiver credits for all of those who have had to take time out of their careers to care for a loved one, and so much more.

It is essential for millions of Americans. In my district, more than 166,800 people depend on Social Security, so I am never going to stop working to protect and strengthen this program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Members are reminded to refrain from referencing occupants and guests in the gallery.

Does the gentleman from Connecticut have a motion to adjourn?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chair, first I would appeal to your great instincts and patience and thank you for this hour, but we actually have colleagues, at least four, that are here. Over 30 showed up.

Would it be possible to yield them a minute apiece?

I would make a motion to extend the time period to provide our colleagues a minute apiece.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 1 minute each?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot accept a motion to extend time, but Members may ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I move for a 1-minute speech from the remaining four Members.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does any Member wish to be recognized for 1 minute speeches?

SOCIAL SECURITY IS NOT MERELY A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

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

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman LARSON for his inspired and indefatigable leadership on this critical issue.

As someone who represents nearly 100,000 Social Security beneficiaries in

the Massachusetts 7th and as a co-chair for the Task Force on Aging and Families, I am so proud to be an original cosponsor of your Social Security 2100 Act.

This is a deeply consequential issue that stands to impact individuals from every walk of life—women, children, people of color, veterans, and our seniors—who have the right, who have earned the right, to age in dignity.

Too often they tell me that doing so is becoming more and more difficult. They share their anxieties of living on a fixed income. They are skeptical of the long-term stability of a system they have paid into, paycheck after paycheck, their entire working lives; people like Mrs. Palmer who lives in Boston and wrote my office saying that Social Security is a promise.

I agree. It is not merely a government program. Social Security is a promise to workers, to our elders, to the disabled, a promise to all people who seek to age with dignity. We will keep fighting to keep that promise.

IN SUPPORT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Social Security 2100 bill, and I thank Representative LARSON for introducing it.

Social Security is a promise. It is a promise that if you work hard and do the right thing and pay into the system during your career, you will be able to retire with dignity in this country.

Unfortunately, too many of my colleagues are obsessed with trying to cut and undermine this vital program. They say there is not enough money in the trust fund, while many of them voted for \$10 trillion of tax cuts that went primarily to the wealthy and to the biggest corporations just a few years ago. They could find \$10 trillion for tax cuts for the people at the top, but then they claim they can't find any money to shore up the Social Security system.

Here is the truth: We can increase cost-of-living adjustments, increase benefits of Social Security, and extend the life of the trust fund indefinitely by just asking the people at the very top to pay their fair share. That is what this bill does. It asks the Elon Musks and Jeff Bezoses of the world to pay a fair share into the trust fund so that working people can retire in dignity.

IN SUPPORT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a proud cosponsor of the Social Security 2100 Act, a bill that will enhance Social Security benefits for the first time in 50 years and ensure this program's solvency for years to come.

In my district, more than 157,000 retirees and families rely on Social Security as their primary source of income. Social Security doesn't just help retirees. Almost 10,000 children and more than 20,000 disabled workers in my district depend on Social Security to meet their basic expenses.

Social Security was there when my mother-in-law, a stay-at-home mom, was suddenly widowed at 28 years old and left with four young children to raise on her own. Social Security was there to help her get through the tragic loss of her husband and to figure out how to support her young family.

I stand in support of Social Security. I will stand up to any politician who wants to take away or reduce those earned benefits.

A SECRET FISCAL COMMISSION

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing us this opportunity.

Is it really true, Mr. Speaker? Perhaps Mr. LARSON has told me that the Republicans intend to put together some sort of a fiscal commission specifically designed to go after Social Security, to cut the benefits, and to really jeopardize the well-being of seniors now and future seniors? Could that possibly be correct?

Apparently it is. A secret fiscal commission. There is another way of doing it.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. LARSON has put together a proposal that would guarantee Social Security solvency for years to come. It would require that the super wealthy have to pay their fair share.

What is wrong with that? Nothing that I can think of.

We can also actually increase the annual COLA by going to the fair COLA bill which was introduced by—wow, my bill. Mr. LARSON, you have that in your bill. Good for you. Good for the seniors. Good for the future of America.

We can do this correctly, Mr. Speaker, if Mr. LARSON's bill, Social Security 2100, would actually become law.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. CLARKE of New York (for herself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. TORRES of

California, Mr. LAWLER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. D'ESPOSITO, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. MOLINARO):

H.R. 6929. A bill to appropriate funds for the Affordable Connectivity Program of the Federal Communications Commission; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. CROW (for himself, Mr. DELUZZO, Mr. SARBANES, and Ms. PORTER):

H.R. 6930. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require political committees to file separate reports for contributions of \$1,000 or more which are received fewer than 20 days before the date of any election in which the committee makes a contribution to, or an expenditure or electioneering communication on behalf of or in opposition to, a candidate or political party in the election, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. EDWARDS (for himself and Ms. KUSTER):

H.R. 6931. A bill to amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to improve that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. EDWARDS (for himself and Mr. RYAN):

H.R. 6932. A bill to amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to require the inclusion of low-head dams in the national dam inventory, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FITZGERALD (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. KIM of California, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H.R. 6933. A bill to provide the National Credit Union Administration Board flexibility to increase Federal credit union loan maturities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. FOXX (for herself, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ROSE, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. LATURNER, Mr. DONALDS, Ms. MACE, and Mr. GOODEN of Texas):

H.R. 6934. A bill to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as a fundamental right; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ (for herself, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Mr. LIEU, and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 6935. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts, to award grants for arts and creative workforce programs; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LIEU (for himself, Mr. NUNN of Iowa, Mr. BEYER, and Mr. MOLINARO):

H.R. 6936. A bill to require Federal agencies to use the Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology with respect to the use of artificial intelligence; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. PINGREE (for herself and Mr. MOLINARO):

H.R. 6937. A bill to provide for the improved collection of data for organic dairy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. RASKIN (for himself and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 6938. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the deduction

for personal casualty losses as in effect prior to the enactment of Public Law 115-97 (commonly referred to as the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act"); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROSENDALE (for himself, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. RESCENTIALER, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. PERRY, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FRY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. OGLES, Mr. YAKYM, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. COLLINS):

H.R. 6939. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to continue to implement the Migrant Protection Protocols, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSENDALE (for himself, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. COLLINS, and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H.R. 6940. A bill to effect a moratorium on immigration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSENDALE (for himself, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. FRY, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. OGLES, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. COLLINS):

H.R. 6941. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit fleeing law enforcement officers enforcing immigration laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSENDALE (for himself, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FRY, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. COLLINS, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 6942. A bill to prevent congressional reapportionment distortions by requiring that, in the questionnaires used in the taking of any decennial census of population, a checkbox or other similar option be included for respondents to indicate citizenship status or lawful presence in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

By Ms. SALAZAR (for herself, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MORELLE, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 6943. A bill to provide for individual property rights in likeness and voice; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. SALINAS, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. BROWNLEY):

H.R. 6944. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a catastrophic property loss reinsurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. STEFANIK (for herself and Ms. WILD):

H.R. 6945. A bill to require enforcement against misbranded egg alternatives; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. STRICKLAND (for herself and Mr. POSEY):

H.R. 6946. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to establish a compensation fund for military firefighters exposed to PFAS; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. TURNER (for himself and Mr. LANDSMAN):

H.R. 6947. A bill to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans Affairs History Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. WATERS:

H.R. 6948. A bill to authorize affordable housing construction as an eligible activity under the Community Development Block Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. WATERS:

H.R. 6949. A bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. YAKYM (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 6950. A bill to require agencies with working dog programs to implement the recommendations of the Government Accountability Office relating to the health and welfare of working dogs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MOORE of Utah:

H. Res. 954. A resolution electing a Member to a certain standing committee for the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. BERA, Mr. BARR, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. GALLAGHER, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. MOONEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. ISSA, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. HINSON, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. LIEU, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. WALTZ, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. GALLEGRO, Mr. MORAN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. PETERS, Mr. OGLES, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. KIM of California, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. TRONE, Mr. HUIZENGA, and Mr. LUTKEMEYER):

H. Res. 955. A resolution commending Taiwan for its history of democratic elections, and expressing support of Taiwan in the preservation of its democratic institutions; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY:

H. Res. 956. A resolution expressing the great contributions to American society by Indian-American communities and the graduates of the Indian Institutes of Technology in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND SINGLE SUBJECT STATEMENTS

Pursuant to clause 7(c)(1) of rule XII and Section 3(c) of H. Res. 5 the following statements are submitted regarding (1) the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution and (2) the single subject of the bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. CLARKE of New York:

H.R. 6929.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
Funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program

By Mr. CROW:

H.R. 6930.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To require political committees to file separate reports for contributions of \$1,000 or more which are received fewer than 20 days before the date of any election in which the committee makes a contribution to, or an expenditure or electioneering communication on behalf of or in opposition to, a candidate or political party in the election.

By Mr. EDWARDS:

H.R. 6931.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 9, Clause 7—“No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of Appropriations made by Law;”

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—“Regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.”

The single subject of this legislation is:

Reauthorizes funding for the National Dam Safety Program through FY2028 and makes improvements to the National Dam Safety Act.

By Mr. EDWARDS:

H.R. 6932.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

“Regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.”

The single subject of this legislation is:

Amends the National Dam Safety Act to require the inclusion of low-head dams in the National Dam Inventory.

By Mr. FITZGERALD:

H.R. 6933.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18:

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers and vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To authorize the National Credit Union Administration Board to increase the federal credit union loan maturity cap from 15 to 20 years and allow loan maturities for 1–4 unit principal and non-principal residences to be extended to 30 years.

By Ms. FOXX:

H.R. 6934.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution. “To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.”

The single subject of this legislation is:

to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as a fundamental right.

By Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ:

H.R. 6935.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Workforce Development

By Mr. LIEU:

H.R. 6936.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section VIII

The single subject of this legislation is:

Artificial Intelligence

By Ms. PINGREE:

H.R. 6937.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1

The single subject of this legislation is:

Data

By Mr. RASKIN:

H.R. 6938.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill reinstates the deduction for personal casualty losses as in effect prior to the enactment of Public Law 115–97

By Mr. ROSENDALE:

H.R. 6939.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Border security

By Mr. ROSENDALE:

H.R. 6940.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Immigration

By Mr. ROSENDALE:

H.R. 6941.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Law enforcement

By Mr. ROSENDALE:

H.R. 6942.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Decennial census

By Ms. SALAZAR:

H.R. 6943.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

Individual Rights

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 6944.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Insurance

By Ms. STEFANIK:

H.R. 6945.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To require enforcement against misbranded egg alternatives.

By Ms. STRICKLAND:

H.R. 6946.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To create a compensation fund for military fire fighters exposed to PFAS

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 6947.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans Affairs History Office, and for other purposes.

By Ms. WATERS:

H.R. 6948.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3 provides Congress with the power to “regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.”

The single subject of this legislation is:

Housing and Community Development

By Ms. WATERS:

H.R. 6949.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3 provides Congress with the power to “regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.”

The single subject of this legislation is:

Housing and Community Development

By Mr. YAKYM:

H.R. 6950.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This legislation would require federal government agencies with working dog programs to implement the recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office in their October 2022 report.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 15: Mr. AMO.
 H.R. 16: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 33: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H.R. 82: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. AMO.
 H.R. 175: Mr. GUEST and Mr. TIMMONS.
 H.R. 333: Mrs. RODGERS of Washington and Mr. VAN DREW.
 H.R. 529: Mr. BABIN.
 H.R. 533: Mr. OWENS.
 H.R. 537: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mrs. TORRES of California, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. NEHLS, and Mr. MENENDEZ.
 H.R. 574: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 623: Mr. PAPPAS.
 H.R. 645: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 700: Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, and Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 709: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
 H.R. 726: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 751: Ms. LETLOW.
 H.R. 766: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
 H.R. 793: Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina.
 H.R. 797: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H.R. 802: Mr. YAKYM and Mrs. HINSON.
 H.R. 807: Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. KUSTOFF, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H.R. 905: Mr. MORELLE.
 H.R. 907: Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. ROSS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 926: Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. STANTON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
 H.R. 1087: Ms. CHU.
 H.R. 1088: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
 H.R. 1097: Mr. ALFORD, Mr. BOST, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. CAREY, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. EVANS, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. MILLS, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BACON, Mr. GALLAGHER, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
 H.R. 1116: Mr. DONALDS.
 H.R. 1117: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
 H.R. 1118: Mr. MCGARVEY.
 H.R. 1139: Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. BURGESS, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.

- H.R. 1179: Mr. GOTTHEIMER and Mr. McCAUL.
- H.R. 1191: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida and Ms. SALINAS.
- H.R. 1222: Mr. FROST, Mr. NORCROSS, and Mr. TONKO.
- H.R. 1247: Ms. SCHOLTEN.
- H.R. 1262: Mr. RESCHENTHALER.
- H.R. 1273: Mr. DESAULNIER.
- H.R. 1277: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
- H.R. 1278: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
- H.R. 1369: Mrs. LUNA.
- H.R. 1406: Ms. CARAVEO.
- H.R. 1413: Mrs. KIM of California and Mr. SCHIFF.
- H.R. 1437: Mr. PENCE.
- H.R. 1491: Ms. STEVENS.
- H.R. 1638: Mr. KIM of New Jersey.
- H.R. 1716: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
- H.R. 1721: Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 1737: Ms. NORTON and Ms. PINGREE.
- H.R. 1770: Mr. HORSFORD and Mr. NEGUSE.
- H.R. 1810: Ms. DE LA CRUZ.
- H.R. 1812: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
- H.R. 1831: Mr. CLINE and Mr. SCHIFF.
- H.R. 1833: Mr. LEVIN.
- H.R. 1840: Ms. JAYAPAL.
- H.R. 2367: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina.
- H.R. 2395: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, and Mr. SHERMAN.
- H.R. 2407: Mr. IVEY, Mr. RYAN, and Mr. FRY.
- H.R. 2413: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Ms. ADAMS.
- H.R. 2440: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mrs. KIM of California.
- H.R. 2441: Ms. HOYLE of Oregon.
- H.R. 2479: Mr. CARTER of Texas.
- H.R. 2501: Mr. LIEU, Mr. CASAR, and Mr. NORCROSS.
- H.R. 2537: Mrs. HAYES.
- H.R. 2552: Ms. STANSBURY.
- H.R. 2573: Ms. LEE of California and Ms. TLAIB.
- H.R. 2706: Mr. DUNN of Florida.
- H.R. 2726: Mr. THANEDAR.
- H.R. 2728: Ms. SALINAS.
- H.R. 2748: Ms. HAGEMAN.
- H.R. 2753: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
- H.R. 2831: Mr. MAGAZINER.
- H.R. 2869: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
- H.R. 2880: Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia.
- H.R. 2889: Mr. MOULTON.
- H.R. 2923: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
- H.R. 2955: Ms. SPANBERGER and Mr. CUELLAR.
- H.R. 2965: Mr. MORELLE.
- H.R. 2967: Mrs. HAYES.
- H.R. 2983: Mr. FRY.
- H.R. 3009: Ms. KUSTER.
- H.R. 3018: Ms. BALINT, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. BROWNLEY, and Mr. PHILLIPS.
- H.R. 3036: Mr. SMUCKER and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota.
- H.R. 3074: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
- H.R. 3079: Mr. WITTMAN.
- H.R. 3090: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
- H.R. 3139: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. WOMACK.
- H.R. 3238: Mr. NEGUSE and Mr. RUTHERFORD.
- H.R. 3366: Ms. CRAIG.
- H.R. 3380: Mr. MCGOVERN.
- H.R. 3408: Mr. WOMACK.
- H.R. 3413: Mr. BANKS, Mrs. KIM of California, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
- H.R. 3433: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. D'ESPOSITO, and Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida.
- H.R. 3474: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
- H.R. 3475: Mr. VEASEY.
- H.R. 3481: Ms. MATSUI.
- H.R. 3541: Ms. BUDZINSKI.
- H.R. 3605: Ms. ROSS and Mr. PAYNE.
- H.R. 3606: Ms. LEE of California and Mr. CASE.
- H.R. 3638: Mr. DAVIDSON.
- H.R. 3651: Ms. BROWNLEY and Mr. MANN.
- H.R. 3676: Ms. OMAR.
- H.R. 3734: Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas.
- H.R. 3824: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
- H.R. 3876: Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 3916: Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
- H.R. 3917: Ms. NORTON and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
- H.R. 3925: Mrs. PELTOLA.
- H.R. 3957: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. RASKIN, and Mr. KIM of New Jersey.
- H.R. 3970: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, and Mr. GOLDEN of Maine.
- H.R. 4010: Ms. BROWN.
- H.R. 4050: Mrs. RAMIREZ and Ms. TLAIB.
- H.R. 4052: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY and Mr. TONKO.
- H.R. 4069: Mr. LAWLER.
- H.R. 4089: Mr. PAPPAS and Ms. CARAVEO.
- H.R. 4123: Mr. BANKS and Mr. LAMALFA.
- H.R. 4170: Mr. NEGUSE.
- H.R. 4224: Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Ms. ESHOO.
- H.R. 4263: Ms. PEREZ.
- H.R. 4277: Ms. TLAIB.
- H.R. 4316: Mr. VAN DREW.
- H.R. 4345: Mr. BANKS and Mr. LAMALFA.
- H.R. 4432: Ms. PEREZ, Ms. SANCHEZ, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. MANNING, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. KIM of New Jersey.
- H.R. 4539: Mr. MOYLAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. RASKIN.
- H.R. 4565: Mr. ALLEN.
- H.R. 4569: Mr. CARBAJAL and Mr. LEVIN.
- H.R. 4602: Ms. TLAIB.
- H.R. 4612: Mr. BUCSHON.
- H.R. 4663: Mr. TRONE, Mr. MAGAZINER, and Mr. IVEY.
- H.R. 4708: Mr. SMUCKER.
- H.R. 4714: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.
- H.R. 4721: Mr. COMER.
- H.R. 4736: Mr. STAUBER and Ms. CROCKETT.
- H.R. 4750: Mr. NEHLS and Mr. MOLINARO.
- H.R. 4758: Mr. MEUSER, Mr. ALFORD, Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. COSTA.
- H.R. 4774: Ms. STANSBURY.
- H.R. 4856: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
- H.R. 4864: Mr. PALMER.
- H.R. 4899: Mr. MOLINARO.
- H.R. 4933: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
- H.R. 4993: Mr. DUNN of Florida.
- H.R. 5003: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
- H.R. 5008: Mr. DESAULNIER.
- H.R. 5012: Mr. PAPPAS, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER, and Mrs. SYKES.
- H.R. 5048: Ms. LEE of Nevada.
- H.R. 5064: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, and Mr. PAYNE.
- H.R. 5104: Ms. BROWNLEY.
- H.R. 5244: Mr. AUCHINCLOSS.
- H.R. 5344: Mr. STAUBER.
- H.R. 5399: Mr. VASQUEZ.
- H.R. 5401: Mr. RESCHENTHALER.
- H.R. 5408: Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. VAN ORDEN, and Mr. MOULTON.
- H.R. 5420: Mr. MOLINARO.
- H.R. 5455: Mr. LAWLER.
- H.R. 5501: Mr. DONALDS.
- H.R. 5513: Mr. ALLEN.
- H.R. 5530: Mr. WILLIAMS of New York, Ms. KUSTER, and Ms. DE LA CRUZ.
- H.R. 5563: Mr. BOWMAN, Mrs. FOUSHEE, and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ.
- H.R. 5601: Mr. DELUZZIO, Mrs. FOUSHEE, and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ.
- H.R. 5669: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
- H.R. 5683: Mr. AUCHINCLOSS.
- H.R. 5710: Ms. KUSTER and Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas.
- H.R. 5754: Ms. PORTER.
- H.R. 5776: Mr. PHILLIPS.
- H.R. 5799: Mr. BEAN of Florida.
- H.R. 5840: Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. VAN DUYN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 5854: Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK.
- H.R. 5867: Mr. DUNN of Florida.
- H.R. 5909: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. MOULTON.
- H.R. 5940: Mr. MOSKOWITZ.
- H.R. 5976: Mr. PAYNE.
- H.R. 6021: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
- H.R. 6030: Mr. RYAN.
- H.R. 6031: Ms. PEREZ.
- H.R. 6046: Mr. STEUBE and Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia.
- H.R. 6090: Mr. VAN DREW, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. TRONE.
- H.R. 6091: Ms. NORTON.
- H.R. 6129: Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER.
- H.R. 6140: Mr. EDWARDS.
- H.R. 6175: Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia.
- H.R. 6284: Ms. CARAVEO.
- H.R. 6301: Mr. TRONE, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mr. RASKIN.
- H.R. 6318: Ms. BALINT.
- H.R. 6319: Mr. BACON.
- H.R. 6374: Mr. LAWLER.
- H.R. 6429: Mr. SELF and Mr. HARRIS.
- H.R. 6485: Mrs. HINSON.
- H.R. 6492: Mr. ZINKE.
- H.R. 6502: Ms. TENNEY.
- H.R. 6504: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
- H.R. 6515: Mr. HUFFMAN, Mrs. RAMIREZ, and Ms. SCANLON.
- H.R. 6530: Mr. CAREY, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. MOYLAN.
- H.R. 6538: Mr. VAN ORDEN.
- H.R. 6553: Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, and Mr. SWALWELL.
- H.R. 6578: Mr. TRONE.
- H.R. 6581: Mr. TRONE.
- H.R. 6608: Mr. GOMEZ.
- H.R. 6643: Ms. BALINT.
- H.R. 6657: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. ALFORD.
- H.R. 6687: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. COSTA.
- H.R. 6698: Mr. KIM of New Jersey.
- H.R. 6706: Ms. NORTON.
- H.R. 6744: Mr. GUTHRIE.
- H.R. 6762: Mrs. FISCHBACH and Mr. MOOLENAAR.
- H.R. 6789: Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. EMMER, and Mr. DONALDS.
- H.R. 6810: Mr. DUNN of Florida and Mr. MAST.
- H.R. 6827: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York and Mr. TORRES of New York.
- H.R. 6830: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. UNDERWOOD, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
- H.R. 6831: Mr. SOTO.
- H.R. 6832: Mr. PASCRELL.
- H.R. 6862: Mr. MOYLAN.
- H.R. 6885: Mr. MOONEY.
- H.R. 6906: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
- H.R. 6914: Mrs. HOUCHIN and Mrs. MILLER of Illinois.
- H.R. 6918: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. MOORE of Utah, and Mrs. MILLER of Illinois.
- H.R. 6922: Mr. LANGWORTHY.
- H.R. 6926: Ms. TENNEY.
- H. Con. Res. 33: Mr. GRIJALVA and Ms. KUSTER.
- H. Con. Res. 37: Mr. TRONE.
- H. Con. Res. 44: Mr. NORCROSS.
- H. Res. 380: Mr. LAWLER.
- H. Res. 419: Ms. NORTON.
- H. Res. 540: Mr. SHERMAN.
- H. Res. 542: Mr. AUCHINCLOSS.
- H. Res. 627: Mr. FEENSTRA and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
- H. Res. 774: Mr. LAWLER and Ms. TENNEY.
- H. Res. 806: Mr. VALADAO.
- H. Res. 851: Mr. EVANS.
- H. Res. 881: Mr. COHEN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. LEE of California.
- H. Res. 883: Ms. TENNEY.
- H. Res. 901: Mr. LAWLER.
- H. Res. 935: Mr. PETERS.

H. Res. 941: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. BICE,
and Mr. CLINE.

H. Res. 942: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H. Res. 943: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. JOHNSON
of Georgia.



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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, You are our hope for the years to come. In this sacred moment, we turn our thoughts to You. We think of You because You have promised that no weapon formed against us will prosper. We think of You because You have given us mercy and grace to help us face life's difficulties. We think of You because You have guided this Nation through seasons more challenging than we face today. We love and depend on You, so continue to use our lawmakers as instruments of Your peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 10, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Sen-

ator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Karoline Mehalchick, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, here on the floor yesterday, I warned that the administration's efforts to deter Iranian-backed Houthi threats to international shipping and American credibility were grossly insufficient. Just hours later, the Houthis proved my point with a significant escalation in the Red Sea.

Tehran's proxies fired more than 18 suicide drones, along with anti-ship cruise missiles and ballistic missiles,

into one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. At great cost, American and British Navy vessels launched expensive interceptors to defend against these relatively inexpensive Houthi weapons.

On January 3, America and coalition partners warned that "the Houthis will bear responsibility for the consequences should they continue to threaten lives, the global economy, or the free flow of commerce in the region's critical waterways." Well, the Houthis crossed that redline. The question is now whether President Biden will finally impose sufficient consequences on the Houthis and their patrons in Tehran. The world is watching.

But American credibility and security isn't just on the line in the Red Sea; our Nation is facing the most serious array of national security challenges since the fall of the Soviet Union. The Senate's responsibility to address them remains unfilled.

Take the first major land war in Europe since 1945. On one side of the war in Ukraine is a free world that recognizes sovereignty; on the other is an autocrat with imperial ambitions that extend beyond Ukraine's sovereign borders.

With assistance from a nuclear-armed, rogue state—the most active state sponsor of terrorism—and a friendship without limits with America's top strategic adversary, Russia has spent a decade trying to subjugate Ukraine militarily.

Putin is waging a war of torture and brutality. In some cases, his forces' crimes—like those of the Hamas terrorists responsible for October 7—are documented proudly by the perpetrators themselves. And Moscow has mobilized a war economy, ramping up military production while also tapping into the industrial capacity of its axis partners in Beijing, Tehran, and Pyongyang.

The war has clearly jolted our European allies out of a holiday from history. Producers in Norway are racing a

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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streamline production of critical air defense systems. Governments like Poland and Germany have announced major increases in defense spending. Denmark, for example, has resurrected an entire dormant industry to contribute ammunition. But even these historic, overdue investments have not yet turned the tide. This conflict has also exposed the glaring shortcomings of America's own arsenal and supply chains for critical capabilities.

As I have explained repeatedly and in great detail here on the floor, our supplemental appropriations to support Ukraine included heavy investments in expanding our defense industrial base and purchasing the cutting-edge weapons that our own forces need to deter our biggest adversaries.

The legislation we are considering this month would do even more to help meet urgent requirements of our own Armed Forces. It will increase procurement of critical munitions, long-range fires, and air defenses, and invest in our own defense industrial capacity.

This is essential for long-term competition with China and Russia. America and our allies still face serious shortcomings, and they extend well beyond the war in Ukraine. By one recent tally, Russia and China's arsenal of land-based air defense systems far exceeds the combined stockpile of the United States, Europe, and Japan combined. The West is outgunned in critical capabilities.

So let's not waste time indulging the misconception that standing by our European allies is an obstacle to competition with China. Let's give no credence to the idea that America should cut and run from our own allies and partners—precisely as our adversaries work closer and closer together.

With continued American leadership, European allies are shouldering more and more of the burden of collective security on the continent. There is just no question that our NATO allies are building military capacity and taking on more responsibility for restoring and maintaining the sovereignty of America's closest trading partners.

But America is a global superpower, and retreating from our leadership of NATO before seeing the job through won't make competition with China any easier. Handing Russia a victory in Ukraine on account of a waning attention span will only shred America's credibility, weaken critical alliances, and force us to contend even more directly with two major adversaries at once. I honestly can't think of a more shortsighted strategic gamble.

Only time will offer a full accounting of the missed opportunities of the past 3 years, but it is already clear that hesitation and self-deterrence on the part of our Commander in Chief cost Ukrainian lives and chances at swift victory over Russian aggression.

Of course, the brazen violence of Iran's terror network reminds us that this weakness and timidity is contagious. We cannot let them spread. We

cannot let shortsightedness govern our approach to the strategic competition that will define the next century of American history. We cannot give China any more reasons than this administration already has to doubt America's resolve to stand with sovereign democracies and to vigorously defend our interests.

In the very near future, it will be time for the Senate to demonstrate that we understand what time it is.

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

Mr. President, on a different matter, this year, two of America's most elite universities are in the market for new chief executives.

What makes for good leadership in higher education might once have been common sense, but if the past 3 months have taught us anything, it is that the virtues of a college president might need to be spelled out in a bit more detail.

For starters, the prerequisite for campus leadership should be a personal scholarly record that models academic rigor—prolific writing, publication, and an excellence in one's field.

I am not an Ivy Leaguer, but it would seem to me that someone who had produced fewer than a dozen peer-reviewed articles might not usually meet this standard at a place like Harvard. It may once have gone without saying that university presidents should also model the codes of academic conduct and integrity to which they should hold their students.

An academic record riddled with plagiarism should disqualify any candidate. And perhaps, more importantly, a university president must be committed to ensuring that the culture of speech on their campus—however far it might diverge from the protections enshrined in our First Amendment—is administered fairly.

Suffice it to say that Harvard did not wind up dead-last in a watchdog ranking of free speech of American campuses for nothing, which made its former president's free-speech justifications for anti-Semitic hate laughable.

Over the past several decades, our country's most elite universities have let intolerant leftist dogmas, like DEI, replace the robust exchange of ideas as ordering principles on campus. One Harvard professor and former dean recently noted that the words "white supremacy" and "intersectionality" appear more frequently in the Harvard course catalog than the term "scientific revolution." These course offerings seem to indicate a drift from Harvard's stated motto "Veritas," Latin for "truth."

Of course, it doesn't have to be this way. Hundreds of American universities outside the dusty confines of the Ivy League aren't showing any signs of abandoning their rigorous pursuit of truth for woke madness.

Places like Harvard and Penn would be well-served by a leader who takes an approach like our former colleague Ben

Sasse has taken as president of the University of Florida. As he put it recently:

Universities must reject victimology, celebrate individual agency, and engage the truth with epistemological modesty. Institutions ought to embrace open inquiry . . . More curiosity, less orthodoxy . . . Engage the ideas. Pull apart the best arguments with the best questions.

By all accounts, the heads of the leading universities in my home State of Kentucky—President Kim Schatzel of the University of Louisville and President Eli Capilouto of the University of Kentucky—aren't finding it especially difficult to foster campus climates of integrity and academic rigor.

I don't envy those tasked with finding new leaders to right the ship of the Ivy League. Restoring the tarnished reputations of our Nation's most elite universities will be no small task. But maybe they will have some luck if they look beyond their northeastern bubble and trade in the meaningless jargon of postmodernism for the simple wisdom of their mottos.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic whip.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, having experienced legislative efforts of both the House of Representatives and the Senate, it would be a surprise to many people to learn that many Members come to the floor to address issues of personal importance to them, something that happened in their lives that motivates them to take up an issue, introduce a bill, try to create a new law.

That happened to me in the House of Representatives many, many years ago when I first confronted the tobacco issue. I lost my father to lung cancer when I was 14 years old, and it was a profound experience, as you might guess, in my life.

And I remembered what he went through in the last 100 days of his life, fighting lung cancer and, eventually, succumbing to it.

And so I took on the tobacco issue in the House of Representatives on a personal basis as well as a public basis, trying to reduce the power which the Big Tobacco lobby had in the House of Representatives. And when I arrived there in 1982, they were the most powerful lobby in Washington.

We were warned as new Members of Congress on both sides—Democratic and Republican—don't touch the tobacco issue. It is an issue that is very important for us to maintain our majority, and you shouldn't bring it up.

Well, I ignored that advice and introduced several ideas on reducing the power of the tobacco lobby on Capitol Hill. The one issue that I pursued with success had a profound impact on this country—much more than I ever imagined. I introduced the first bill, successful bill, in the House of Representatives to ban smoking on airplanes.

It seems so obvious today that it would be a fiction to suggest that there is a smoking and nonsmoking section

on an airplane. We know that those people who were smoking were generating secondhand smoke, which was dangerous as well.

Well, with an amazing bipartisan majority, we passed my bill to ban smoking on airplanes. It was taken up by Senator Frank Lautenberg here in the U.S. Senate successfully, signed into law, and the rest is history, as they say.

What we did not anticipate was that this law, in and of itself, was going to be a tipping point. People thought and said: Wait a minute, if secondhand smoke is dangerous in an airplane, why wouldn't it be dangerous in a bus? on a train? in an office? in a hospital? in a place of work? in a restaurant? And the next thing you know, we saw a dramatic change over the years in the attitude towards smoking.

New Members of Congress historically, before that was passed, would head to the stationery shop as soon as they were elected to buy an ashtray to put on the coffee table in their office for those visitors who wanted to smoke while they were meeting with the Senators and Congressmen. That is unthinkable today. I am not even sure they sell the ashtrays anymore. They used to be embossed with a big Congressional seal.

Things started changing across America, and one of the things that led to that change was the discussion of the impact of tobacco on children.

We knew that tobacco, with its chemical nicotine, was addictive. And we knew that kids, naturally, being told not to touch a tobacco product, started using them as soon as they could; and many of them developed an addiction even before they graduated from high school. So we started requiring warning labels and restricting retail sales to try to protect kids from this addiction.

It was an ongoing battle because the tobacco companies were powerful and profitable and had many friends in high places, particularly here in Washington. I continued that battle over the years in the House and in the Senate with some success, dramatically reducing the percentage of children who were using tobacco.

The tobacco companies knew that they were in trouble. That was their source of addicted people who, when they became adults, bought their products for the rest of their lives until they died from that addiction.

And so these tobacco companies started a new campaign. It wasn't based on tobacco but on the chemical nicotine and the addictive nature of it. And they created something called vaping and e-cigarettes. And who did they go after? Kids, of course.

They had fruit-flavored vaping devices that looked like they belong in a computer or in a school bag going off to grade school and high school. And these kids started buying them and using them; and so I switched my campaign not exclusively from tobacco but

to vaping as their latest Big Tobacco product that was addicting children.

I have asked the Food and Drug Administration, through many administrations, to basically police this product as they would a tobacco product, and they have promised that they would. I come here today to make a report, one very good piece of news and one very bad piece of news about that effort.

First, I want to thank the Supreme Court which, on Monday, left in place a California law banning the sale of flavored cigarettes. That is great news for kids and communities of color who have been preyed upon by Big Tobacco's aggressive marketing with flavored products.

We know that flavors play a unique role in hooking new smokers because they mask the harsh taste of tobacco and turbocharge the addictiveness of nicotine.

In particular, we know that menthol cigarettes have been purposely targeted at Black communities for decades with heavy advertising, sponsorship of events, and free samples. It has contributed to the fact that Black adults in America are 30 percent more likely to die from heart disease and 50 percent more likely to die from a stroke compared to Whites.

There is a Federal proposal on the table now to prohibit the manufacturing and retail sale of menthol cigarettes. That rule would save an estimated 650,000 lives, including 255,000 Black Americans. It would eliminate the racial disparity in lung cancer deaths between Black and White Americans.

I know this President cares deeply about the toll of cancer. It has touched his family personally, as it has mine. If we want to make a difference in the health of Americans and set a legacy for future generations, then the administration must finalize this public health measure to end Big Tobacco's predatory promotion of menthol cigarettes. Lives hang in the balance. That is the good news out of California and the Supreme Court.

Here is the bad news. Robert Califf is the head of the Food and Drug Administration. Two years ago, he was approved by the Senate in a very close vote; it was 50 to 46. If two Senators had gone the other way, he would not be the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration.

He came to my office and made a plea that I vote for him. I was planning on voting against him. He ended up getting five Democrats voting against him and six Republicans who voted for him, and that made the difference in the final rollcall.

On the final rollcall, because he looked me in the eye in my office in this building and promised that he would take on the vaping interests, I voted for him. It has been a miserable disappointment to see what he has done with that office when it comes to this issue.

As the calendar turns to 2024 and the new year, I am afraid that it has not brought any change in the Food and Drug Administration's shameful, abysmal job of preventing tobacco companies from addicting our children.

On January 1, the Food and Drug Administration missed yet another court-imposed deadline to finish reviewing e-cigarette applications. Even after repeated delays, the FDA had told the U.S. district court for Maryland that it would finish reviewing e-cigarette applications by December 31, 2023. It failed. That deadline came and went.

The FDA is now 28 months past the original court-ordered deadline to complete this review. That is not only unacceptable, it is embarrassing.

Here is why that is a problem: The law is clear that no vaping or tobacco product can be put on the market without first proving—proving—to the FDA that it is—listen—“appropriate for the protection of public health.”

In other words, the industry, the vaping industry, has the legal burden of proof to prove that their product will protect the public health. Vaping companies cannot do that. We know they can't. Yet thousands of products continue to flood store shelves and addict America's children without having met that bar of proof.

The FDA has the power and the responsibility to protect public health by enforcing this premarket review requirement, but it appears to be giving Big Tobacco a free pass day after day, week after week, month after month, despite court orders to the contrary.

While the FDA has missed a court-ordered deadline, it also failed to meet a statutory deadline for the regulation of synthetic nicotine products, an authority that the FDA asked us in Congress to provide. You see, vaping companies thought they found a loophole in the law by using nicotine that was synthesized in a lab, rather than derived from a tobacco leaf. They thought they could skirt FDA regulation by exploiting this ambiguity in the law.

The same FDA Commissioner I referenced earlier, Dr. Robert Califf, testified to the Senate: We have to close this loophole. He pleaded with us to close it, and we did.

Senators COLLINS, MURKOWSKI, and several others joined me to lead a bipartisan effort to clarify FDA's jurisdiction over synthetic nicotine. The new law required the FDA to clear the market of all unauthorized synthetic nicotine products by July 13, 2022—18 months ago—and they have failed. After asking us for this authority, after our passing the law and having it signed by the President, they have ignored the law and the requirement to clear the shelves since 2022. Since then, FDA has failed to issue a single marketing denial for a synthetic nicotine vaping application.

Worse yet, e-cigarettes using synthetic nicotine are now the most popular tobacco products used by children. There are many examples of that.

Think about that for a moment. The FDA Commissioner comes here and says: My hands are tied. I cannot regulate e-vaping to protect kids because they are using synthetic nicotine and we are not sure the law covers it.

We change the law and tell them: Now you can proceed. Enforce this law that you have asked for, and do it 2 years ago to make sure these products are not on the shelves.

They ignore it. After calling for our passage of the bill, they ignore the reality, and the shelves are stocked with these e-cigarette synthetic nicotine products that kids are using across America.

The consequences for our children are devastating. According to the Surgeon General, e-cigarettes can damage lungs, heart, mental health, and parts of the brain that control attention and learning. Don't just take it from me. I recently received a letter from the Chicago Teachers Union. Here is what it said:

Teachers have noticed a growing frequency of disposable vapes in our schools. These products come in colorful packages and fruity, kid-friendly flavors that are pushed on social media. . . . Some even look like school supplies.

And it is not just the big cities like Chicago. Last month, I also received a letter from the regional superintendent of schools for five of the rural areas, southernmost parts of Illinois: Alexander, Jackson, Perry, Pulaski, and Union Counties. They said:

While most young people view smoking as no longer cool, they look at vaping differently . . . as being a "healthy" and cool alternative.

The FDA was given the tools to protect our kids and consistently failed to do it under Dr. Robert Califf, head of the FDA.

Here is what I want to make clear today: February 14 is the second anniversary of Robert Califf's approval by the U.S. Senate. By that date, by February 14, I expect his compliance and the compliance of the FDA with all of these court-ordered mandates which they have ignored for months and years. What is at stake? The health of our kids and their addiction. If Dr. Califf cannot exercise the authority of the FDA, it is time that we put somebody in who will.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as Congress approaches the January 19 funding deadline—less than 10 days away—both parties in both Chambers must work together quickly to ensure we avoid a government shutdown.

Congressional leaders agree that a shutdown would be a terrible way to start the year. Speaker JOHNSON and I are on the same page on that. A shutdown will hurt the economy, halt a lot of work of Congress and government,

and endanger services that millions of Americans rely on.

If reasonable Members on both sides continue working together, we can ensure a shutdown is avoided. We took a big step last Sunday towards our goal when Speaker JOHNSON and I announced funding level top lines, and appropriators right now are hard at work drafting the 12 appropriations bills. It is good news that all four of the appropriators, the four corners, want to do this—Senator MURRAY, Senator COLLINS, and Congressmembers GRANGER and DELAURO. I am hopeful that if we stay the course, we can avoid a shutdown even with the tight deadline.

Now I want to return to a point I made yesterday about some of my colleagues in the House. As everyone knows, this is a period of divided government. Like it or not, it means that compromise is a necessity, and nobody is going to get everything they want in any negotiation. And, of course, the President is a Democrat, and the Senate has a Democratic majority. Anyone who wants to get anything done knows that there has to be a compromise between the Democratic President, the Democratic majority in the Senate, and the Republican majority in the House—of course taking into account our Republican colleagues in the Senate and Democratic colleagues in the House.

But right now, there are 30 or so hard-right Republicans in the House who labor under the illusion that they can bully everyone else into submission to get their narrow, hard-right agenda enacted into law. That is what they are trying to do in the appropriations process. There is only one word to describe the hard right's tactics: Bullying. Bullying. They want to bully their own conference, bully the Speaker, bully the Congress, and bully the country into accepting their extremist views.

It is easy to see why the hard right spends so much time trying to bully the rest of Congress: They have little leverage otherwise because their views are wildly out of the mainstream. These 30 or so Republican chaos agents do not represent the views of most Americans. They don't even represent the views of a great number of Republicans. They are MAGA radicals, extremists whose benchmark for success is paralysis, gridlock, chaos. They think a shutdown will help their party and help the country, but virtually no one else agrees. They are on an island.

But here is the thing: This kind of bullying almost never works. The hard right's bullying didn't work when we avoided default, it didn't work when we avoided shutdowns last year, and it is not going to work here.

Case in point: Where things stand right now in the appropriations process is little different than where we were after we passed the FRA last summer. The hard right wasted almost a year in the House by trying to bully their colleagues through the appropriations

process. They wanted the Speaker to renege on the agreement codified in the FRA. Time and time again, they thwarted the House GOP's ability to even pass their own spending bills. They just wasted precious time. But for all their bluster, the hard right has nothing—nothing—to show for their bullying. The agreement we reached Sunday is practically the same number leadership shook hands on back in June.

In a body comprised of 435 voting Members, it is lunacy for the MAGA hard right to think they can puff their chest and bully the majority of their colleagues into submission. Won't happen.

This year, the American people are going to pay close attention to which party is capable of addressing their everyday needs and which is not. They will pay close attention to who is willing to reach across the aisle to get things done and who is openly calling for—almost excited about—a shutdown, which will hurt so many people. And the American people will note which is the party of chaos and which is the party of getting things done.

Make no mistake, the American people will not stand for radical MAGA Republicans whose only strategy for governing is to bully the rest of the country into submission. It will not work.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, now on the supplemental and Ukraine, Senate negotiators continue. They met several times yesterday. So Senate negotiators continue their work on finalizing an agreement for a national security supplemental.

At a time of growing crisis around the world, our supplemental package is America's answer to this decisive moment in world history. The world stands at a crossroads. The war happening in Ukraine is not just between one nation defending itself against another but between tyranny and democracy itself.

The Ukraine war is a conflict of history-altering importance. It could reset the balance of power for Western democracies that has endured since the end of the Cold War.

The Ukraine war has not been much in the news lately with so much going on in Gaza and at the border and so many other things, but that does not mean nothing is happening in Ukraine. Right now, Ukrainian soldiers remain determined, but Russian soldiers are beginning to have an advantage as ammunition is starting to run out for Ukraine.

So passing the supplemental will be America's signal to the world that we will hold the line not just to defend democracy in Europe but to defend our friends in Israel, to deliver critical aid for innocent civilians in Gaza and humanitarian aid across the world, and to outcompete the Chinese Communist Party in the Indo-Pacific.

We must keep moving quickly here in the Senate because Ukraine stands

at a dangerous moment in its war against Putin. Ukrainian fighters remain determined and have not lost their resolve to defend their homeland, but what they are losing are ammunition and armaments, which America has played a leading role in providing. That aid is running out, much to Putin's delight.

Every Senator needs to understand the stakes. If the Senate does not approve more aid to Ukraine, the war, which is already trending in Russia's direction, could, a month from now, dramatically shift in Russia's favor. It is only trending in Russia's direction now because of the lack of armaments. As I quoted yesterday, a Ukrainian officer said that for every five salvos the Russians fire at his troops, he can only fire one salvo back.

A Russian victory in Ukraine would commence an ominous domino effect across the Europe continent of expanded Russian influence. That is not a world any of us want to return to.

In generations past, Democrats and Republicans would have bent heaven and Earth to stand up to Russian dictators, we would have balked at showing weakness to autocratic thugs who invade their neighbors and hope for America's demise.

We find ourselves in a new moment in history where democracy is under siege yet again. We heard directly from President Zelenskyy a few weeks ago about what is at stake if we fail. So fail we must not. It is, therefore, essential that we finish the work of passing the supplemental. It is one of the hardest things the Senate has done in a very long time; but for the sake of our national security, of our friends abroad, of our fundamental values, we must stay the course.

Of course, there are many difficulties with the supplemental, but we must keep our eye on the ball. We must get this done. Ukraine hangs in the balance.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, negotiations continue on border security reforms to be included in the national security supplemental, and I am thankful that after 3 years of chaos at our southern border, Democrats have, at least, finally come to the table, because it is long past time to get the situation under control.

As I said, for 3 years—almost since the day President Biden took office—we have confronted chaos at our southern border. Rather than improving, this crisis has just grown worse and

worse with time. Fiscal year 2021 saw a recordbreaking 1,734,686 migrant encounters at our southern border. Then fiscal year 2022 broke that record, and then fiscal year 2023 broke that record.

And if fiscal year 2024 continues on its current trajectory, we will, yet again, end up breaking another record. December reportedly saw a staggering 302,000 migrant encounters at our southern border—not only the highest December number ever recorded, but the highest number ever recorded for any month, period.

My colleague from Pennsylvania recently compared September's nearly 270,000 border encounters to having the entire population of Pittsburgh crossing our southern border in one month—in one month. The comparison is even more apt with December's numbers. We can't afford to have a major city's worth of illegal immigrants crossing our southern border every single month.

As border cities have long known and as major Democratic cities are now finding to their cost, this simply isn't sustainable. New York City, which has seen 150,000-plus migrants enter the city since last spring, is facing cuts to city services as a result of the influx. In fact, just yesterday, it was reported that Mayor Adams is actually temporarily removing students from their classrooms to house migrants.

It is not just New York that is overwhelmed; so are cities like Denver and Chicago. The mayor of Chicago recently noted that the situation his city and others are facing is "unsustainable." So there are massive practical problems associated with having a city's worth of people coming across our southern border each and every single month.

But that isn't the worst of it. The even bigger concern is the national security crisis that this represents. Our Nation cannot be secure while we have hundreds of thousands of migrants flooding across our southern border each month, frequently to end up released into the United States with court dates that are, literally, years into the future. The sheer volume smooths the way for criminals, terrorists, and other dangerous individuals to make their way into our country.

And there are dangerous individuals trying to make their way into our country. Make no mistake about that. During the first 2 months of fiscal year 2024 alone, 30 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist were apprehended on our southern border. That is, literally, one every other day. Fiscal year 2023 saw 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist apprehended at our southern border, which was more than the previous six fiscal years combined. If we continue on our current trajectory, we will break the 2023 record this year. And that is deeply concerning.

Those are just the individuals the Border Patrol is actually apprehending. We have no way of knowing how many dangerous individuals have

entered our country over the past years without—without being apprehended. Since the beginning of fiscal year 2021, there have been more than 1.7 million known "got-aways," and those are individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. Since October 1 alone, there have been more than 83,000 known "got-aways." That is 83,000 individuals entering our country without our knowing who they are, why they are here, or where in the United States they are going. And there is no way—no way—of telling how many unknown "got-aways" there have been.

With the current chaos at our southern border, there is no question that some individuals are managing to make it into the United States completely undetected.

With so many illegal immigrants arriving at our border these days, planning to get caught so they can take advantage of the Biden administration's lax asylum and parole policies, it is especially concerning to see these "got-aways" who are working to evade Border Patrol. Some of them may, indeed, be entering the United States simply hoping for a better life, but it is highly likely that a number of them have more malign intentions.

I mean, think about it. You look at the number of people just in the month of October: 1,569 convicted criminals got in the country, 50 gang members, 93 people who have had warrants for their arrest, and 12 terrorists. That was one month—just one month. And those are the people that were apprehended. Think about those "got-aways," which I mentioned—83,000 known "got-aways" since October 1—and then the unknown "got-aways" who you assume are people who know how to evade law enforcement and figured out how to get into the country illegally. The point simply is this: Our southern border has become a portal for people with all kinds of malign interests to get into this country.

Now, arguably, there was a time when people came here from places like Central and South America in pursuit of a better life; and, obviously, you can't blame them for leaving the places where they lived and wanting to live in the United States. They come here legally. We have ways of people getting into this country legally; laws that should be followed. We are a nation of laws. But the fact that people like terrorists, like criminals, like cartels who are trafficking in who knows what—weapons, drugs, humans—we know how many people are dying every year from fentanyl in this country—our southern border is out of control. It is a danger to our national security, and it is a threat to the safety and security of every community in this country, whether you are on the border or not.

Now, people used to think of this issue as something that just affects people along the southern border. It is not. I just mentioned New York, Chicago, Denver, facing very, very hard

decisions because they don't know how to manage this huge influx of migrants coming into their communities. And, again, many of them are coming here for reasons that are, perhaps, understandable; nevertheless, still in violation of our laws. But now what is most concerning is the very fact that so many of these people being apprehended have criminal records, are members of gangs, or, worse yet, are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

What do you think they are doing trying to get into this country? Seems pretty obvious to me. And some day, we are going to face something in this country, they are going to trace back some incident harmful to America that they are going to trace back to somebody who came across the southern border. And this administration and these lax policies and their unwillingness to enforce the law are going to be responsible for it.

Mr. President, we are a nation of immigrants. I have said that many times. My own grandfather was an immigrant. Immigrants have helped build this country into what it is today. I am a strong supporter of legal immigration. As I said, we have ways for people to come here; but we are, first and foremost and fundamentally and foundationally, a nation of laws. We will only be able to remain a nation of laws as long as the law is respected and enforced, meaning this: Immigration needs to be legal. We need to know who is coming into our country and why.

So I am very much hoping that in the very near future, the ongoing border negotiations will produce real reforms that will help us finally regain operational control of our southern border; because 3 years of chaos is 3 years too many. It is time to get this done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, on behalf of the leader, I ask that yesterday's order with respect to the Crews nomination be executed at 11:30 a.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF S. KATO CREWS

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am delighted the Presiding Officer is in the Chair for this conversation about Judge Kato Crews.

Today, I rise in strong support of President Biden's nominee for the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, Judge Kato Crews.

Judge Crews is a true son of Colorado. He was born in Pueblo, in the

high desert, in the southern part of our State. His family didn't have a lot while he was growing up, but his parents worked hard and always put their kids first.

Since he was in middle school, Judge Crews knew he wanted to become a lawyer. His dad was a solo practitioner in Pueblo, and although Judge Crews didn't really know what his father did for work, he knew that he was helping people and that he had the respect of the community.

Judge Crews attended public high school in Rye, CO, which is a small town in the San Isabel foothills, where he was the only African-American male in his entire school. He earned a B.A. from the University of Northern Colorado and then a J.D. from the University of Arizona, where he served on the law review, where he made the dean's list, and offered pro bono services to survivors of domestic violence.

After law school, Judge Crews returned to Colorado to serve as an attorney for the National Labor Relations Board, where he investigated and prosecuted charges of unfair labor practices.

He spent the next 17 years after that in private practice—first at a large firm in Denver, where he made partner, and later at a smaller firm that he founded with colleagues. In private practice, Judge Crews focused on civil litigation and employment law, representing both workers and employers. He tried approximately 18 cases before Federal courts, State courts, and administrative agencies, serving as chief or sole counsel in jury trials, bench trials, and administrative proceedings.

For the last 5 years, he has served as a magistrate judge for the Federal District of Colorado. In this role, he has performed most tasks expected of a district court judge on the Federal bench, from handling evidentiary proceedings to all matters before, during, and after trial.

During his time on the bench, Judge Crews saw how pro se litigants often struggled to advocate for themselves. He also saw younger lawyers who were eager for courtroom experience. So he founded a program to connect the two, giving young lawyers in Colorado, for the first time, valuable time in court and pro se litigants free help to navigate certain proceedings that these young lawyers were capable of handling.

That is just one example of Judge Crews going the extra mile and of his commitment to making the legal system more accessible—a lifelong commitment to making the legal system more accessible to litigants, to future lawyers, and to the community it serves, most importantly.

As Colorado's first African-American magistrate, Judge Crews spends as much time as he can in the community by serving on nonprofit boards, mentoring students, and using the power of his example to help young Coloradans imagine a career in law for themselves.

Former mentors and colleagues all describe Judge Crews as a true public servant who works hard, who never loses his poise, and who never forgets where he came from. He is one of the most accessible judges on the bench in our State, and he knows the law as well as anyone.

Judge Crews knows what it means to try a case as a litigator and to preside over one as a judge. He has practiced law for the government and for firms both large and small. He has tried cases from the perspectives of employees and employers, for clients with a lot of money and resources and for clients with none at all.

If confirmed, Judge Crews will follow in the footsteps of Judge Moore, who has taken senior status, to become the only African-American judge on the district court. Judge Crews will become the only district court judge born and raised in Pueblo, CO, and that means something to me and to the Presiding Officer, bringing a really important perspective to the bench from a critical but sometimes overlooked part of our State.

With his experience, with his intellect, and with his character, Judge Crews will make a remarkable addition to Colorado's district court, and I urge my colleagues to confirm, this morning, Judge Crews with a strong bipartisan vote.

I would say, before I surrender the floor to my colleague from Colorado, what an extraordinary job he has done in providing leadership to the selection of these judges and to the nominations of these judges for President Biden to consider. It is extraordinary. We have had a number of vacancies on the district court, and we have worked very hard together to make sure those vacancies are filled in as expeditious a way as possible—in fact, I would argue, probably more expeditiously than any other Federal district court in the country. That would not have happened without the leadership of Senator HICKENLOOPER, who, with his team when he came into office, observed that the process that I had in place was a little bit creakier than maybe it should have been. Together, we have been able to improve it.

I want to say thank you also to the tireless advisory committee members of the bar in Colorado, who have given us their best recommendations all along the way, including the recommendation that has now led to the nomination of Judge Kato Crews and, hopefully, to his confirmation today.

With that, I yield the floor, and I look forward to the next speaker.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, today, the Senate will consider President Biden's nominee, Judge Kato Crews, for the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, as our senior Senator so ably represented.

I am not a lawyer, so I bring a slightly different perspective, but I do recognize the experience and sensibilities that Senator BENNET brings to this. I would argue that there is no one else in the Senate who has spent as much time really looking at our legal system and examining it from a variety of different perspectives and who really understands what it means to serve on our Federal courts.

Judge Crews came before us and comes before this body with broad and well-earned bipartisan support thanks to a career dedicated to the people of Colorado. His experience, his intellect, and his integrity set him apart. They make him an ideal candidate for the Federal judiciary and will make him a judge for all of Colorado.

As Senator BENNET mentioned, he comes from a part of Colorado, Pueblo, in the south-central part of the State, which sometimes has been neglected in these types of appointments. Judge Crews will bring that valuable experience from southern Colorado, but he also understands the whole State.

In addition to the more than 20 years of legal experience that he brings to the bench, Judge Crews has also served as a magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado since 2018—the same court to which he has been nominated.

As Senator BENNET mentioned, he also has a tremendous commitment to pro bono work. He founded the Federal Limited Appearance Program, which is a volunteer program that provides people with free representation when they first engage with our legal system. For many people, this can be an unknown and scary time for them—really, for any citizen. This program lends a helping hand and helps people deal with that anxiety.

Judge Crews's experience in community service has earned him enthusiastic support from members of the Colorado legal community up and down the list—former colleagues, labor leaders, elected officials. In supporting his nomination, a group of attorneys who has appeared as opposing counsel in Judge Crews's courtroom wrote:

Not one of us questions Magistrate Judge Crews's intellect, integrity, respect for the law, and the profession we share.

They then added:

He has embodied what all hope to see in a judicial officer—fairness and impartiality.

I could not agree more.

Kato has my full and wholehearted support. He is exactly the type of person who needs to be on the bench, who needs to join the court.

In May, the Senate Judiciary Committee favorably reported Judge Crews's nomination to the floor, and now I want to wholeheartedly encourage all of my colleagues in the Senate to support his confirmation.

This is a proud day for Colorado. Colorado should be and is proud that we can put forward someone like Judge Crews. I know it is also a proud day for Judge Crews and his family, of course. We want to make sure it is a really good day, so I hope everyone will support him.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE LLOYD J. AUSTIN

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am going to be brief.

I decided this morning that I wanted to come and talk about the events involving Secretary Austin and what we now know are his challenges with prostate cancer. I want to look at it from two different perspectives.

One, I want to be very brief. I think that Secretary Austin made a mistake by not notifying Members of Congress and by not notifying the administration—in other words, moving through the transition. I think that was a mistake, and I hope Secretary Austin has learned from that. But I am not here to talk about that. That was just a mistake. It shouldn't have been made, particularly in the circumstances we are in now with conflicts in Israel, conflicts in Ukraine, threats across the world, and threats to this country.

I am here to talk about this because it was 2 years ago this month that I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I made a decision very quickly after I learned about it. It took me about a month. I had gone to my doctor for my annual checkup. You always check your PSA. I found out in probably the September-October timeframe that my PSA was up. I went back for a followup exam through the Christmas holiday. Then, in the first or second week of January 2021, my doctor said: You have prostate cancer, and you need to take some course of action. And there are several different courses of action, but I made the immediate decision to be public with the fact that I was going through prostate cancer.

Secretary Austin chose not to. For any individual person, that is your right. I hope you are not embarrassed by the fact that you have cancer any more than a woman would be embarrassed for having breast cancer, because back in the day, when breast cancer was stigmatized, a lot of women died because they were ashamed of something they had no control over.

So my point is that Secretary Austin is a global figure. Secretary Austin is somebody whom people around the world know. Secretary Austin, as personal as it is to have to deal with a cancer diagnosis, needs to know, as a public figure—I, as a U.S. Senator; he,

as the Secretary of Defense—has an obligation to save lives. And one of the ways you save lives, when you get prostate cancer as a male, is to not be ashamed of it and to tell other males. Any male who has a history of prostate cancer—and their family—needs to tell those young men, you don't get to wait until you are 40 to get a PSA test; you should start getting it when you are 30. And every man over 40 should be getting a PSA test every year. And then do your homework. Study the courses of therapy, whether it was, in my case, a procedure similar to what Secretary Austin got—removal of the prostate; it could be hormone therapy; it could be radiation therapy.

Cancer—and prostate cancer in particular—is one of the most treatable cancers there is. It is highly likely I still have cancer. The goal with prostate cancer is to die with it, not from it, right? Die with it, not from it. You can manage this cancer, but you can only manage it if public officials like Secretary Austin and U.S. Senators step up and are not ashamed of it but try to make sure everybody else understands it is something that is out of your control. You confront it, and you beat it.

So the reason for my comments today was to use this opportunity to remind men across this country and across this world: Don't be ashamed of prostate cancer. Don't be ashamed of some of the side effects that may or may not occur. Have the courage to tell everybody that you are going to take it on and you are going to win. By mentioning it and sharing this conversation, like I am today, hopefully you are going to save a few more lives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote proceed immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 174, S. Kato Crews, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado.

Charles E. Schumer, Raphael G. Warnock, Mazie Hirono, Jeanne Shaheen, Elizabeth Warren, Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Mark Kelly, Tammy Duckworth, Chris Van Hollen, Amy Klobuchar, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, John Fetterman, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sherrod Brown.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of S. Kato Crews, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 3 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Butler	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

NAYS—47

Barrasso	Graham	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hagerty	Rounds
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Britt	Hoeben	Schmitt
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sinema
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Vance
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Cantwell Risch

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 47.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of S. Kato Crews, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Crews nomination be considered expired at 2:30 p.m. today and that, following disposition of the Crews nomination, the Senate proceed to legislative session to execute the order from December 19, 2023, with respect to the veto message on S.J. Res. 32; further, that all time on the veto message be considered expired and the Senate

vote on passage of the joint resolution, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding; and finally, that upon disposition of the veto message, the Senate resume executive session to resume consideration of the McEntarfer nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. For the information of the Senate, there will be two rollcall votes at 2:30 p.m. today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it is common knowledge that America's southern border has been in crisis since President Biden took office 3 years ago. Since then, 6.7 million—6.7 million—migrants have shown up at the border, only to be released by the Biden administration into the interior of the United States.

That 6.7 million people is higher than the Obama and the Trump administration combined, and that was over a period of 12 years. In just 3 years, we have experienced more illegal immigration than we did in the preceding 12 years.

Well, despite the eye-popping statistics, leaders in the Biden administration have repeatedly tried to mislead the American people into believing everything at the border is just hunky-dory. In other words, they are saying: Don't believe your lying eyes.

President Biden has consistently attempted to downplay concerns about the border crisis. Of course, my State, the State of Texas, which has 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico, we are a ground-zero. But the President has even refused to visit the border until last January, nearly 2 years into his presidency, and then he did sort of a drive-by in El Paso after much of the evidence related to the crisis had been cleaned up.

At one point, the President defended his decision not to go to the border by saying: Well, there are more important things to do. What an abdication of responsibility.

Other leaders in the administration have offered weak and unconvincing claims that there is no reason to be concerned. Some have just lied. That sounds harsh, but there is simply no other reasonable conclusion.

In the fall of 2022, Vice President KAMALA HARRIS, the appointed border czar by President Biden, said: We have a secure border.

I don't know how she reached that conclusion, other than maybe being just wishful thinking. She certainly has traveled to the border. She certainly hasn't studied the phenomenon associated with this mass migration of humanity across our border into the United States.

And then the Biden official principally responsible for border security, Alejandro Mayorkas, made a nearly identical proclamation, saying—this is

under oath, penalties of perjury—he said: The border is secure.

Well, it is easy to see that these statements are demonstrably false. After all, the American people can turn their TV set on and watch news footage of migrants streaming across the border, caravans making their way to the border mostly to just turn themselves in because they know the Biden administration will release them into the countryside. We see photos of migrants lining the streets and sidewalks of our major cities like New York and Chicago, which are more than 1,000 miles away from the United States-Mexico border.

We watch as people in communities die from fentanyl poisoning and know that the vast majority of that fentanyl comes across the border from Mexico.

Evidence of the humanitarian and security crisis at the border is all around us, but the administration refuses to be honest, refuses to be honest with the American people about the scope of this crisis as well as their response.

Here is just one of many shocking examples. Last May, the chief spokesman for President Biden, the White House Press Secretary, tried to address the concerns over the administration's catch-and-release policies. She said:

The claims that [Customs and Border Protection] is allowing or encouraging mass release of migrants . . . is just categorically false.

That was in May of 2023. What was false was her statement. Migrants were being released in the United States with no immigration court date and no way of keeping tabs on their whereabouts. When one of the catch-and-release policies was vacated by a Federal court, the court's final order likened the administration's actions to posting a flashing sign on the border. That sign says "Come in. We are open." That is what one court likened the Biden administration's border policies to—a welcome sign.

In the months since the White House Press Secretary made these obviously false comments, the Biden administration is taking catch-and-release to a new level. They have made that "Come in. We are open" sign even brighter and even bigger, and they have laid out a welcome mat in addition.

Well, surprisingly, after falsely stating that the border is secure time and time again, Secretary Mayorkas, who traveled to Eagle Pass this last week, met with frontline law enforcement officials. He told the Border Patrol agents that the current release rate of migrants caught crossing the border illegally was 85 percent—85 percent. There is no way to reconcile these two statements.

You know, some people say: Well, we need to build a wall.

Well, border infrastructure is important, but people can turn themselves in and be released, and the wall doesn't make much difference.

Yes, we need technology. Yes, we need more Border Patrol. But unfortunately the Border Patrol are being

overwhelmed now, and the Biden administration has made it their policy simply just to release people coming to the border. This, of course, is a huge magnet or what the Border Patrol calls a pull factor encouraging more and more people to come. That is why you are seeing unprecedented levels of illegal immigration during the Biden administration, because people realize: Here is my opportunity, and no one is going to stop me.

Well, the main people benefiting from this, of course, are the transnational criminal organizations and the drug cartels who get paid by the head or by the pound. It is part of a really ingenious business model by the cartels because they know that if you flood the zone with people and you make \$5,000, \$10,000 a head for each person you smuggle into the United States, then you can overwhelm the Border Patrol so that they get offline in order to process the migrants, and then here come the drugs—the drugs that took the lives of 108,000 Americans last year alone.

The statement of Secretary Mayorkas in January 2024 that over 85 percent of illegal border crossers are released—this was not made in a press release or made in a speech; this was overheard as part of a private conversation and only after these Border Patrol agents, who are putting their lives on the line to enforce the laws that Congress has written—when they pressed him on the comments he made earlier last week.

In that interview, interestingly, the Secretary was asked about reports that as many as 70 percent were released into the United States, and he said, “[That] would not surprise me at all.” He said, “I know the data.”

“I know the data.”

Well, this is the guy who said the border is secure time and time again under oath—lying to Members of Congress in official proceedings before congressional committees.

He didn't say: Well, the rate is actually higher than 70 percent. Instead, he said: I know. He said: I know what the numbers are, and it is not 70 percent; it is 85 percent.

Well, Secretary Mayorkas may be able to dissemble and prevaricate here in Washington, but our frontline personnel—our Border Patrol, our Department of Public Safety personnel who are working at the order of Governor Abbott, as well as the National Guard, who are trying to do the job that the Federal Government and the Biden administration have refused to do—they know the truth.

The fact is, the American people know the truth. They know that President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas, the White House Press Secretary, the Vice President—all of them have tried to mislead the American people about the truth.

No area along Texas's southern border has been spared by the chaos of the Biden border crisis, but Eagle Pass—

Eagle Pass, TX—has been dealt an especially tough hand. Over the past few months, migrants have flooded this section of the border, and it is not uncommon for agents to see thousands of migrants in a single day.

This is not a major city with a lot of resources. Eagle Pass is a small border town with a population of roughly 28,000 people. It simply doesn't have the capacity to house, feed, or transport this many individuals.

At various points, migration levels have been so high that Customs and Border Protection did not have the resources to manage both lawful crossings and unlawful migrations. As a result, the administration shut down vehicle and rail processing so officers could help process migrants.

Well, it is not surprising to say that frontline officers and agents in Eagle Pass know the impact of the crisis better than just about anyone. According to reports, they pushed Secretary Mayorkas on his comments, and the Secretary finally acknowledged the truth. It was a remarkable event of candor amidst a fog of lies, prevarication, dissembling, and misleading.

This is just the latest example of the Biden administration misleading, downplaying, and outright lying about the border crisis. They don't want the American people to see the widespread catch-and-release policies in action because they know the backlash would be severe.

Here we are, about 11 months from the next election, and President Biden has finally realized this is a huge liability for him politically. Our Democratic colleagues are recognizing that this could be the difference between winning and losing the Senate.

When 85 percent of illegal border crossers are released, it serves as a magnet for even more migration. This is another thing that is lost on the Biden administration. When you lay out the welcome mat, when you say “If you come to the border, we will just release you into the interior,” it is just an incentive for more people to come.

There is no grand mystery on how to stop this trend. While the immigration policy can be complicated, the solution is not. We need consequences—consequences. We need to make clear that anyone who illegally crosses the border will be detained and removed. That is the key to establishing deterrence, and we have seen it used successfully in the past.

Let me just interject here that legal immigration has been one of the biggest blessings this country has ever experienced. We among all the nations in the world are the most open to people who want to come here for a better life, but we ask them to do it through legal, humane, and orderly channels. And we naturalize about 1 million people a year. But President Biden has outsourced our immigration policy to the drug cartels and criminal organizations, and it is a disaster.

Well, we know how to address this problem. In 2005, then-Secretary of

Homeland Security Michael Chertoff testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee and spoke about the Department's response to a surge of migrants from Brazil in that case. The Department launched what they called Operation Texas Hold 'Em, which involved detaining and then removing the illegal Brazilians they apprehended. As Secretary Chertoff noted, word spread fast. Word spread fast. After 30 days, the number of Brazilians dropped by 50 percent, and in 60 days, it dropped by more than 90 percent.

This is evidence—clear and convincing evidence—that consequences work, and the only way to address this crisis is through deterrence that comes with imposing consequences for people coming illegally rather than legally to the United States. We need to make it absolutely crystal clear that anyone who does not have a legal basis to remain in the United States will be detained and removed.

The Biden administration is ultimately responsible for enforcing our laws and delivering consequences, so without their buy-in, it will be nearly impossible to address this crisis in a significant way. But that does not mean we shouldn't try. I have very little confidence that the Biden administration will experience an epiphany and all of a sudden decide to enforce the law when they have refused to do so over the last 3 years, but we have to do the best we can.

Frontline border communities and law enforcement are buckling under the weight of this crisis. Fentanyl, which took the lives of 71,000 Americans last year alone, and other deadly drugs are pouring across the border and killing American citizens. Migrant children are being exploited and abused. All the while, the cartels and criminal organizations that get rich based on these policies are leaving a trail of death and destruction that the Biden administration has enabled.

The U.S. Senate has a responsibility to address this crisis head-on as part of the security supplemental that President Biden has requested, and I hope and pray we can make some progress.

I want to express my gratitude to the Senator from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD, for leading the effort on the part of the Republican conference. I know others, like Senator SINEMA, Senator MURPHY, and others, are working in good faith to try to reach a reasonable conclusion. But I know all of us want to see an end to this current crisis, and any even incremental progress we might make as a result of our debate and vote on the national security supplemental will represent progress.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I rise today to continue the conversation that I have just appreciated hearing from my colleague from Texas, Senator CORNYN.

I am once again on the floor to call attention to and express my great concern for the continuing humanitarian and national security crisis on our southern border.

Since President Biden took office, we have seen the largest year-to-year increase in migrants crossing our southwest border. Congress has provided resources for physical security, for walls and fencing and personnel; however, to keep our Nation safe and secure, we need to change the administration's policies.

While money and programs are important, the green light that this administration's policies provide to encourage people to come here has to come to an end. These are policies that encourage more migrants to attempt to enter our country illegally, and then, once they enter, there is no consequence.

I am increasingly concerned about this administration's carefree attitude toward those seeking to abuse our asylum system and increase the use of administrative parole. These policies bog down the asylum system, making it harder for those it was designed to protect and help to utilize it while also stretching thin our border personnel.

In fiscal year 2023 alone, the overworked men and women of U.S. Customs and Border Protection had approximately 2.5 million encounters along the southern border. The number of encounters in 2020—only 3 years earlier—was only 458,000. At the time, we thought that was a terrible number to deal with, but it has gone from 458,000 to 2.5 million in 3 years.

The vast majority of those encounters are with people who claim to be seeking asylum in our country. When someone arrives at the southern border, whether they present at a designated point of entry or not, that person only needs to say they are seeking asylum to be able to take advantage of the policies instituted by President Biden and by Secretary Mayorkas. Without being detained, these individuals are provided an asylum hearing date at some time several years into the future. Unsurprisingly—no surprise here at all—the majority of those released under this process then fail to report as they were directed.

In December of 2023, border authorities were forced to deal with more than 10,000 migrants crossing daily. In response to this, President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas suspended rail service and closed the international crossings at Eagle Pass and El Paso. This greatly harmed our carriers' ability to move goods across the North American rail network and to the North American consumers who rely

upon them. Closing the crossings limited grain exports from Kansas and elsewhere by nearly a million bushels a day, and it had negative impacts on many other agriculture commodities as well.

I raise that point because it is an example of where we are trying to take something from here to fix the problem there. That is not a plan or a policy, and it will not have a successful outcome because it is so damaging when we remove Border Patrol from a railroad crossing to try to impact the consequences of people crossing elsewhere along the border. I join my colleague Senator RICKETTS in calling for Secretary Mayorkas to immediately reverse that harmful decision.

The magnitude of this crisis is felt all across the country, and it is impacting every facet of our daily lives. A high school in New York was recently forced to turn to remote learning for students because their classrooms are being used to house nearly 2,000 migrants. Every State is a border State now, and rather than providing tangible help to legitimate asylum seekers, we are robbing our students of their educations to make certain that migrants don't have to spend a night in a tent.

A historic level of crossings at the southern border has not only created a humanitarian crisis and put an incredible strain on our immigration system, but it has seriously compromised our national security. That is a topic of conversation here, as it should be, and I believe that our country is facing one of the most dangerous times in its history, with the forces that are allied around the globe to our detriment.

The border, our southern border, is a significant component of protecting our national security. The cartels that operate in Central America are sophisticated, adaptable, and ruthless. Not only do they take advantage of individuals who are attempting to trek to our southern border by forcing them to pay thousands of dollars to fund their operations and subject them to abuse and murder, but they use these individuals to their strategic advantage. They will send thousands of individuals across the border at the same time and attempt to overwhelm and distract law enforcement while cartels bring guns and deadly drugs like fentanyl undetected across those borders.

In addition to cartels, our national security is threatened by potential espionage and terrorists. The last time I was at the border, which was several months ago, I witnessed the apprehensions of two Chinese nationals. What are Chinese nationals doing crossing our border illegally?

As a member of the Appropriations Committee and as the top Republican on the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, it is a priority of mine to ensure our Federal law enforcement has the resources necessary to keep Americans safe.

Yesterday was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, and I use this

opportunity to thank the committed men and women who leave their families every day to go out and protect and serve our communities and our country. In the face of risk and challenge, these officers continue to exemplify strength and courage and resiliency.

I can tell you, when I speak to law enforcement at home in Kansas, almost without exception, the conversation turns to the circumstances at the border and the consequences of the illegal activity that is occurring there and then in Kansas as a result of those border crossings.

Securing our southern border can't just be left to our frontline law enforcement to handle alone. It is also law enforcement across the country that is now struggling to make certain that the citizens across the country are safe from what happens at our border.

We must prioritize additional border security measures that include a physical barrier and investments in new technology. We must enforce our immigration laws and work to reform our immigration so that we reward those who follow the law, and we must disincentivize the illegal crossings.

President Biden's and Secretary Mayorkas's years of inaction in addressing this crisis have allowed a horrible—a horrible—situation to get worse.

I take this moment to thank my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD.

We are, hopefully in the near future, addressing the issue of the world, its condition, and what it means to the safety and security of Americans.

As I said a moment ago, I think we are in a very dangerous time for Americans. The future of our country, as always, is at stake, but with the actions of Russia in Ukraine; with what is taking place with Hamas in Israel; with China's desire to expand and spread its influence around the globe, to the detriment of the United States; and with Iran and its terrorist activities, national security should be a top priority. It is something that the Constitution of the United States vests in us as being our primary responsibility—to protect and defend the United States.

So we are in the process of figuring out our response to the circumstances the United States faces around the globe, with an effort to be supportive of our allies and to create challenges and difficulties to win over our adversaries.

I applaud Senator LANKFORD's efforts, who is negotiating a border policy to be included in our national security appropriations process. It belongs there. It is important there. It is a national security issue, and it is necessary to be included for us to be able to take care of the issues we face around the globe.

I stand ready, as Senator LANKFORD knows, to work with him and to work with my colleagues. We want to hold this administration accountable. We

want to promote a sound border security policy, and we want to put an end to this crisis. We want to put an end to this crisis for the well-being of the people of the United States of America and my constituents at home in Kansas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to display photos of Gad Haggai and Judih Weinstein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ISRAEL

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, as people around the world gathered last week to ring in the new year, it was a heartbreaking moment for families of the remaining Israeli hostages, whose loved ones have been forced to begin a new year in Hamas captivity.

Over the past month, I was devastated to learn that two of the hostages whom I have spoken about have since died. Israeli-American Judih Weinstein and Gad, her husband, both died from injuries they sustained on October 7. Their bodies are still being held in Gaza.

Gad was a retired chef, a jazz musician, and a gifted flautist. A father of four and a grandfather of seven, he was a man full of humor who knew how to make other people laugh.

Gad's wife Judih was a person of peace. A New York native, she loved making puppets and teaching English to children with special needs. She was a wellness expert who used meditation and mindfulness techniques to help those traumatized by years of rocket fire. She was also a pacifist who advocated for Palestinian rights. In one of the poems she wrote and shared on social media, Judih described herself as a "lone pilgrim, enveloped by ancestors"—listening to a "flute's homage beckoning [her] on."

The deaths of Judih and Gad are a sad conclusion to a long and horrifying saga. It is also a disturbing reminder of the perils faced by other hostages.

I recently returned from a congressional delegation trip to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, and I can tell you that the suffering and the grief the Jewish people and innocent Palestinian people have faced daily are truly devastating. The collective anguish, fear, and horror is palpable.

The path to peace—with all hostages being returned, the rebuilding of a Palestinian state without Hamas, and with the support and investment of the Arab and Muslim world—is now more urgent than ever.

When meeting the families of the hostages, the urgency and anguish in their eyes was devastating. To know that your loved one could be suffering unspeakable horrors and that they may be on the edge of death and feel powerless to stop it is a pain that no family member should ever be forced to bear.

They have spent every living day and moment since October 7 fighting to get their loved ones home. This nightmare must end now.

One of the families I met with told me about their loved one, Doron. A 30-year-old veterinary nurse, she hid under the bed in her apartment as Hamas terrorists rampaged her kibbutz. The last her family heard from her was from a voice message in which she said:

They've arrived, they have me.

Doron has a stomach condition, and her family worries her health will deteriorate without her daily medication. They worry about rape and sexual violence and sexual torture. They worry she will not survive the horrors of her captivity.

I also met again with the families of Itay Chen and Omer Neutra—two New Yorkers who are being held hostage by Hamas.

Itay is a 19-year-old boy who was born in New York City and is now serving with the IDF. He was supposed to return home to his family shortly after October 7 to celebrate his brother's bar mitzvah.

Omer Neutra is also a New Yorker, the grandson of Holocaust survivors, and an avid athlete. He loves the New York Knicks. He deferred his acceptance to Binghamton University to spend a gap year in Israel before he joined the IDF. On the day of the attack, he was working as a tank commander while defending the Gaza border. He was last seen on a video as being forcibly removed at the hands of Hamas terrorists.

In addition to these two New Yorkers, I also met with the family of another American hostage, Hersh Goldberg-Polin. He had his lower arm blown off by a hand grenade. His mother says his injuries could easily have resulted in his bleeding to death and wonders: Is he alive? Is he suffering? Does he ever have a chance of coming home?

These are just a few of the roughly 130 people still being held hostage by Hamas, including 8 Americans. With every day that goes by, the danger to them only grows. I hope that in this new year we can secure their safe return, their release, and their coming home to their families before it is too late.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, as we begin our new year, I rise to continue our discussion on one of the most pressing matters that has been so hard on our country. That is our open southern border and the responsibility for this Senate to take meaningful action.

Since this Chamber last was in session, each of us has traveled back to our respective States and has had the opportunity to talk with our constituents about what they are thinking and what they are seeing. Hands down, I can tell you that the crisis on our southern border is on the tip of everybody's tongue in terms of asking questions. It is the No. 1 issue for my State of West Virginia. Time and time again, across a multitude of conversations, West Virginians have asked me pretty logical questions: When will enough be enough? When will President Biden finally wake up and realize that this is a crisis? What can Congress do to stop this? What are you—meaning me as a Member of the Senate—going to do about it?

They see the numbers in the news—we saw them all through December, the mass humanitarian costs broadcasted on our TV sets daily—and the destruction that the flow of illicit drugs is doing and causing in our communities. So I share their frustration, and I have voiced it many times here on the floor. The crisis of our southern border is a topic that I have addressed repeatedly.

The chronic failure of this President to act has led to the point where even my colleagues across the aisle—everyone—have begun to raise alarm as the consequences of the administration's bad border policy have become undeniable.

One of my colleagues referred to the border as "porous." That is kind of a nice way of saying it is open and very, very easy to get through. I am not sure what finally led to this universal recognition, but I do have some ideas. It could have been the 2.4 million migrant encounters this past fiscal year—2.4 million. I live in a State of a little less than 1.8 million. My entire State came through that border, and more. Or the month after month of record illegal crossings with the largest month being just this past December of 302,000 encounters. That is this past December. Or the over 10,000 illegal encounters that we are experiencing daily, which is the size of many of the small towns in my State, with the record being 12,600, again, in December—12,600 crossings in December. Or the record 169 encounters with individuals on our Terror Watchlist just this past fiscal year, with an additional 30 encounters the first 2 months of fiscal year 2024. These are people whom we know have terrorist ties; whom we know could be a danger to us. Yet we are catching them as they are joining this brigade of millions coming across our southern border.

This is just an untenable national security crisis, one where we have no way of knowing how many terrorists have evaded apprehension and are now in the heartland of our country. This is a risk that we cannot take—not now, not ever. Yet very little, if any—and I would say none—has been taken by this administration to really remedy the situation.

There has been a lapse in this border security under the President, and a subsequent mass flow of immigration is creating a real-life humanitarian crisis of drug smuggling and human trafficking.

In fact, there is somebody who is thriving during this. The cartels are thriving with this billion dollars of business with our wide-open southern border.

It is important to remember that, really, I believe, this catastrophe is entirely the making of our President. And while congressional Republicans did not cause this, we are now taking the responsibility, along with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, of trying to address it and make meaningful progression.

This is why we need substantive policy changes to address our broken border. It has become increasingly obvious that now is the time to act.

Doing nothing will result in what? A continuation of 10,000 people a day, encounters per day, on our southern border and cover for the cartels to smuggle drugs and traffic people.

Doing nothing will result in the news, like we got just, I think, yesterday or maybe earlier today. A New York City high school is being overtaken and housing migrants for shelter, and the students are being told that they should engage in remote learning. In other words, don't come to school; we are using the school to house illegal migrants, and you do remote learning in school.

Well, what did we learn during COVID about remote learning? It is not good for our students. With a consistent remote learning program that we tried during COVID, you could see our falling test scores and a lot of mental health issues at the same time. So doing nothing will only increase the national security threats that our country is facing; therefore, doing nothing is unacceptable.

In a moment as critical as this, we cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. We are currently in a historically narrowly divided Congress, making bipartisanship an essential component in getting legislation across the finish line. That is what our Senate negotiators are engaged in.

We all talk about how bad the situation is at the southern border, but it is irresponsible to talk about the problem while refusing to solve it unless you get 100 percent of what you want. I have been here several years. I can honestly say there are very few times I get 100 percent of everything I want in a bill.

If we do not take this opportunity to make serious reforms, then the current crisis will continue with no end in sight. We cannot do that. As negotiations continue, we await the text of a final agreement.

The question that will soon be before us will not be whether this is a bill that each of us would have personally written—because it won't be—but,

rather, if we will take this opportunity and make serious reforms—the most serious reforms in decades—to help stop the overwhelming number of encounters that our Border Patrol agents see every day and take back control of our southern border. We must bring order and process back to our immigration policies.

I admire the steadfast and particular dedication of my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD, who has personally called many of us. He called me three times over Christmas. I know he didn't get much of a break with his family. He has displayed incredible strength throughout this process.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to recognize the importance of this moment and the urgent need to respond to the challenges that we have in front of us.

As always, I maintain my optimism—I am hoping next week we will get the text, and we can work that bill through this body—and remain confident in this Chamber's ability to deliver. We must take advantage of this opportunity.

I have never been at the cusp of an opportunity like this in the last 20 years on immigration that we have right now—something that will make a difference. So we have to take advantage of this, and we have to make sure that we are making meaningful changes as we are moving through this process.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, there has been a big conversation in this body that actually matches the conversation that is happening around the country right now. If you ask any random person on the street what are the key issues that they are thinking about right now, almost every poll that I have seen for the past several months has said people are concerned about the economy and they are concerned about border security. Just about every poll you have seen everywhere, that has been the one and two. Sometimes border security has been the top issue, sometimes it has been the second issue, but it has been in those top two over and over and over again. It is not just border States, and it is not just Republicans; it is Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike.

They see what is happening on the border, and they just want to know: What is the plan? Because the news came out that last September was the highest number of border crossings ever in the history of the country for any September. Then October was the highest number of illegal crossings of any October. Then November was the

highest number of crossings of any November in our Nation's history. Then December came, and it was not only the highest number of illegal crossings of any December in our history; it was the highest single month ever, for any month in our history. Typically, December is a lower month, but instead, it was the highest month in our history, with the highest single day in our history and an average of 10,000 people a day who illegally crossed the border—right at 300,000 people in a single month.

Just to put that in perspective, if I go—during the Obama administration, what we had in December and November exceeded any single year in the Obama administration—just those 2 months. During the early days of the Obama administration, we had 21,000 people a year who requested asylum—21,000 people a year who requested asylum on our southern border. We had that in 2 days in December. That is how things have shifted.

That is why this is not a partisan issue; this is a national issue. People understand the national security implications of this, that we literally have thousands of people crossing the border every day, and we have no idea where they are. They cross the border, and I can tell you quickly how. They cross somewhere in the desert in Arizona, either through a gap that has been cut in the fence or in areas where there is a gap in the fence and they just go around it.

They are given a couple different options. One is a parole authority. It is called 236 parole. You are just released in the country—take off. There is another one called a notice to appear. You will hear the common term “NTA.” There are just so many people crossing right now, we don't have time to be able to go through all the paperwork, so we are going to give you a piece of paper that says show up at an ICE office—and you can literally go anywhere you want to go in the country to do this—go anywhere you want to be able to go in the country, hand them this piece of paper and turn yourself in, and then get a hearing date set after that.

It may be shocking to everyone: Not many people are actually showing up at ICE offices and turning themselves in. They are just disappearing into the country by the hundreds of thousands, month after month.

In addition to that, if you come to our ports of entry and you are going to do an orderly entry, well, that has shifted, actually. Since earlier this year, this administration has started using a parole authority that is termed “humanitarian parole,” but they are using it in a way that no administration has ever used humanitarian parole in the history of the country. You see, earlier this year—actually, I should say “last year” now that it is January. Earlier last year, this administration announced to the world that if you will tell us ahead of time that you are coming, when you come to a port of entry,

we will give you a work permit when you arrive—that day. So 1,500 people a day come to their appointment at the port of entry, from all over the world. They show up. They are given a parole document called 212(d), and they are given a work permit that day and released into the country.

We just ask the question: How does that slow down immigration across the country? Because parole is actually not a status. Parole is actually listed in our law as a nonstatus. It is that you are actually here, but humanitarian parole was designed for a situation like what we had in Ukraine or it was designed for a situation where an individual has a funeral that they have to get to, but in their country, it takes too long to get a visa, and they couldn't get to the funeral, so they get humanitarian parole to be able to come in and get to that funeral. It is not designed to say "You all come." It is not designed to be "Anyone from anywhere in the world just show up, and I am going to hand you a work permit when you get here and release you into the country at 1,500 people a day."

Americans see this. This doesn't make sense to people. They just want to know what we are going to do to get order where there is chaos. They are not asking for a political solution; they are just asking for a solution.

This shouldn't be something that we don't address here. For 2½ months now, my colleague Senator MURPHY, my colleague Senator SINEMA, and a whole bunch of folks around the three of us—our other colleagues in this body and their staff—have worked together to try to get to a solution on how we can address this in a bipartisan way. This body requires bipartisan solutions. We have to have 60. So we have to work on hard issues.

I would tell you, the House of Representatives did a very good bill called H.R. 2 that addressed a lot of issues dealing with immigration, but unfortunately the House didn't have any Democrats on board. In fact, they didn't even have all the Republicans on board that particular bill.

They passed a very comprehensive set of solutions to be able to deal with border security. That is what they passed. This body has not passed anything to be able to respond. The House noticed a long time ago that this is something that needs to be addressed. This body has been allergic to working on how to be able to solve the border crisis.

So for the last 2½ months, we have met in a bipartisan way to hammer out how do we solve this because it can't be ignored. The worst-case scenario is for Americans to say, "Who is going to do something?" and for this body to say, "Not it." We have to come to some solutions.

Some of the issues are obvious. The vast majority of people coming in across the border will say, "I have fear in my country" because the cartels have told them, "If you say the magic

words, you will be released into the country because that puts you on a track for asylum," when actually what it does is it puts you into a 10-year backlog of claims that are out there. And people know, if I cross the border and just make a statement, I can be in the United States for the next 10 years.

It is the greatest country in the world. There are billions of people who would like to be able to be here. That is a pretty easy entry—to be able to just come across, say the secret word, and you are in. We have to be able to resolve that.

We as a nation should be able to filter through the people who are coming and to identify who actually qualifies for asylum and who is just wanting to come to be a part of the greatest Nation in the world. If you want to just come for economic reasons, there is a way to be able to do that, to go through the legal process.

We allow about a million people a year to legally naturalize into our country. We are one of the most generous countries in the world in our legal naturalization process. We should continue to be able to do that, as we have for decades and decades.

But for people who want to game the system, we are lawmakers. Why would we ignore people who are abusing the law? If we ignore the abuse of the law, what are we doing making law if it is not going to actually be enforced?

So let's get back to identifying those who actually qualify for asylum. And those who are just gaming the system—turn them back around and say: Go through the legal processes. Don't run through the desert. Don't swim across the river. Don't come to a border agent and lie to them.

Let's figure out a legal way to be able to address legal immigration and turn around illegal migration. We should be able to solve this issue. It is obvious to everybody. We should be able to bring immediate consequences when someone has actually violated our law.

Currently, if someone crosses the border, it may be 10 years before it is addressed. If we can't deal with immediate consequences—as I have heard over and over again from parents and from every individual, a delayed consequence is a nonconsequence. So if the consequence is delayed 10 years, that is not really a consequence, and everyone knows it. So we have to be able to have immediate consequences, and we have to have solutions to this issue about just paroling 1,500 random people from anywhere in the world.

If the standard to get into America is literally just fill out a form and tell them that you are coming first, and you are released into the country with a work permit in a nonstatus of parole, literally, that is an executive authority that could be taken away at any moment—literally. The next President comes in, they can waive every single parolee on the first day, and it would be entirely legal because parole is not

a status; it is just a release into the country.

If we can't figure out how to be able to solve that when the mayors of Chicago and of New York and of Denver are saying: Why is this administration releasing people into the country between ports of entry and this other parole process or an NTA with no work permit and just releasing them by the hundreds of thousands, why is this happening—if we can't answer that question, then we need to be able to sit down at the table until we do.

The Senate is where hard things get worked out. This is a hard thing. This is something that has not been resolved in more than 30 years. I understand we have differences of opinion. So does America—except in this one issue. They want this solved. America wants a resolution on this. So I encourage us, as a body, to keep negotiating, keep working at it. We are not going to solve everything; we never do. But we need to solve as much as we can because this is one of the biggest issues in the country. And I will tell you, this is one of our greatest threats.

In the past year in the flood of people crossing our border, tens of thousands of people who came across our border, this administration declared as a national security risk. The term they use is "special interest alien." Tens of thousands of people who crossed were given that designation, "special interest alien," and then released into the country.

We have no idea where they are. These were identified at the border as a national security risk. But because we are not managing our border and we are overrun with capacity, the option they have is releasing them.

For the sake of our Nation's national security and our future, let's actually go back to following the law. Let's actually create a process where when we pass law, we expect it to actually be enforced and to be done. We can do a hard thing. That is our job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, before the Senator from Oklahoma leaves, I was wondering if he would yield for a question.

Mr. LANKFORD. Yes, I would.

Mr. TILLIS. Senator LANKFORD, you have done an extraordinary job of negotiating what I think is going to be a successful compromise that is going to get support from Republicans and Democrats. But as you were going through this work, in the years that you spent studying this issue as a ranking member and chair in a committee of jurisdiction, I have got to believe you have looked at, let's say, Canada, for example. There are a lot of people who think that Senator LANKFORD and those of us who are trying to support Senator LANKFORD are being draconian and being out of step with the Western World.

But, Senator LANKFORD, could you just briefly describe how what we are

trying do compares to, say, our partner to the north, Canada, their laws?

Mr. LANKFORD. I don't run into many people who call the Canadians extreme. Not a derogatory statement towards the Canadians, but they have a pretty consistent system on it. If you crossed from the United States into Canada and ask for asylum, they would first ask you: Did you cross through the United States of America before you came into Canada? And if your answer was yes, they would turn you around and immediately return you back to the United States and say you can't request asylum here in Canada if you haven't requested asylum in the places you have already traveled through. That is the law in Canada.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, may I ask one followup?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Senator LANKFORD, isn't it true that tens of thousands of people who cross our borders today—and who may, ultimately, request asylum—have looked past an opportunity to safely relocate in the country they are seeking asylum from, likely transited to another country where they could have declared asylum, and, in some cases, passed through four or five or six different safe jurisdictions before they made the dangerous trip through Mexico, across the Rio Grande border, and present themselves at the border? Is that an accurate assessment of what hundreds of thousands of people have done during the Trump administration?

Mr. LANKFORD. Senator TILLIS, that is correct that during the past several administrations, we had millions of people who have actually crossed our border, have either never requested asylum—at the border, they declared they were going to ask for asylum but, literally, never did, never filled out the paperwork, never even tried because they knew they weren't eligible—or they travelled through multiple countries on the way, never requested asylum because they wanted to come to America, which I don't blame them. It is the greatest country in the world. But that is not what asylum is. "Asylum" means I have fear in my entire country. There is no safe place in my country, so I fled to the next safe place. That is what the international definition of "asylum" is.

Mr. TILLIS. I thank Senator LANKFORD through the Chair.

Madam President, I want to spend a few minutes on this subject as well.

We are reaching a milestone that I think is critically important. Since President Biden has entered office, the number of encounters at the border, 8 million—8 million—since President Biden entered office—that population exceeds the population of 30 U.S. States—the population of 30 individual U.S. States. That is the number we are talking about here.

And, ladies and gentlemen, a lot of them are the people who we just de-

scribed. Of course, the United States wants to be a haven for people who are fearing for their lives, suffering from oppression. But the goal of asylum is to get them immediately out of that dangerous situation—not to suddenly decide that I want to go through two or three or four other jurisdictions because what, ultimately, I want to do is get to the United States.

They are demeaning and devaluing the concept of asylum. And the problem is, they are getting those who want to come here—and we should take it as a compliment that they want to come to the United States—but they are elbowing out and sapping the capacity for the United States to make absolutely certain that people who have a legitimate case for asylum are even being heard. I wonder about how many thousands of people who desperately need to get to the United States—it is their only option—are not getting there because we are focused on this population.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have to do something. This is dangerous. You know, for a time, conservatives were really in the wilderness, being viewed as inhumane, insensitive, saying we have to have an orderly border process. I have been saying that. I am also somebody who thinks we should probably legally immigrate another 250,000 to a half million more than we do already. We immigrate about a million.

Let me tell you the other problem we have here that is inherently unfair. I already talked about people who legitimately should be given asylum—probably not, because we don't know who they are. We are dealing with a flood of 300,000 in the month of December alone. Of course, they are going to be collateral damage in the form of people who want asylum.

But now the American people are waking up to it. There was a time when it was purely a shirts and skins—blue jersey Democrat, red jersey Republican—argument. It is not the case anymore. The American people expect this administration to do something. And I am glad.

I am also glad we have JAMES LANKFORD at the tip of the spear negotiating on behalf of Republicans. He has negotiated—I am part of the working group; I have seen progress. He has negotiated something that I think is important.

We cannot miss this opportunity. The stakes are too high, and the American people agree. Nearly half of those who responded to this poll—which was an even distribution, ideologically speaking—nearly half of them think we have an emergency at the border. They are right. I have been there several times. They are right. People are dying.

Cartels are making nearly \$1 billion a year charging tolls to come across the border. If you try to cross the border without an armband or recognition you paid a cartel, you are likely going to die or you are going to get one more

chance before you get beaten up. That happens every day at the border, ladies and gentlemen. I am not exaggerating. I have been there. I have seen it. I have heard the stories.

Fortunately, now we have a majority of Americans that expect this administration to come to the table and negotiate in good faith with conservatives and people like me who have negotiated several bipartisan deals to solve this problem. If any Democrats are concerned with how far the negotiations are going, I don't think that they need to. This is not a political loser for people who are concerned with voting on a bipartisan compromise. In fact, it is politically smart.

At the end of the day, I hope political advisers and everybody that is up for election next year know: You know what, you don't even need political courage to do the right thing here, because the good policy of border security is also good politics for the overwhelming majority of people that need a vote for this bill.

We are going to have 30 or 40 people on this side—not 30 or 40—I think we will probably have 25 or 30 Members in this body that won't vote for it. Some will be because it didn't go too far; the others will be, it didn't go far enough; some of them are closer in cycle. It is very difficult to explain; I get that. But we need about 70 votes coming out of this Chamber to create a momentum to get it done in the House. I am going to be one of those 70 votes.

I also want the American people to not only wake up to the reality that people are abusing our system—they are taking our attention away from people we should desperately find a path to getting to the United States—and they are also jumping line. That is what I will leave with you. How angry do you all get—I love going to a good sporting event or a good comedy show. You get there early sometimes because you want to get a good seat if there is general admission. How angry do you get if you are standing in line for hours and, all of a sudden, somebody jumps in front of you? Well, imagine if you have been waiting years—more than a decade—to legally follow the process to be one of those million people a year that gets citizenship, when you see millions of them coming across the border every year breaking line. These people that are working hard, obeying our laws, respecting it, doing it by the book—they are breaking line, and it is actually elongating the time for them to get into this country. It is unfair at every level, and it is unsafe.

The only people who are loving the stalemate that we have in this Nation today are the cartels who are charging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 a person to get you across the border. Not everybody has \$5,000, though. So you know what they do? They say, well, you don't have to pay. But once you get across the border, you are going to participate in criminal enterprises until we think

your debt is done. That is not an exaggeration either. Talk to law enforcement. Talk to people in these communities. These cartels are like a cancer metastasizing through illegally present communities, exploiting them, and causing some people who may not have had a criminal record in the country of their origin to become criminals here.

There are a million different reasons why we need to get this border compromise done. I hope this Congress is the Congress where people set aside politics, do the right thing, make this country safer, and show respect for people trying to come to this country legally by making sure that their place in line is reserved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Louisiana.

S.J. RES. 32

Mr. KENNEDY. Two minutes, two points, Madam President.

No. 1, imagine if you are a typical Louisiana middle-class family. Mom is making, let's say, \$40,000 a year; Dad is making \$40,000 a year. They have two children. You have a house note. You have a car note—probably two car notes because both Mom and Dad have to get to work. You have to pay for health insurance. You have to eat. You try to save a little bit for retirement, and you try to save for your children's college education. But, basically, you are living on \$80,000 a year for a family of four.

All of a sudden, prices start rising, as they have. Since President Biden has been President, we have experienced 17-percent inflation. That is how much prices have gone up on average. What does that mean? We cite that number a lot. By the way, I know inflation is coming down and that is a very good thing and I am glad. I hope it stays down. But all that means is that prices are rising less quickly. It doesn't mean prices are dropping.

These high prices caused by the President's inflation are going to be permanent. They are. I wish I didn't have to report that. And as a result of Bidenomics and inflation, in my State, the average family making \$80,000 a year is going to have to pay an extra \$800 a month because of inflation. That is an extra \$10,000 a year. You are on a fixed income of \$80,000 and you have to find an extra \$10,000.

That is happening right now to millions of Louisianians and millions of Americans. What are you going to do? Well, the first thing you are going to do is ask for a pay raise from your employer. And some of our employers have granted pay raises; and I thank them for that. But it is not how much of a pay raise you have been given that is relevant. What is relevant is how much of a pay raise you have been given vis-a-vis the inflation rate. That is why, when we look at wages, we talk about real wages. That is the amount that wages have gone up after accounting for inflation.

Well, here is what they look like. Since President Biden has been Presi-

dent, this chart represents wages after inflation. We started up here. We are down here. They have been a little bit better lately. So most Americans who have gotten a pay raise after inflation, it doesn't count. It doesn't count. Pay raise doesn't work. It is great to have, but inflation eats it up and then some.

Well, OK. That family still has to find \$10,000. What do you do? You are going to borrow the money. And that is what is happening. Credit card debt—buy now, pay later—and other types of loans. Don't just take my word for it. On the last numbers we have in the third quarter of this year, credit card spending was up 9 percent at Chase Bank. It was up 15 percent at Wells Fargo. It is not just putting more money on the card that is relevant; it is also paying down the amount on the card.

People are not only borrowing more on this credit card, but they are not able to pay the amount on their credit card off as quickly as they were. Unpaid loan balances have gone through the roof—16 percent at Chase Bank, up 14 percent at Wells Fargo, up 11 percent at Citigroup. People are using credit cards. They are charging more and more, and they are paying less and less on those credit cards. And they are getting deeper and deeper into the hole.

What else are people doing in my State and every other State? They are raiding their savings. If you look at the numbers, personal deposits are down 3 percent year over year at Chase Bank. What does that mean? That means people are raiding their savings accounts to deal with this inflation. Personal deposits are down 5 percent at Citigroup. Personal deposits are down 10 percent at Wells Fargo and 31 percent—31 percent—in the wealth management division of Wells Fargo.

My point, Madam President, is that these actions that are taken in Washington, DC, have real-life consequences for average, everyday American families on fixed incomes.

As a result of this inflation, which is coming down—but the high prices are permanent—people are having to borrow and people are having to raid their savings. And it is clearly a cancer on the American journey.

Point 2, Madam President. A month or so ago, the Congress passed a resolution. It passed here in the Senate—for us, overwhelmingly—53 to 43. We passed that resolution on the Congressional Review Act. What did we do? Well, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—we call it the CFPB—it is where common sense is illegal. Common sense, I think—I know—is illegal at the CFPB. CFPB comes up with these nuggets every week.

If you ever want to understand why the American people hate the Federal Government, just look at the output of the CFPB. I mean it. Common sense is illegal there. One of their last nuggets, they put out a resolution. The title of it was called "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity

Act, Resolution B." And the Senate said no to this resolution. We said, no, can't do it, 53 to 43. And the House followed it by saying no to the CFPB, 221 to 202.

I am very proud of the Senate. Thank you, colleagues. I am very proud of the House. Unfortunately, President Biden has vetoed it. If I didn't know better, I would think that the President is auditioning to become the President of an Ivy League university, because let me tell you what this resolution will do unless we override the President's veto. Once again, you are a small business woman or small business man. You need a loan. Maybe you need a loan to grow your business; maybe you need a loan to sustain your business.

You go to your community bank. You say, I need to borrow some money. You submit your financials. The bank does its job. It does accurate underwriting, but before the bank can make a decision under this new CFPB rule, where common sense is illegal, the small banker has got to turn to that applicant and say: Look, I have to ask you a bunch of questions. I don't want to, but CFPB says I have to before I can grant your loan, so please bear with me.

Now, the small business woman or small business man is sitting there, things have been going pretty well. That small business person is feeling warm and toasty, thinking, I am going to get my loan, and I am going to be able to keep my business going and keep my people employed. But all it sounds like to me, there is a hitch here because my banker is being very apologetic, and I can tell he is upset about this, but I am going to try to help him and comply.

So the small banker says: OK. Let's get going. I have got to ask you 81 questions.

And the banker from the small bank starts with this small business person. First question: Are you female? Next: Are you male? Are you Black? Are you White? Are you mixed race? Are you another race? Are you Hispanic? Are you a homosexual? Are you a lesbian? Are you gay?

Now, remember, this is probably a small town in a community bank with a small business woman and a small business man applying for a loan. And the CFPB, our Federal Government, is telling the small banker, You have got to ask these questions.

The questions continue. The small banker looks the small business woman in the eye and says: Are you bisexual? Are you transgender? Are you queer? Are you intersex? And on and on and on.

Now, that small business woman—it could be a small business man—is going to have a couple of reactions. First, she is going to be thinking, What in God's name has happened to my country? What in God's name has happened to the Federal Government?

And the second emotion she is probably going to feel is anger. What business is it of the CFPB—what business

does the CFPB have in knowing what I do in my bedroom? It is none of its business. But the other notion that small business woman is probably going to have is fear because she needs this loan and, if she looks that small banker in the eye and says, It is none of your business whether I am gay or straight. It is none of your business what I do in the privacy of my bedroom with a consenting adult. It is none of the government's business, that small business woman is going to be thinking, Man, if I do that, he could deny my loan.

It is not the fault of the small banker; it is the fault of us in Washington, DC. It is the fault of Joe Biden because he has vetoed this resolution. He is saying to the world: It is OK for small banks in America to be required—be required—to turn to a small business woman applying for a loan and say: Are you a lesbian? Are you gay? Are you bisexual? Are you transgender?

And after they answer or don't answer, all of that information is sent to a Federal Agency, the CFPB, which has a data breach about every other Thursday. This is insanity.

And today, in about 10 minutes, I am going to ask this body to override President Biden's veto. If you believe in fairness, if you believe in privacy, if you believe in the freedom of the American people, if you have taken your meds today, if you have any semblance of common sense left, you will see that this proposal by President Biden is like a rock, only dumber.

I can't think of a better example why the American people have come to hate the Federal Government, and I can't think of a better example to explain to people why President Biden's poll numbers are on a journey to the center of the earth. It is stuff like this.

NOMINATION OF S. KATO CREWS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Kato Crews to the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado.

Born in Pueblo, CO, Judge Crews received his B.A. from the University of Northern Colorado and his J.D. from the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law. After working for the National Labor Relations Board in Denver, Judge Crews entered private practice in Colorado. During his career as a civil litigator, he tried 18 cases to verdict, including 6 jury trials.

In 2018, the district judges of the District of Colorado unanimously voted to appoint Judge Crews as a magistrate judge. In his 5 years on the Federal bench, he has handled a wide variety of both civil and criminal matters. He has presided over six trials and issued more than 1,700 recommendations and orders. Judge Crews has also been deeply involved in his community, serving as a mentor to young lawyers and helping establish a program to assist pro se litigants in the District of Colorado.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Judge Crews as "well qualified" to serve on the District of

Colorado. He enjoys the support of the Colorado legal community and both of his home State Senators, Mr. BENNET and Mr. HICKENLOOPER.

Judge Crews' deep ties to the Centennial State, his significant litigation background, and his courtroom experience as both an advocate and magistrate judge ensure that he will continue to be an asset to the district court.

I strongly support his nomination, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

Mr. KENNEDY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I would ask consent that the rollcall vote that is scheduled to start at 2:30 start immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON CREWS NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Crews nomination?

Mr. CARDIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 4 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Butler	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

NAYS—48

Barrasso	Graham	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeben	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sinema
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Vance
Ernst	Mullin	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—1

Cantwell

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO "SMALL BUSINESS LENDING UNDER THE EQUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITY ACT (REGULATION B)"—VETO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and proceed to the consideration of the veto message with respect to S.J. Res. 32, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message, a joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)".

VOTE ON VETO MESSAGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Shall the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding?

The yeas and nays are required under the Constitution.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 5 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Blackburn	Hagerty	Ricketts
Boozman	Hawley	Risch
Braun	Hickenlooper	Romney
Britt	Hoeben	Rounds
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Schmitt
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Collins	King	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sinema
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Tester
Crapo	Manchin	Thune
Cruz	Marshall	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	Moran	Vance
Fischer	Mullin	Wicker
Graham	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—45

Baldwin	Butler	Cortez Masto
Bennet	Cardin	Duckworth
Blumenthal	Carper	Durbin
Booker	Casey	Fetterman
Brown	Coons	Gillibrand

Hassan	Murphy	Shaheen
Heinrich	Murray	Smith
Hirono	Ossoff	Stabenow
Kaine	Padilla	Van Hollen
Kelly	Peters	Warner
Klobuchar	Reed	Warnock
Luján	Rosen	Warren
Markey	Sanders	Welch
Menendez	Schatz	Whitehouse
Merkley	Schumer	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1
Cantwell

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). On this vote, the yeas are 54, the nays are 45.

Two-thirds of the Senators being duly chosen and sworn, a quorum being present, not having voted in the affirmative, the joint resolution on reconsideration fails to pass over the veto of the President of the United States.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Erika L. McEntarfer, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ISRAEL

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I would like to say a few words on the resolution I have introduced under section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act, which I intend to bring to the floor next week. This resolution is privileged. We will have a floor debate on it, and there will be a vote.

There is some confusion, I think, regarding what this resolution does, and I want to say a few words about that.

Very sensibly, the Foreign Assistance Act requires that when the United States provides security assistance or arms to any country in the world, that assistance must be used in line with internationally recognized human rights. The act prohibits assistance to any government that engages in a consistent pattern of violation of human rights.

That is the law of the United States of America.

This act also provides Congress with several oversight tools to make sure that this law is, in fact, followed, and one of these tools is section 502B(c), which allows Congress to direct the State Department to provide a report on any country receiving U.S. security assistance and that government's observance or lack of observance of international human rights. That is what the law is about; and that is, in fact, exactly what this resolution does.

In line with existing law, it directs the State Department to provide any credible information it may have on

potential violations of internationally recognized human rights by Israel in its military campaign in Gaza.

It focuses in particular on the denial of the right to life, a human right enshrined in U.S. and international law caused by indiscriminate or disproportionate military operations, as well as by the denial of basic humanitarian needs and access.

It also asks for additional information on steps the United States has taken to limit civilian risk in this war; a certification that the Leahy laws are being fully applied; and a summary of the arms and munitions provided to Israel since October 7, when the war began. In essence, we will be voting on a very simple question. This is not a complicated question.

The question is: Do you support, as a Member of the Senate, asking the State Department whether human rights violations may have occurred using U.S. equipment or assistance in this war? That is what the resolution does—nothing more, nothing less.

This resolution is not prescriptive. It does not alter aid to Israel in any way. It does not cut one penny of aid. It simply requests that the State Department report on how U.S. aid is being used. The State Department then has 30 days to provide a report responding to the request.

To my mind, this is not a controversial resolution. Every one of us should want to know whether our U.S. military aid is being used in violation of international law or not. No matter what your view on the war may be, it is a simple question. And I hope that we can get widespread support for the resolution.

Now, let me say a word about why, in my view, this resolution is, in fact, necessary. It is no great secret that the United States has long been very supportive of Israel, providing billions of dollars a year in military aid, year after year after year. We have also provided a massive influx of arms and munitions since October 7, the day of Hamas's disgusting terrorist attack against Israel.

The Israeli military has made extensive use of these U.S. weapons in its campaign, including the widespread use of 2,000-pound bombs, 1,000-pound bombs, and 155-mm artillery.

On December 1, the Wall Street Journal reported that the U.S. has provided at least 15,000 bombs and 57,000 artillery shells to Israel since October 7, including more than 5,400 huge 2,000-pound bombs that can flatten entire neighborhoods. The Washington Post reported that in just 6 weeks after October 7, Israel dropped more than 22,000 American-supplied bombs on Gaza. CNN reported that 40 to 45 percent of the bombs used in Gaza have been unguided or what is called dumb bombs.

Let me be very clear. This aggressive military campaign has led to massive destruction and widespread civilian harm. There is extensive evidence

showing that this military campaign since October 7 in Gaza has been, far and away, the most intensive bombing campaign of the 21st century.

Independent human rights monitors and the press have extensively documented the use of U.S. arms in strikes leading to large numbers of civilian deaths and injuries.

The Israeli military campaign is not just something that concerns me or millions of Americans. It is also something that has been troubling to the entire international community. The U.N. General Assembly and U.N. Security Council have voted repeatedly and overwhelmingly to try to secure humanitarian access to stop the bombardments and to enact the humanitarian cease-fire. Unfortunately, our government has voted against or vetoed most of those efforts.

We all know that Hamas started this war with its brutal terrorist attack on October 7, an attack which resulted in the deaths of 1,200 innocent people, injuries of more, and the taking of over 200 hostages.

In my view, there is absolutely no question that Israel has the right to defend itself and respond against the perpetrators of that horrific attack; but while it is clear that Israel has the right to go to war against Hamas, in my view, it does not have the right to go to war against the entire Palestinian people, including many hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza.

Israel has relied on widespread bombardment, including with massive explosive ordinance in densely populated urban areas. This bombardment and the severe humanitarian restrictions have led to a catastrophe that veteran aid workers say goes beyond anything they have ever seen before.

And let me say a word. Let me be very clear about what the devastating humanitarian crisis in Gaza looks like right now, today. Up to now, some 23,000 Palestinians have been killed—70 percent of whom are women and children.

Let me repeat: Some 23,000 Palestinians—remember, we are talking about a population of a little over 2 million people. Some 23,000 Palestinians have been killed, 70 percent of whom are women and children.

More than 58,000 people have been wounded; 146 United Nations workers have been killed—more U.N. workers killed than in any previous war ever.

In Gaza—and this, again, is just unspeakable. In Gaza, 1.9 million people have been displaced by the bombing. They have been thrown out of their homes. And that is more than 85 percent of the population.

Can you imagine a population of some 2.2 million people and 85 percent of those people have been forced out of their homes? And many of those people today are homeless. And some 1.4 million of them are crowded into U.N. facilities which were never, ever, ever intended to be housing the kinds of populations that they are forced to house

today. And, today, tens of thousands of Palestinians are sleeping out in the cold as winter sets in.

What is also quite unbelievable is that over 70 percent of the housing units in Gaza have now been damaged or destroyed.

Let me repeat that. It is really quite unbelievable. It is a war that has gone on for 3 months—only 3 months—and 70 percent of the housing units in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed.

Unbelievably, according to a study by Professor Robert Pape of the University of Chicago, what that statistic of 70 percent destruction in housing means is that what is going on in Gaza after 3 months of war has surpassed the destruction that took place in Dresden during World War II.

I think when any person in America who knows anything about history or anybody around the world thinks about the city of Dresden, what comes to mind is the horrific bombardments that took place by U.S. and British Air Force and the destruction in the city. Those attacks during World War II took place over 2 years. The destruction in Gaza after 3 months, in terms of housing, is worse than what took place in Dresden over 2 years.

Now let me say a word about another horrific reality that is taking place in Gaza. So, above and beyond the death and destruction caused by bombs and the Israeli military campaign, what we are now looking at is the reality that Israel has made it extremely difficult from the very start of this war for food, water, medical supplies, and fuel to get into Gaza. This is no great secret. I think everybody knows it. The result of it is that, right now as we speak, starvation and hunger are a reality for the women, the children, and the men in Gaza—starvation.

The United Nations reports that more than 90 percent of the population there faces “acute food insecurity” and that virtually every household is skipping meals many days. Gaza is at risk of widespread famine in the coming weeks and months. Hundreds of thousands of children go to sleep hungry every night, and desperate Gazans—I think we have pictures of this—are mobbing the few U.N. relief trucks that can reach beyond the border crossing. These are hungry people who see a truck full of food, and they are attacking that truck and eating the food as quickly as they can.

Gaza’s healthcare system has collapsed, with little electricity, water, medicine, or fuel. Only 11 of Gaza’s 36 hospitals are able to function at all, and those that remain open can barely care for the patients who go to them.

The lack of sanitation and the destruction of the infrastructure there is leading to disease. In overcrowded U.N. facilities, thousands of people must share a single shower, and more than 220 people have to share a toilet. That is just a small piece of the horrible reality that is taking place in Gaza right now.

Now, some people may say: Well, you know, war is terrible, and this is war, and there is always collateral damage in war. But this is not just another war; this is wholesale destruction in an almost unprecedented manner. It is clear to me that the Netanyahu right-wing, extremist government in Israel is now waging this war in a deeply reckless and immoral way.

In other words, we all know that war is horrible and that we have to do a lot better than we are doing right now in trying to eliminate war on this planet. In war, there is always collateral damage, but something more is going on here right now.

I would mention to the Presiding Officer that many senior figures in the Netanyahu government have said things that only deepen the profound concern we should all feel about what is going on in Gaza today.

Several of these government officials have talked openly about reestablishing Israeli settlements in Gaza.

The current Intelligence Minister, among other senior officials, openly talks of permanently displacing Palestinians from Gaza.

The Defense Minister declared a “total siege” at the start of the war.

The Heritage Minister posted a picture of the devastation, saying Gaza was “more beautiful than ever, bombing and flattening everything.” All that destruction makes Gaza more beautiful than ever.

Another Israeli lawmaker said:

The Gaza Strip should be flattened, and there should be one sentence for everyone there—death. We have to wipe the Gaza Strip off the map. There are no innocents there.

I could go on and on with other terrible quotes from leading officials in the rightwing government of Netanyahu.

Given all of this—given the scale of the destruction, the unprecedented level of destruction, and the extent of use of U.S. arms in this campaign, including thousands of massive, 2,000-pound bombs—Congress must act to conduct real oversight. That is what the law is about, and that is why I hope we are going to have widespread support for the 502B resolution I will be offering next week.

The United States, whether we like it or not, is deeply complicit in what is going on in Gaza right now. Those are our weapons that are killing women and children in huge numbers, that are destroying homes in huge numbers, that are causing massive levels of injury, that are resulting in the hunger and the lack of medical care the people of Gaza are now experiencing.

I have supported Israel for many years, and many of my colleagues have as well. I don’t think there is any debate in Congress that Israel has a right to live in peace and security—something that has not always been the case. They have been subjected time and again to horrific terrorist attacks. They have the right to live in peace and security, but I do not believe we

are doing Israel any favors by ignoring what their policies are doing right now. Friends have to be prepared to tell friends the truth, and if Israel is a friend of ours, as it is, we have to tell them the truth. The truth is that, all over the world, people are outraged by Netanyahu’s campaigns and destruction against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

The Biden administration has urged Israel to change its tactics and to be more targeted in its military operations and to protect civilians. We have heard the President say this over and over again. We have heard Secretary Blinken say this over and over again. But the Netanyahu government clearly has not listened, and they have continued their very destructive war in violation of international law. Their war is in violation of international law. In my view, that approach is simply unacceptable and is not something we should be supportive of. In my view, the United States must end our complicity in what is going on in Gaza right now.

What this resolution is about, again, is not cutting one nickel of aid to Israel. That is not what this resolution does. And you don’t have to agree with me in terms of what I perceive is going on in Israel today. You can disagree with me completely. All this resolution does is ask for more information from the State Department, which allows us to determine whether or not Israel is violating international law. This is information Congress should have. Whatever your views on the war may be, this resolution should be something you can support. We are asking the State Department for information. That is what we are doing. That is all this resolution does.

If you believe that the military campaign in Gaza by Israel has been indiscriminate, as I do, then we have the responsibility to ask that question. If you believe that Israel has done nothing wrong, that what they are doing is consistent with international law, which is what the Israeli Government says, then the information coming from the State Department should buttress your belief.

So let me conclude by saying that we are not all likely to agree on the Israeli-Palestinian situation anytime soon, and we will have more chances to debate these issues if and when we consider a foreign aid supplemental bill, but asking for more information as to how American arms and security assistance are being used, particularly amid the level of death and destruction we are seeing in Gaza right now, should not be controversial. In fact, it is exactly what our job is.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION WITHDRAWN

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion with respect to the Mehalchick nomination be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I was unavoidably absent on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, for rollcall vote No. 2. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on confirmation for John A. Kazen, of Texas, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, rollcall vote No. 2; PN1020.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is still available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications that have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 23-91, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia for defense services estimated to cost \$250 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MIKE MILLER,
James A. Hursch, (for Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 23-91

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Australia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment A* \$0
Other \$250 million.
Total \$250 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: The Government of Australia has requested to buy services to support the Tomahawk Weapon System, including the below non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Major Defense Equipment: None.
Non-MDE: General Tomahawk Weapons System support services; logistics support management; material support; engineering technical support; management of technical data; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (AT-P-FBK).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: (AT-P-LGJ).

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None known.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 10, 2024.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Australia—General Tomahawk Weapons System Support Services Uplift

The Government of Australia has requested to buy services to support the Tomahawk Weapon System, including general weapons support services; logistics support management; material support; engineering technical support; management of technical data; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated total cost is \$250 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States. Australia is one of our most important allies. The strategic location of this political and economic power contributes significantly to ensuring peace and economic stability in the Western Pacific. It is vital to the U.S. national interest to assist our ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defense capability.

The proposed sale will allow Australia to better utilize the Tomahawk Weapon System it is procuring and ensure appropriate weapon pairing is evaluated to identify defined targets more precisely. It will also assist and contribute to Australia's joint maritime weapon technology development, analysis, and implementation; support multiple lines of effort to enhance interoperability and interchangeability with the United States; and uplift joint warfighting operational effects.

The proposed sale of this support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor(s) will be determined as the Government of Australia identifies its specific annual and quarterly requirements for weapons uplift support. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Australia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control

Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 22-54, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Egypt for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$200 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-54

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Egypt.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$0 million.
Other \$200 million.
Total \$200 million.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: Foreign Military Sales case EG-B-VIT was below congressional notification threshold at \$41.9 million for non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE) light tactical vehicle chassis and fleet build. The Government of Egypt requested that the case be amended to include additional chassis and non-MDE items and services. This case amendment will increase the total case value above the non-MDE notification threshold, and thus notification of the entire case is required.

Major Defense Equipment: None.
Non-MDE: Included are 4-Man REV1-B Rolling Chassis with 190 horsepower (HP) diesel engines upgraded to 205HP Turbocharged engines; training for chassis assembly process, operations, and maintenance; spare and repair parts; testing equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (EG-B-VIT).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 10, 2024.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Egypt—Light Tactical Vehicle Chassis and Fleet Build

The Government of Egypt has requested to buy additional light tactical vehicle chassis and fleet build that will be added to a previously implemented case. The original Foreign Military Sales case, valued at \$41.9 million, included 4-Man REV1-B Rolling Chassis with 190 horsepower (HP) diesel engines upgraded to 205HP turbo-charged engines; training for chassis assembly process, operations, and maintenance; spare and repair parts; testing equipment; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost is \$200 million.

This proposed sale will support U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic growth in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will contribute to the modernization of Egypt's Light Tactical Vehicle fleet, enhancing its ability to meet current and future threats. These chassis will contribute to Egypt's goal of updating its military capability while further enhancing interoperability with the United States and other allies. Egypt will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment and services into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be AM General, LLC, of Mishawaka, IN. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of up to five (5) additional U.S. Government and three (3) contractor representatives to Egypt for a duration of five (5) years to support fielding and training for the program.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-54

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle 13-Series 4-Man REV1-B Rolling Chassis will support the assembly production of the Egyptian vehicle (TEMSAH 3) to increase the capabilities of the Light Tactical Vehicle fleet.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Government of Egypt can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the

sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Egypt.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 22-58, concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Egypt for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$129 million. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCHE,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-58

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Egypt.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment * \$0 million.

Other \$129 million.

Total \$129 million.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: Foreign Military Sales case EG-P-LFY was below congressional notification threshold at \$49 million for non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE) 28-meter patrol craft production kits. The Government of Egypt requested that the case be amended to include additional 28-meter patrol craft production kits. This case amendment will increase the total case value above the non-MDE notification threshold, and thus notification of the entire case is required.

Major Defense Equipment: None.

Non-MDE: Included are 28-meter patrol craft production kits consisting of Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats, forward-looking infrared systems, and computer packages; technical and logistics support services; transportation; spare parts, materials, equipment, and components; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (EG-P-LFY).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: January 10, 2024.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Egypt—28-Meter Patrol Craft Kits

The Government of Egypt has requested to buy additional non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE) 28-meter patrol craft production kits and technical support. The kits consist of Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats, forward-looking infrared systems, and computer packages; technical and logistics support services; transportation; spare parts, materials, equipment, and components; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost is \$129 million.

This proposed sale will support U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic growth in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will improve Egypt's capacity to sustain security operations and strengthen its internal and external defense capabilities. The proposed sale will assist the Government of Egypt's maritime patrol and interdiction efforts to contribute to regional maritime security efforts in the Mediterranean and Red Sea. Egypt will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment and services into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Swiftships, of Morgan City, LA. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require multiple trips to Egypt involving one (1) U.S. Government representative and three (3) contractor representatives for approximately three (3) years for program management, program and technical reviews, training, maintenance support, and site surveys.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 22-58

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The 28-meter patrol craft production kits consist of Rigid Inflatable Boats, materials, equipment, and components for 28-meter patrol craft. Technical support is also included.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the hardware

and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems which might reduce system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that the Government of Egypt can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Egypt.

REMEMBERING HERB KOHL

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding public servant, my former colleague and friend Senator Herb Kohl who passed away on December 27, 2023. Over his 88 years, Herb rightfully earned a reputation as a civic-minded champion, whether it was in his many business ventures, his ownership of the Milwaukee Bucks, or his four terms representing his home State of Wisconsin.

Herb was the son of immigrants who came to America from Poland and Russia and joined in our Nation's entrepreneurial tradition by opening their own business: a small grocery store. Along with his parents and siblings, he helped grow this one store into a successful regional chain. Even with the enormous success of the business, Herb never forgot where he came from. Reflecting on his parents later in his life, he said that "[t]hey came with zero . . . None of us [children] ever thought we could get by on anything less than a full effort in life."

Herb remained deeply and personally involved in the business. He would visit dozens of Kohl's stores each week and would personally interview every full-time employee from the top on down. Herb knew that by focusing on his workers, by making sure they were secure in their jobs and able to thrive, that his business would flourish. One of Herb's closest friends once said of him, as noted by the University of Wisconsin's alumni magazine, "With any store we walked into, he knew every employee by their first name, and he knew all their families . . . You could tell his whole heart and soul was into it."

In 1985, when the Milwaukee Bucks were on the verge of being sold off and moved to another city, Herb stepped forward and bought the team with the promise to Bucks fans that the team would never leave. He stayed true to his word, even when it came time to sell the franchise three decades later, putting up \$100 million of his own money to help build a new arena to serve as the team's home.

That kind of generosity and commitment to the community made Herb a truly beloved figure in Wisconsin. Four times, voters there turned out to send him to the U.S. Senate, each time by wider margins. Just as with his busi-

ness, Herb put his whole heart and soul into serving the people of the State. He championed gun safety legislation and nutrition programs for children. He worked to support the State's agriculture industry, and his office became known as the gold standard for constituent service which, given his history, was no surprise. He was the embodiment of his campaign slogan, "Nobody's Senator but Yours."

I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to Herb's family and to all those who loved him in Wisconsin. Through his work, we know that his impact will continue to be felt, and his humility and dedication will serve as an inspiration to public servants for years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 2023 ARKANSAS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to Arkansas State Police troopers Special Agent Matt Foster and Senior Corporal David Smothers, the 2023 State Law Enforcement Officers of the Year.

The Arkansas Officer of the Year Award honors members of law enforcement who exemplify bravery, service, and commitment. The recognition is bestowed upon officers who go above and beyond the call of duty. Special Agent Foster and Senior Corporal Smothers earned this distinction by saving a victim of human trafficking and apprehending the trafficker. Smothers was conducting a traffic stop on I-40 when, after recognizing the smell of marijuana, he initiated a search of the vehicle and found illegal drugs and weapons. Additional items discovered during the search led him to believe a woman in the car was the victim of human trafficking.

He contacted Special Agent Matt Foster, who is trained in recognizing and identifying victims of human trafficking. In an interview with the passenger, she confirmed to him how she had been trafficked for several months. Thankfully, Foster facilitated her rescue from this dangerous situation and helped place her in a recovery program specializing in assisting victims of human trafficking and drug use.

On behalf of all Arkansans, I thank Senior Corporal David Smothers and Special Agent Matt Foster for making sacrifices to keep us safe, saving the life of an innocent victim, and bringing offenders to justice. I applaud their courageous actions, compassion, and the use of their skills to enforce the law and protect the vulnerable.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Kelly, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to H. Res. 949, resolving that the Clerk of the House inform the Senate that a quorum of the House is present and that the House is ready to proceed with business.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3179. A communication from the Chair, National Endowment for the Humanities, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Endowment's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023 received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3180. A communication from the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Joint Report on the Implementation of the Cybersecurity Sharing Act of 2015"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3181. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3182. A communication from the Treasurer of the National Gallery of Art, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Gallery's Inspector General Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3183. A communication from the Chair of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3184. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3185. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Education's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3186. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Reports from the Treasury Inspector General and the

Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration for the period from April 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3187. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General and a Management Report for the period from April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3188. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the vacancy in the position of Special Counsel, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 8, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3189. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 25-322, "Grounds for Divorce, Legal Separation, and Annulment Amendment Act of 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3190. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to notifying Congress that the Commission did not complete or initiate competitive sourcing for conversion in fiscal year 2023, nor do they plan to do so in fiscal year 2024; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-3191. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Candidate Salaries" (Notice 2023-19); to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-3192. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Technological Modernization" (Notice 2023-20); to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-3193. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Attorney General's Fourth Quarterly Report of Fiscal Year 2023 on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3194. A communication from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Payments Under State Home Care Agreements for Nursing Home Care" (RIN2900-AR62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 30, 2023; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3195. A communication from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reevaluation of Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation" (RIN2900-AR76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 30, 2023; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-3196. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Jacksonville, Oregon" (MB Docket No. 23-285) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 13, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3197. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of the Low Power Protection Act" ((FCC-23-112) (MB Docket No. 23-126)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 26, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3198. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Wireless Emergency Alerts, Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System" ((FCC23-88) (PS Docket Nos. 15-91 and 15-94)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3199. A communication from the Program Analyst, International Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expediting Initial Processing of Satellite and Earth Station Applications" (FCC 23-73) (IB Docket Nos. 22-411 and 22-271)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 13, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3200. A communication from the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Promoting Telehealth in Rural America" ((FCC 23-110) (WC Docket No. 17-310)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 26, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3201. A communication from the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Supporting Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence; Lifeline and Link Up Reform Modernization; Affordable Connectivity Program" ((RIN3060-AL48) (WC Docket Nos. 22-238, 11-42, and 21-450)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3202. A communication from the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act: Prevention and Elimination of Digital Discrimination" ((RIN3060-AL56) (GN Docket No. 22-69)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2023; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-92. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California applying to the United States Congress to call a constitutional convention under Article V of the Constitution of the United States for the purpose of proposing a constitutional amendment relating to firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas, Approximately 49,000 Americans died in 2021 as a result of gun violence, and firearms are the leading cause of death for children under 18 years of age in the United

States and the most common method of both homicide and suicide, and

Whereas, it is estimated that there are approximately 393,000,000 firearms in civilian hands in the United States as of 2023, meaning that firearms now outnumber people in our country; and

Whereas, Gun safety laws are proven to lessen the scourge of gun violence, as evidenced by the fact that since some of California's most significant gun safety laws took effect in the early 1990s, California has cut its rate of gun death in half, and the state's gun death rate is 39 percent lower than the national average as of 2023; and

Whereas, Precedents of the Supreme Court of the United States, including its decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen* (2022) 142 S.Ct. 2111, have limited the ability of the states to enact and enforce reasonable restrictions on the public carry of firearms, and prompted challenges to many other common sense regulations, such as those allowing law enforcement officials to assess the potential dangerousness of individuals seeking to obtain firearms and prohibit possession of firearms by those deemed dangerous, and those restricting possession of certain particularly dangerous weapons, including weapons of war; and

Whereas, Modern technology and capabilities, including semiautomatic firing mechanisms, capacity, range, accuracy, and use of specialized ammunition, of the firearms commercially available today make them far more lethal than anything the founders could have imagined in the 18th century, when most weapons needed to be reloaded after every shot; and

Whereas, Common sense public safety regulations limiting aspects of firearms acquisition, possession, public carry, and use by individuals, including, but not limited to, the types of firearms and ammunition that private individuals may possess, categories of private individuals who may not acquire or possess firearms, and locations where private individuals may carry firearms, as well as procedures to ensure that individuals possessing or seeking to acquire or publicly carry firearms will not pose a threat to the safety of themselves or others or use a firearm in furtherance of otherwise unlawful conduct, are proven to save lives; and

Whereas, Since state leaders first announced their intention to introduce this joint resolution in June 2023, the Supreme Court of the United States has granted review in *United States v. Rahimi*, yet another case in which a court struck down a commonsense gun safety regulation, and the scourge of gun violence has continued unabated, with recent mass shootings bringing tragedy to communities across the country, further underscoring the need for urgent action; and

Whereas, Amending the United States Constitution as described herein will ensure that federal, state, and local government can effectively pursue common sense solutions to this deadly nationwide problem, consistent with the understanding that throughout American history private, individuals have possessed firearms for home defense, hunting, and recreational purposes; and

Whereas, Article V of the Constitution of the United States requires the United States Congress to call a constitutional convention upon application of two-thirds of the legislatures of the several states for the purpose of proposing amendments to the United States Constitution; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California, speaking on behalf of the people of the State of California, hereby applies to the United States Congress to call a constitutional convention

under Article V of the Constitution of the United States for the purpose of proposing a constitutional amendment that would do either, or both, of the following:

(a) Affirm that federal, state, and local governments may adopt public safety regulations limiting aspects of firearms acquisition, possession, public carry, and use by individuals, and that such regulations are consistent with the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and the understanding that throughout American history private individuals have possessed firearms for home defense, hunting, and recreational purposes;

(b) Impose, as a matter of national policy, the following firearms regulations and prohibitions: (1) universal background checks as a prerequisite to purchase or acquisition of a firearm, (2) a prohibition on sales, loans, or other transfers of firearms to those under 21 years of age, subject to limited exceptions, (3) a minimum waiting period after the purchase or acquisition of a firearm before that firearm may be delivered to the buyer or acquirer, and (4) a prohibition on the sale, loan, or transfer of assault weapons and other weapons of war to private civilians; and be it further

Resolved, That this application is for a limited constitutional convention and does not grant Congress the authority to call a constitutional convention for any purpose other than those set forth herein and that this application shall be void if ever used at any stage to consider any constitutional amendments on subjects other than those specified herein; and be it further

Resolved, That this application shall be considered as covering the same subject matter as applications from other states to the United States Congress to call a convention to propose a constitutional amendment for each respective purpose set forth herein and that this application—shall be aggregated with such applications for the purpose of attaining the two-thirds of states necessary to require Congress to call a limited convention on each respective subject, but shall not be aggregated with any other applications on any other subject; and be it further

Resolved, That the State of California intends that this application shall constitute a continuing application, considered together with any applications on the respective subject that other states have adopted or may in the future adopt, until such time as two-thirds of the several states have applied for a convention and said convention is convened by Congress; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

POM-93. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the United States Congress, Department of Defense, and Department of Veterans Affairs to prioritize research and investment in non-technology treatment options for servicemembers and veterans who have psychological trauma as a result of military service; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 5

Whereas, The men and women who voluntarily sign-up to serve our nation in the United States Armed Forces, and the additional uniformed services, generally do so

with an understanding that such service may ultimately impact their physical and mental well-being. Even with this knowledge, they still answer the call to serve; and

Whereas Members of the active-duty Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, and Space Force, and their reserve components the Army and Air National Guard, may have experiences that increase the risk for developing behavioral health problems, including traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, and depression. Effective treatment options for these conditions vary from servicemember to servicemember, and

Whereas, Upon return from a deployment, members of the reserve components and the National Guard are demobilized and must reintegrate back into civilian life, while simultaneously losing access to the full range of services offered by the military health system and having to emotionally deal with the same experiences as their active-duty counterparts; and

Whereas, Non-technology treatment options, such as buddy-to-buddy programs, controlled use of psychedelics in clinical settings, outdoor therapy, and easier access to service animals, among others, have shown promise to help veterans improve their mental health and find a new normal while dealing with the invisible wounds of war and service; and

Whereas, The families of servicemembers must also not be forgotten, and resources should be made available to help them understand and assist their loved ones who may be suffering from psychological trauma. Family members of servicemembers or veterans with behavioral health problems may experience family violence and aggression, lower parenting satisfaction, and child behavior problems. Resources should include services that will help family members deal with the impacts of their family members' service; and

Whereas, The need to address veteran mental health is of key importance in Michigan. In 2021, it was reported that there were 554,281 veterans living in Michigan, making Michigan rank eleventh out of fifty-three states and territories in veteran population. However, between 2016 and 2020, it was reported that there were 882 Michigan veterans who died by suicide; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (The Senate Concurring), That we urge the United States Congress Department of Defense, and Department of Veterans Affairs to prioritize research and investment in non-technology treatment options for servicemembers and veterans who have psychological trauma as a result of military service; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Chair and Ranking Members of the Committees on Veterans Affairs and Armed Services, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-94. A petition from citizens of the State of Massachusetts relative to urging the United States Congress to act expeditiously to enact legislation relative to comprehensive immigration reform and, in doing so, help resolve the dual crises of a dysfunctional immigration system and a rapidly-developing domestic workforce shortage; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-95. A resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth, New Jersey, opposing the use of public and private property in the City of Elizabeth for the purposes of the federal government detaining detaining immigrants awaiting due process; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. VANCE, Mr. CRAMER, and Ms. ROSEN): S. 3565. A bill to appropriate funds for the Affordable Connectivity Program of the Federal Communications Commission; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 3566. A bill to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. VANCE):

S. 3567. A bill to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans Affairs History Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 3568. A bill to amend chapter 3081 of title 54, United States Code, to enhance the protection and preservation of America's battlefields; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TILLIS:

S. 3569. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report on the disclosure process for intellectual property created under a Federal grant, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 3570. A bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 500 West Pike Street in Clarksburg, West Virginia, as the "Irene M. Keeley United States Courthouse", and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 3571. A bill to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children as a fundamental right; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3572. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts, to award grants for arts and creative workforce programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 3573. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase data transparency for supplemental benefits under Medicare Advantage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3574. A bill to amend chapter 3 of title 36, United States Code, to designate the mastodon as the national fossil of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3575. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to give a preference, with respect to project grants for preventive health

services, for States that allow all trained individuals to carry and administer epinephrine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BUDD, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. VANCE):

S. 3576. A bill to authorize certain States to take certain actions on certain Federal land to secure an international border of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BUTLER, and Mr. WELCH):

S. Res. 518. A resolution expressing solidarity with the people of Guatemala and urging the Government of Guatemala to permit a peaceful transfer of power to President-elect Bernardo Arevalo; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 96

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 96, a bill to address the history of discrimination against Black farmers and ranchers, to require reforms within the Department of Agriculture to prevent future discrimination, and for other purposes.

S. 344

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 344, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to modify the disposition of certain outer Continental Shelf revenues and to open Federal financial sharing to heighten opportunities for renewable energy, and for other purposes.

S. 431

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 431, a bill to withhold United States contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and for other purposes.

S. 815

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 815, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the "Hello Girls".

S. 1271

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1271, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to trafficking of illicit fentanyl and its precursors by transnational criminal organizations, including cartels, and for other purposes.

S. 1529

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1529, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to provide for greater protection of roosters, and for other purposes.

S. 1631

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to enhance the authority granted to the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice with respect to unmanned aircraft systems and unmanned aircraft, and for other purposes.

S. 1906

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1906, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a time-limited provisional approval pathway, subject to specific obligations, for certain drugs and biological products, and for other purposes.

S. 2003

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2003, a bill to authorize the Secretary of State to provide additional assistance to Ukraine using assets confiscated from the Central Bank of the Russian Federation and other sovereign assets of the Russian Federation, and for other purposes.

S. 2085

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2085, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection screening tests.

S. 2372

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2372, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 2465

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms.

CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2465, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program to furnish doula services to veterans.

S. 2496

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to amend the National Housing Act to include information regarding VA home loans in the Informed Consumer Choice Disclosure required to be provided to prospective FHA borrowers.

S. 2839

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2839, a bill to clarify the maximum hiring target for new air traffic controllers, and for other purposes.

S. 2861

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2861, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

S. 2862

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2862, a bill to amend the Food for Peace Act to restore the original intent of commodity transfers, and for other purposes.

S. 3192

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3192, a bill to designate Ansarallah as a foreign terrorist organization and impose certain sanctions on Ansarallah, and for other purposes.

S. 3258

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3258, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of ALS-related services under the Medicare program for individuals diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and for other purposes.

S. 3488

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3488, a bill to amend title 51, United States Code, to provide for a NASA public-private talent program, and for other purposes.

S. 3490

At the request of Mr. TUBERVILLE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3490, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from providing health care to, or engaging in claims processing for health care for, any individual unlawfully present in

the United States who is not eligible for health care under the laws administered by the Secretary.

S. J. RES. 45

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. J. Res. 45, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. J. RES. 49

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) were added as cosponsors of S. J. Res. 49, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to a "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status".

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution designating 2024 as the Year of Democracy as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of Government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 515

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 515, a resolution condemning attacks by Iranian military proxies on the armed forces of the United States in Iraq and Syria and emphasizing the urgency of responding to and deterring such attacks.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 3568. A bill to amend chapter 3081 of title 54, United States Code, to enhance the protection and preservation of America's battlefields; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, today I am introducing bipartisan legislation to protect America's historic battlefields. Specifically, the bill would make updates to strengthen the American Battlefield Protection Program, ABPP, a program within the National Park Service, NPS, which promotes the preservation of significant historic battlefields and sites of armed conflict across the United States. The program has preserved more than 35,000 acres of historic land in 20 States.

I am pleased that Senator HYDE-SMITH of Mississippi is coleading this effort with me, along with Senators

WARNER, CORNYN, CARDIN, WICKER, VAN HOLLEN, and TILLIS.

Protection of America's battlefields is the preservation of our Nation's history. Once these grounds are lost, we will have forever lost the opportunity to tell their unique stories. When preserved and interpreted, these lands serve as outdoor classrooms to educate both current and future generation of Americans about some of the most pivotal moments in our Nation's history.

Key to the success of ABPP has been its one-to-one matching grants formula, which encourages State, local, and nonprofit investment in the preservation of Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War battlefields. Preserved battlefields are economic drivers for communities, bringing in tourism dollars that are extremely important to the economies of these communities. Over the past two decades, the sense of urgency to preserve these sites has only grown as some of the most historically significant battlefields in the Nation remain unprotected.

Recognizing the success of the ABPP and the continued need for preserved battlefields to serve as places where visitors can better understand the battles and their consequences, this legislation proposes to make necessary updates that will strengthen the program for years to come. These modifications will help to ensure that these hallowed grounds are preserved forever.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 518—EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF GUATEMALA AND URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA TO PERMIT A PEACEFUL TRANSFER OF POWER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT BERNARDO AREVALO

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BUTLER, and Mr. WELCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 518

Whereas the United States and Guatemala have shared strong bilateral relations on issues of mutual interest for decades, including—

- (1) addressing the root causes of irregular migration;
- (2) a shared commitment to addressing key development challenges, such as poverty, child hunger and illiteracy, citizen security, and more transparent and accountable governance; and
- (3) supporting Taiwan and Ukraine's independence from Russia;

Whereas general elections were held in Guatemala on June 25, 2023, resulting in a runoff election between the 2 presidential candidates receiving the most votes, Congressman Bernardo Arévalo of the Movimiento Semilla party and Sandra Torres, a former first lady representing the Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (UNE) party;

Whereas the runoff election, held on August 20, 2023, resulted in the people of Guate-

mala electing Congressman Arévalo as President with more than 60 percent of the popular vote;

Whereas the election observation teams from the European Union and the Organization of American States, which were present at the invitation of the Government of Guatemala, reported that both rounds of the election were run professionally and efficiently and concluded that there was no basis for claims of fraud;

Whereas Guatemala's Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) certified that the presidential elections upheld national, regional and international standards for a democratic election;

Whereas immediately following the election of President-elect Arévalo on August 20, 2023, Guatemala's Public Ministry, led by Attorney General María Consuelo Porras Argueta, who has been designated for visa restrictions by the United States Government for significant corrupt and undemocratic activities, initiated a series of efforts to undermine President-elect Arévalo's inauguration, which is scheduled to take place on January 14, 2024, including—

- (1) a raid on the facilities of the TSE Citizen Registry and the Operations Center of the Electoral Process (COPE) on September 12, 2023, during which Public Ministry officials opened ballot boxes in violation of Guatemala's Electoral and Political Party Law;
- (2) a formal request on September 27, 2023, by the Public Ministry to the Supreme Court (CSJ) to remove the immunity of the 5 magistrates of the TSE;

(3) an order from the Public Ministry on November 15, 2023, which instructs the TSE to surrender registration documents for the Movimiento Semilla party and President-elect Arévalo, immediately followed by a press conference on November 16, 2023, at which the Public Ministry announced that it intended to seek the removal of immunity against President-elect Arévalo, Vice President-elect Herrera, and Congressman Samuel Perez, who is also a member of the Movimiento Semilla party; and

(4) a decision by the Public Ministry on December 8, 2023 to issue arrest warrants against two members of the TSE and a simultaneous announcement that the 2023 presidential elections should be annulled;

Whereas the November 30 vote of Guatemala's current governing coalition in Congress to remove the immunity of four TSE magistrates demonstrates that the Public Ministry has largely been supported by the political establishment in Guatemala;

Whereas the actions of the Public Ministry follow a trend in which the Public Ministry has intimidated, threatened, forced into exile, and in some cases imprisoned dozens of judges, prosecutors, civil society actors, and independent journalists who have worked to root out corruption in Guatemala, including anti-corruption prosecutor Virginia Laparra and journalist José Rubén Zamora, who were sentenced, respectively, to four and six years;

Whereas, since October 1, 2023, Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala, who comprise nearly 42 percent of the population of Guatemala, have led protests against the Public Ministry's actions, which demonstrates citizen organizing in support of a peaceful transfer of power;

Whereas the Organization of American States, the European Union, the United Nations, the Department of State, and the governments of many European and Latin American countries have released public statements condemning the Public Ministry's efforts to annul the 2023 presidential elections and prevent President-elect Arévalo from assuming office on January 14, 2024; and

Whereas the Constitutional Court of Guatemala ruled, on December 14, 2023, that Guatemala's Congress must take steps to ensure that every elected official in the 2023 electoral process, including President-elect Bernardo Arévalo, must be allowed to take office on January 14, 2024: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) applauds the will of the Guatemalan people to participate in a free and fair presidential election on August 20, 2023, as certified by the European Union and Organization of American States electoral observation missions;

(2) reaffirms the interest of the United States to maintain mutually beneficial relations with the people of Guatemala and their national government, based on shared interests of security, prosperity, and democratic values;

(3) reaffirms that the bilateral relationship between the United States and Guatemala is strengthened through shared policies, such as—

(A) efforts to prevent irregular migration;

(B) good governance, improved citizen security, and poverty reduction; and

(C) support for Taiwan, and for Ukraine's independence from Russia;

(4) looks forward to working with the incoming Arévalo government to build a safer, democratic, and more prosperous region;

(5) expresses deep concerns for the undemocratic actions of Guatemala's Attorney General and Public Ministry, in coordination with the current governing coalition, to maintain power by undermining free, fair, and democratic elections, the rule of law, and basic democratic principles;

(6) urges the Government of Guatemala—

(A) to immediately repudiate the attacks of the Attorney General and the Public Ministry on President-elect Arévalo and members of his political coalition;

(B) to commute the sentences of José Rubén Zamora and Virginia Laparra and end intimidation and threats against all other actors working to reduce corruption in Guatemala; and

(C) to prioritize and work actively to ensure for a peaceful transfer of power and inauguration of President-elect Arévalo on January 14, 2024; and

(7) calls on the Department of State, the Department of the Treasury, and the United States Agency for International Development to prepare for the possibility that a peaceful transition of power does not occur on January 14, 2023, including by—

(A) preparing to reassess all elements of United States foreign assistance and bilateral cooperation with the Government of Guatemala;

(B) conducting an evaluation of all diplomatic and economic tools, including sanctions, that can be used to hold accountable Guatemalan public officials, private sector actors, and others who have planned, supported, or undertaken efforts to prevent the peaceful transition of power in Guatemala; and

(C) working with the Organization of American States, the European Union, and the United Nations to reevaluate Guatemala's standing in institutions that require their members to adhere to basic democratic principles.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I have three requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 11; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the McEntarfer nomination; further, that the cloture motion with respect to the nomination ripen at 11:45 a.m. and that, if cloture is invoked, all time be considered expired at 1:45 p.m.; and finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:21 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

ANN MARIE MCLIFF ALLEN, OF UTAH, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH, VICE DAVID NUFFER, RETIRED.
SUSAN M. BAZIS, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA, VICE JOHN M. GERRARD, RETIRED.
ERNEST GONZALEZ, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE FRANK MONTALVO, RETIRED.

ROBIN MICHELLE MERIWEATHER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE PATRICIA E. CAMPBELL-SMITH, RETIRED.

KELLY HARRISON RANKIN, OF WYOMING, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING, VICE NANCY D. FREUDENHALT, RETIRED.

LEON SCHYDLLOWER, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, VICE PHILIP R. MARTINEZ, DECEASED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. THOMAS M. CARDEN, JR.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. MELVIN G. CARTER
BRIG. GEN. PHILLIP N. FRIETZE
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT C. FULFORD
BRIG. GEN. PETER D. HUNTLEY
BRIG. GEN. JASON L. MORRIS
BRIG. GEN. JULIE L. NETHERCOT
BRIG. GEN. RYAN S. RIDEOUT
BRIG. GEN. GEORGE B. ROWELL IV
BRIG. GEN. DANIEL L. SHIPLEY
BRIG. GEN. JAMES B. WELLONS

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. KEVIN J. BROWN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. TIMOTHY A. BROWN
CAPT. MICHAEL YORK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. JORGE R. CUADROS

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MISSION SUPPORT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 305:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. THOMAS G. ALLAN, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER, ATLANTIC AREA, IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 305:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. NATHAN A. MOORE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

KENNETH J. SCHNEIDER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JEFFREY A. DOVAN
HARVEY P. LACANILAO
HUGO J. VARGAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

BRYAN M. BAKER
WILLIAM T. CARRIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ANTONIO C. EWINGS

LUCAS A. SPENCER
ADAM W. SPIARS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ROBERT W. BROOKS III
CHRISTOPHER T. PERKINS
RAMON R. RAMIREZ, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DONALD E. CHARBONEAU
RICHARD R. OLSEN
JEFFREY D. PLANTERN
JEFFREY A. TRANBERG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

AARON MORA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

GLEN R. POND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RAFAEL B. MARTINEZ
JARED A. MASON
ISAAC K. TIBAYAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

LUIS E. COLON
ZACHARY D. CURRAN
WILLIAM A. FRIEND
ANTHONY L. GALLUZZI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JASON T. CONNOLLY
DANIEL J. KASSEBAUM
RICKY L. MANLEY
SEAN M. O'BRIEN
COLE A. SARDINTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

DUSTIN M. BAILEY
CARLEIGH J. COWART
JONATHAN D. EATON
CANDACE C. GAMEZ
ANTHONY I. GARCIA
AMIR H. GOLSHANI
EDWIN L. KIM
RYAN M. KRALICEK
MATTHEW B. LANGLOIS
JAVIER PEREZ
JAMIE L. SCOTT
XAVIER TEN

To be major

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

MATTHEW D. DALEO
ISAAC D. JEWSON
MICHAEL J. LANDERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JASON R. BEKEN
NORMAN P. BUNCH
REYNALDO E. DESENGANIO, JR.
MARK A. GUTIERREZ, JR.
JOSHUA T. RAY
ROBERT A. RIVAS
CHARLES L. TRIMBLE
JOSHUA B. WHITEHEAD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

BERNARD J. COYNE, JR.
DAVID B. SOUTHERLAND
NATHAN M. STUHR
AHBLEZA THEOBALD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

GREGORY S. CANEVARI
ANTONIO G. MARRERO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RICHARD L. RAINES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JAMES M. ROD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MATTHEW T. MIGLIORI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DANIEL E. FUSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

GLENN A. STALEY
ALFREDO TOPETE
COREY R. WAINSCOTT

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

JOHN O. WILSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

MARK A. WESS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

SCOTT H. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

SONNY D. ROWLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

CLAUDIA L. BATTLE

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate January 10, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

S. KATO CREWS, OF COLORADO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DANNIE NEEDHAM

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Dannie Needham, Staff Sergeant, United States Air Force, of North Richland Hills, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Needham enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1966, serving as a fuel specialist, with service in Vietnam. During his time in Vietnam, the airbase where he was stationed was attacked by North Vietnamese forces as a part of the Tet Offensive. While he was refueling a C-130 aircraft, an enemy mortar round hit the aircraft destroying it and causing secondary explosions across the airfield. With the fuel truck still near the aircraft, he raced to move the truck and then administered aid to another soldier who had been engulfed in fire retardant. His actions during the Tet Offensive earned him the Airman of the Year Award for the U.S. Pacific Air Forces. His decorations include the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Needham demonstrated in the U.S. Air Force continues with his service to his community. He actively volunteers with the North Richland Hills Police Department and the Knights of Columbus. He is also a member of the Men's Club of the Good Shepard Catholic Church as well as a volunteer of the church. Mr. Needham's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

ABIGAIL DAUS

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Abigail Daus for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Abigail is a student at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and has achieved great things there and throughout her life, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Abigail—who strive to make the most of their education—develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Abigail's hard work, determination, and perse-

verance and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Abigail Daus on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HIGHLIGHTING WEST RANCH HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND'S ACHIEVEMENT

HON. MIKE GARCIA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the West Ranch Marching Band for their outstanding achievement in winning first place in Division 4A at the SoCal Marching Band Championship. Led by first-year band director Rod Schueller, the West Ranch Marching Band won every category leading up to their gold medal.

This significant accomplishment reflects the talent, hard work, and dedication of the students, staff, and parents involved in the West Ranch High School music program. Their performance was a true display of artistry, skill, and precision.

Four other high schools from the Santa Clarita Valley competed in the championships. Valencia and Canyon High Schools took second and eighth place respectively in Division 2A, while Saugus High School and Golden Valley took fifth and eighth place respectively in Division 3A. Each marching band has made their school and community proud.

I encourage all members of Congress to join me in congratulating the West Ranch High School Marching Band on their impressive achievement. Their commitment to excellence in their craft should serve as an inspiration to all of us. I wish them continued success in all of their future endeavors.

Once again, I extend a warm congratulations to the West Ranch High School Marching Band on this well-deserved honor.

RECOGNIZING DARWIN BYBEE

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Darwin Bybee, Master Sergeant, United States Air Force, of Coppell, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Bybee enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1958, serving as an intelligence specialist with

service at the National Security Agency, an assignment as a consultant to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's Strategic Evaluation Task Force, and in West Berlin during the height of the Cold War. His decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal with one Silver Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Force Longevity Service Award with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the National Defense Service Medal, and Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, the Army Good Conduct Medal, and the Army of Occupation Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Bybee demonstrated in the U.S. Air Force continues with his service to his community. Over the past 15 years, he has served as a State Veterans Advocate at the VA Waco Regional Office and the American Legion Department of Texas. With the American Legion, he served in numerous positions of leadership including mentorship to the youth as Chairman of the Boys State Program. He also served as a precinct chair, a poll watcher, and in multiple leadership positions with the Heart of Texas Stamp Club. He was a volunteer of the AARP Tax-Aide Program where he assisted senior citizens with their taxes across the DFW Metroplex. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Coppell Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Mr. Bybee's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF COACH BILL HILL

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate Coach Bill Hill on the celebration of his 80th birthday and recognize him for his decades of dedication to the many students of Gwinn.

Bill has served as a coach, instructor, and mentor for generations of students and athletes. Before settling in Gwinn, Michigan, Coach Hill spent 24 years in selfless service to the United States Air Force, retiring as a Senior Master Sergeant. Coach Hill served at many duty stations, including the Vietnam Campaign, where he earned a Bronze Star Medal; Tripoli; Libya; Japan; and KI Sawyer Air Force Base in Michigan. When KI Sawyer AFB was decommissioned in 1995, Coach Hill decided to stay in the area and continue giving back to the Gwinn community in new ways.

Mr. Hill soon began coaching for the Gwinn Middle/High School girls basketball program. The program was utilized by Bill to impart wisdom and character-building principles to his students beyond the basketball court. Upon

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

his retirement in 2020, due to the countless lives he positively changed, a Facebook group with over 200 members and hundreds of messages was made as a dedication to this exemplary coach. Bill has been dubbed a coach, role model, mentor, teacher, inspiration, and friend to many.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to celebrate the 80th birthday of Coach Bill Hill. An inspiration to the community. I wish Coach Hill all the best in his future endeavors.

EMILLEO BALDIZAN-MORALEZ

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Emilleo Baldizan-Moralez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Emilleo has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Emilleo, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Emilleo's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Emilleo Baldizan-Moralez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING PATRICK RYAN

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Patrick Ryan, Major, United States Army, of Southlake, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Ryan was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army in 1972, serving as a Military Police officer. His decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korea Service Medal, and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Ryan demonstrated in the U.S. Army continues with his service to his community. He currently serves as the Fundraising Chair for the St. Peter Lutheran Church in Roanoke.

Mr. Ryan's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES
FOX MILLER

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I recognize the remarkable life of James Fox Miller.

James (or Jim/Jimmy to his friends and family) was born on June 13, 1939, in East Orange, New Jersey. He met the love of his life, his wife of 63 years, Barbara, at the University of Michigan in 1958, and he earned his J.D. from Northwestern University in 1965.

He was a man who embodied character and integrity. As a young lawyer freshly arrived in Florida, James quit his job in the first week rather than sign an affidavit he did not know to be true. He knew no one in his new home state, had no meaningful experience, and no clients, so he took whatever work he could get to support his young and growing family. From these spare beginnings, Jim eventually came to be recognized by his peers and the general public as one of the nation's top family law attorneys.

Amongst his many accomplishments, James served on the Board of Governors and then as President of the Florida Bar from 1990 to 1991.

In addition to being an exceptional trial lawyer, Jim was a prolific teacher and lecturer at seminars and law schools across the United States. He was passionate about mentorship and was instrumental in guiding and educating scores of young lawyers, helping to shape the next generation of legal practice.

James Fox Miller loved the law, his legal colleagues, and achieving justice for his clients. His practice was not solely about family law, but also about strengthening families, which was something he focused on with his own beloved wife, children, and grandchildren. The only thing stronger than his mind was his heart and his code of ethics.

My heart is with his wife Barbara, three children, and seven grandchildren, but his loss will be felt by our entire community. His life burned brightly, and it is reflected by all those he touched during it.

RECOGNIZING CHIEF WARRANT
OFFICER FOUR WILLIAMS (WILL)
ANAAB

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Chief Warrant Officer Four, Williams "Will" Anaab who served as a Department of Defense Fellow in my office throughout 2023. Last month, he concluded his work with my office, and I would like to thank him for his dedication and service to the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District. In fact, the impact of his work extended far beyond the geographical confines of my district and Georgia.

He was my lead staffer in organizing the Congressional Military Family Caucus 2023 Summit. This annual, bipartisan event, which I

co-host with my caucus co-chair, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington and which alternates between Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington State and Fort Moore in Georgia. Will led the charge to organize last year's event which took place in March at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center. Bringing together federal department and agency service providers as well as stakeholder groups like Blue Star Families, he created a forum through which we could learn from the insight and experiences of our servicemembers and their families as well as discuss ways in which Congress and the Federal Government may improve their quality of life.

He also became intimately familiar with the nuances and needs of Georgia's military family and veteran communities. Working with my constituent services staff in district, he diligently and compassionately strove to ensure that our federal departments and agencies were doing their utmost to provide the services and benefits servicemembers have earned in defense of our country.

Georgia is home to more than a dozen military bases and installations. They are a vibrant part of our great state's fabric and crucial to our national security. My district, alone, is home to three of these installations—Fort Moore outside of Columbus, Robins Air Force Base outside of Warner Robins, and Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany. Will was a stalwart advocate for them and was true to the spirit of my office, working in a bicameral, bipartisan fashion to ensure Congress supported these military installations, the programs they house, and the troops as well as civilians who keep them operational and at the ready.

Will also helped facilitate a community forum that I hosted for municipal leaders and airport administrators in Thomas County and the surrounding areas to discuss with the Department of Defense concerns about the effects of operations at Moody Air Force Base on local air travel. His work helped bring people to the table, ensure greater understanding and appreciation for the challenges each side faces, and created better lines of communication that I will continue to foster in the years ahead.

The Army Corps of Engineers plays a vital role in Middle and Southwest Georgia and the waterways under its care play a huge role in the well-being of the counties and communities—from Bainbridge to Albany and all of the communities along the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Flint Rivers. Will quickly immersed himself into the issues of local concern that involved the Army Corps of Engineers, and his work was instrumental in helping me bridge the divide between residents, local community leaders, and the Army Corps of Engineers to find solutions to the challenges they face.

While my office has hosted many Department of Defense Fellows over the years, this is the first time that the program has included Warrant Officer participants, and I can say with absolute certainty that the program is better for this. My colleagues and I can only benefit from adding the unique perspective that our Warrant Officers have and bringing their experience to the work we do in Congress.

Will demonstrated an extraordinary ability to grasp complex issues quickly. His calm and poised demeanor allowed him to thrive in the fast-paced political environment of our nation's

capital. He became known for his charm and he cultivated a beloved reputation as a smooth operator.

His contributions to our national security are immeasurable, and I am immensely proud to have had him on my team. Undoubtedly, his future endeavors will continue to serve our great Nation with distinction.

It is with great pride that, today, I was able to join Will for his promotion ceremony to Chief Warrant Officer Four. I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to him as he ascends to this new rank and thank him for his continued service to our country.

I, and my whole staff, appreciate the positive and uplifting spirit Will Anaab brought to the office. I wish him all the best in his next endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JASON RANKIN

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Jason Rankin, Sergeant First Class, United States Army, of Dallas, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Rankin enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1993, serving as a medical specialist, with service in Iraq and Bosnia. His decorations include the Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medal (9th Award), the Iraq Campaign Medal with three Campaign Stars, the Army Good Conduct Medal (6th Award), the National Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the Overseas Service Ribbon (5th Award), the NATO Medal, as well as the Combat Action Badge and the Expert Field Medical Badge.

The selflessness Mr. Rankin demonstrated in the U.S. Army continues with his service to his community. He spends time as a vocational rehabilitation counselor helping those in the community with disabilities get school, training, prosthetics, hearing aids, vehicle modifications, and job placement to get them back to work.

Mr. Rankin's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

EMILY CLARK

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Emily Clark for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Emily has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along

the way. Students like Emily, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Emily's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Emily Clark on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING LINA DAKHEEL

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today alongside my fellow U.K. Caucus Co-Chairs, Mr. DEREK KILMER of Washington, Mr. JOE WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. DAVID ROUZER of North Carolina, to recognize the invaluable service of Lina Dakheel, who has served as the Senior Congressional Advisor at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. for the past five years. Throughout her tenure, Lina has personified the Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom with her tireless work, diligent commitment, and dedication to public service.

As one of our key liaisons with the United Kingdom, Lina has facilitated bipartisan engagement with Congressional members and all levels of the British Government, from Prime Ministers to Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, and members of the Royal Family. Through two Presidential Administrations and three Prime Ministers, Lina has led the British Embassy's Congressional operations, ensuring we in the United States remain well connected with our allies across the Atlantic. Lina has been steadfast in ensuring the highest diplomatic channels between our two countries remain open and well-used for the range of issues covered by the U.S.-UK relationship.

The Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom remains special thanks to the work of public servants like Lina Dakheel. We in Congress will miss her work at the Embassy and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING PHILLIP DOLL

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Phillip Doll, Petty Officer First Class, United States Navy, of Euless, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Doll enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1983, serving aboard the USS *Mississippi*, a nuclear-powered guided missile cruiser as well as a Navy recruiter. His decorations include

the Good Conduct Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal, the Navy Gold Wreath Award with 4 Silver Stars, the National Defense Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, the Navy Battle "E" Award, the Navy Recruiting Service Ribbon, and the Navy Achievement Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Doll demonstrated in the U.S. Navy continues with his service to his community. He currently serves as a member of the Park Hollow Homeowner's Association Board (HOA), where he has spent countless hours maintaining the common areas of the Homeowner's Association. He has fixed motorcycles, generators, and lawnmowers for friends and neighbors. He is an advocate for legal gun ownership and has helped neighbors learn firearms safety. Mr. Doll is always ready to lend a hand to the neighbors in his HOA.

Mr. Doll's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Navy and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HONORING COLONEL CHRISTOPHER DRUM

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank and congratulate Colonel Christopher Drum for thirty years of dedicated, exceptional service to our country.

Throughout the last thirty years, Colonel Drum has distinguished himself as a leader. His career with the U.S. Army began in June 1994, and he has proven to be an asset throughout that time. Since June 2014, Colonel Drum has held various positions within the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) and Military Health System (MHS). He has led many teams and provided direct support to senior Army and Department of Defense (DoD) medical leaders to advance Army Medicine and Military Health System (MHS) goals. Most recently, he has served as MEDCOM's Medical Command Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Facilities in Falls Church, Virginia.

In 2013, then-Lieutenant Colonel Drum was competitively selected to the Army Surgeon General (TSG)/MEDCOM Commanding General's Commander's Initiative Group (CIG) as a Special Assistant to the Army Surgeon General. While in this role, he helped plan and execute TSG's international trip to the Pacific Command area of responsibility. This trip was key to strengthening MEDCOM's partnerships; ensuring the visit to Hawaii, Japan, and Thailand aligned with the Army's "Pivot to the Pacific;" and extending Army Medicine's influence with key international partners.

Soon after, Lieutenant Colonel Drum was asked to become the U.S. Army Health Facility Planning Agency's Deputy Commander. While in this role, he led a multi-disciplinary team in the execution of the largest DoD healthcare capital investment program since World War II. Throughout the capital investment process, he provided support by preparing and briefing senior Army Medicine leaders for key Congressional, DoD, and Army-level engagements supporting Army's \$6.3 billion capital investment program.

In 2016, he was promoted to Colonel and assigned as the DHA Facilities Division Chief

of Capital Strategy Management Branch. There, he assumed the lead for the development and execution of multiple MHS capital investment planning processes supporting a \$33 billion global facility portfolio of 49 hospitals and 560 medical and dental clinics. He successfully steered his team and updated several key processes to aid in the planning and execution of capital investments.

Colonel Drum's leadership skills proved essential once more in April 2018, when he was selected to lead the DHA FY17 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) transition. He was then picked to simultaneously serve as the Chief of the DHA Director's Action Group (DAG). As DAG Chief, Colonel Drum and his multi-disciplinary team oversaw, developed, and managed the DHA Director's executive communications, strategic engagements, and special initiatives, as well as maintained archival and analytics capabilities for the DHA Front Office in support of DHA's strategy goals. During this period, the DHA Director's number of strategic engagements increased by nearly 200 percent. A lifelong learner, he was concurrently enrolled in the U.S. Army War College while in this role. There, he expanded his professional military and executive leadership skills and earned a master's in strategic studies.

In his latest role as Medical Command Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Facilities, Colonel Drum's leadership has been essential. In this role, he focused on positive organizational change and facilitated the transformation of MEDCOM through the reevaluation of roles, responsibilities, and essential services focused on Army Readiness.

Colonel Drum's service on behalf of our nation, his camaraderie, and his leadership have proven to be assets across the span of his career. His expertise and experience have been invaluable to the many who benefit from the services rendered through Army Medicine and the Military Health System, and his dedication to service has served as a guide for the various teams he has led throughout his career.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating and thanking Colonel Christopher Drum for his service on behalf of our country, his leadership, and his dedication to excellence as part of the U.S. Army. I wish him the best as he retires to spend time with friends and loved ones.

GABRIEL BASTIDAS

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gabriel Bastidas for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Gabriel has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Gabriel, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Gabriel's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada West High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Gabriel Bastidas on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

ECHOING CONCERN OF MASS RESETTLEMENT OF PALESTINIANS

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge the Biden administration to seek an unequivocal statement of commitment by the Israeli government against mass resettlement of civilians from Gaza.

I echo the concerns of JStreet: any form of mass permanent transfer of families in Gaza from their homeland constitutes an undeniable violation of international human rights law. For too long, Palestinian families have been forced from their homes and endured violence perpetrated by many settlers and the Israeli military. To date, Israeli military operations have displaced more than 85 percent of Gaza residents from their homes, and the United Nations estimates that more than a quarter of Gaza residents will have no home to return to.

The United States has a duty to insist on a public, unequivocal commitment by Prime Minister Netanyahu to stop the displacement of Palestinians living in Gaza and to accept the right of millions of Palestinians to live in peace and safety within Palestinian territory.

As a major military assistance ally, the United States must hold the Israeli government accountable to this and increase pressure to facilitate humanitarian aid to the region. An immediate, comprehensive commitment to ensuring there is no mass displacement of civilians from Gaza—half of whom are children—is required for there to be any hope for peace today or for future generations of Palestinians and Israelis.

RECOGNIZING FREDERICK TIEDE

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the Citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Frederick Tiede, Sergeant, United States Army, of Fort Worth, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Tiede enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1986, serving as both an infantryman as well as a small arms repairer, with deployments to both Korea and Afghanistan. His decorations include the Army Achievement Medal (7th Award), Meritorious Unit Commendation, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with two Campaign Stars, Global War on Terror Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, and NATO Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Tiede demonstrated in the U.S. Army continues with his service to his community. He currently serves in the Texas State Guard supporting the state's efforts in responding to crises and diligently works to serve as a counselor and mentor to his troops, especially being available any hour of the day or night to them.

Mr. Tiede's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HONORING INDIANAPOLIS RADIO LEGEND JERRY WADE

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Indianapolis radio legend Jerry Wade. Known by many loyal radio listeners as the "Loverman," he was one of the most recognizable voices in Indianapolis media. Jerry served as host of "The Quiet Storm with The Loverman Jerry Wade" for more than 30 years on Indianapolis local radio station 106.7 WTLC. Wade passed away at 61 in Indianapolis on Monday, January 8, 2023.

Jerry Wade lifted spirits on the airwaves and in the community. He was an Indianapolis resident through and through and was active in the community appearing in parades, radio station events, and DJ for many events across the city. Jerry was also the Executive Director of "Quality of Life," an Adult Day Center on the east side of Indianapolis, and the owner of several salons known as "Hot Cuts" and "Jerry Wade Live" his mobile DJ service. He lived up to the title of Loverman as he offered date coach services and was able to connect and reconnect countless relationships.

Wade was honored by several local organizations for his work over the years. These accolades included recognition from The Mozell Sanders, We Feed the Hungry program Radio Awards, and the Indiana Black Expo Radio Broadcast Media Awards.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life of Indianapolis radio legend Jerry Wade.

JAHN ARIAS

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jahn Arias for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jahn has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Jahn, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jahn's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jahn Arias on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

COMMEMORATING THE SERVICE
OF SERGEANT MARK WILBUR

HON. MIKE GARCIA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the distinguished career of Sergeant Mark Wilbur, Serial No. 30646, who is retiring from the Los Angeles Police Department after 30 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Los Angeles. Sergeant Wilbur has made significant contributions to the safety and well-being of our community, and his exemplary service is deserving of our highest recognition and gratitude.

Sergeant Wilbur was appointed to the Department on November 29, 1993. He has served in various capacities, including West Valley Patrol, Van Nuys Patrol, Rampart Patrol, Foothill Patrol, and Mission Gang Unit, among others. His leadership and expertise have been essential in maintaining law and order. He has received significant promotions throughout his career, as well as 342 minor commendations from the citizens and Department for his exemplary service. Sergeant Wilbur has also received three major commendations, including the Purple Heart, which he was awarded after being shot by a criminal gang member in 2006. His dedication, courage, and professionalism have set a high standard for all law enforcement offices, and his retirement marks the end of an illustrious career.

I ask that all members of Congress join me in expressing our sincere appreciation to Sergeant Mark Wilbur for his three decades of service to the Los Angeles Police Department and the people of Los Angeles.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH CAMPBELL

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Joseph Campbell, Lieutenant Colonel, United States Army, of Colleyville, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Campbell was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army in 1986, serving as an officer with both cavalry and infantry units with deployments to Bosnia, Albania, and Iraq. He is a graduate of U.S. Army Airborne, Air Assault, Ranger, Pathfinder, and Northern Warfare schools. His decorations include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with three bronze oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with four bronze oak leaf clusters, the Army Meritorious Unit Award, the Army Achievement Medal with one silver and one bronze oak leaf cluster, and the NATO Medal. Additionally, he is a five-time recipient of the Gold German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency.

After his service in the U.S. Army, Mr. Campbell continues to devote himself to bettering our community. He currently serves as Vice-Commander of the Department of Texas for the American Legion. He also served as Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 10454 and is a member of the International Growth Committee. He was a recipient of the President's Lifetime Achievement Award and was selected as the Grand Marshal of the 2023 Tarrant County Veterans Day Parade.

Mr. Campbell's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSE
LUIS LOPEZ

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of José Luis López.

José was born on August 25, 1940, in Michoacan, Mexico, and moved to Houston in 1965. After working as a butcher in some of the finest hotels, he went into business for himself on Patton Street in 1977, opening the institution that would define the next 46 years of his life. He called it Gerardo's Drive-In—named after his newborn son.

José was an award-winning cook, whose tacos de barbacoa were celebrated as the "best barbacoa in Houston," according to the Houston Chronicle. Eater said it was one of the "20 Most Iconic Dishes in Houston" and Texas Monthly put it in the "top ten tacos" in the whole state, awarding a perfect score in their quest to find the "120 Tacos to Eat Before You Die." When Speaker PELOSI visited our district in 2018, there was no question on where to eat.

José's journey began with a simple dream of opening a taqueria, yet he built a place for family, a space of community, and a taste of home.

In a way, it is poetic that José will be laid to rest on a Wednesday. You see, even in his golden years, Thursday was always a working day, preparing the cabezas for the weekend tradition that brought the Northside so much joy. The sign out front said the rest:

"Gerardo's, Barbacoa, Vie-Sáb-Dom." (Gerardo's, Barbacoa, Fri-Sat-Sun.)

José lived the American dream, and he lived it to the fullest. He joins his late wife, María de Jesús López, as they look down at all they built. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of José Luis López.

JOSEPH MARTINEZ

HON. BRITANNY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Martinez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Joseph has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Joseph, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Joseph's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Joseph Martinez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JENNIFER WEXTON

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. WEXTON. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not able to be present to vote on January 10, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 2, and NAY on Roll Call No. 3.

RECOGNIZING JASON STEINBECK

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Jason Steinbeck, Major, United States Army, of Euless, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Steinbeck was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army in 1992, serving as both a cavalry officer and a tactical intelligence officer, deploying as part of U.S. peacekeeping efforts in support of the United Nations Mission in Haiti in 1995. His decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the United Nations Medal.

The selflessness Mr. Steinbeck demonstrated in the U.S. Army continues with his service to his community. He currently serves as a member of the Park Hollow Homeowner's Association Board (HOA), volunteering countless hours to maintain the financial viability of the Homeowner's Association and ensure a safe neighborhood. Jason helps many neighbors with lawn maintenance and home maintenance. He works with the local governments including the City of Euless and Tarrant County to maintain the integrity of the HOA's common areas. He is also a contributor to North Texas Basset Hound Rescue and the Tunnel to Towers organization.

Mr. Steinbeck's service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAVERSE CITY LIBRARY WOODMERE BRANCH

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the Traverse City Library for 25 years of service to the Traverse City community.

Since 1999, the Main Library on Woodmere has hosted hundreds of positive initiatives, charity events, and educational opportunities for the community. Originally founded by the Ladies Library Association in 1869, the Main Library was housed in numerous locations before finding its current home. Along with the Main Library on Woodmere, the library system has grown to include the East Bay Branch Library, Kingsley Branch Library, and three member libraries: Fife Lake Public Library, Interlochen Public Library, and Peninsula Community Library. For 155 years, the city library has served as an integral space in the Traverse City community.

The Traverse Area District Library (TADL) was established in 1983, when voters ratified its establishment and approved an operational millage. It's thanks to the people of Traverse City who voted to establish TADL in the 1980s that Traverse City has its current main branch library building on Woodmere Avenue.

The library has spaces for all occasions—from reading on the spacious front porch or curling up with a novel by the cozy stone fireplace. Visitors can also utilize the vast multimedia space and learn from the library's local history collection. For the younger audiences, the library has a dedicated children's section and many educational events.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate the Woodmere Branch of TADL for an immensely successful 25 years of service. I wish the library and its staff all the best in their future endeavors.

LESLIE GUTIERREZ

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Leslie Gutierrez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Leslie has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Leslie, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Leslie's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Leslie Gutierrez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HIGHLIGHTING CHARLES HULL'S NATIONAL MEDAL OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

HON. MIKE GARCIA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles Hull, a constituent who truly embodies the American ideals of innovation and exploration. As an inventor and scientist, Mr. Hull has dedicated his life to the creation of technology that would be useful to his fellow creators.

Mr. Hull is no stranger to trailblazing. His greatest invention, the 3-D printer, came in 1983 and he co-founded the world's first 3-D printing company, 3-D Systems, just three years later. In 1987, 3-D Systems introduced the world to the stereolithographic apparatus machine, which produced more detailed products faster than ever before. The innovation didn't stop there, though, as Mr. Hull is also known as the godfather of the rapid prototyping movement. This movement focuses on utilizing technology, such as 3-D printers, to deliver one-of-a-kind pieces quickly so that inventors and scientists can focus their time on discovery. For these reasons, Charles Hull was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2014 and more recently recognized by President Biden with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation. This recognition is extraordinary and couldn't be more well-deserved.

I want to thank Mr. Hull for his persistence and dedication to his trade. Our community is better because of him, and I look forward to hearing of his next innovation.

RECOGNIZING KEVIN SELLERS

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the Twenty-Fourth District of Texas, the 2023 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Kevin Sellers, Colonel, United States Air Force, of Grapevine, Texas for the honorable service he performed while in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Mr. Sellers was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Air Force in 1995, serving as an acquisitions and material officer, with deployments to both Afghanistan and Iraq as part of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, respectively. His decorations include the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Meritorious Unit Award, the AF Outstanding Unit Award with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the National Defense Service Medal with one Service Star, the Iraq Campaign Medal with one Service Star, the Global War

On Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal, the Overseas Ribbon, the Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Longevity Service with six Oak Leaf Clusters, the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (Pistol), and the Air Force Training Ribbon.

The selflessness Mr. Sellers demonstrated in the U.S. Air Force continues with his service to his community. He currently serves as a Tarrant County Precinct Chair, the Service Officer for the Grapevine Rotary Club as well as a member of its Foundation Board, and the Commander of the Airport Cities Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 10454 in Grapevine.

Mr. Sellers' service is consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflects great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING THE BETHANY REPUBLICAN-CLIPPER ON 150 YEARS OF PUBLICATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the Bethany Republican-Clipper of Bethany, Missouri, on celebrating its 150th anniversary. The Republican-Clipper has carried on the tradition of delivering local and national news to the residents of Northwest Missouri for over a century.

The Republican-Clipper was born out of the consolidation of two local newspapers in Harrison County; the Bethany Republican, founded in 1873, and the Bethany Clipper, founded in 1905. The papers were purchased and merged by Erwin C. Conger in 1929. The Republican-Clipper is the legacy of a strong journalism history in Harrison County, which at one time had at least 10 news publications, and is considered the longest running business in Harrison County.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in congratulating the Bethany Republican-Clipper on 150 years of publication. This newspaper has been keeping the people of Harrison County, Northwest Missouri, and well beyond informed for over a century. I am proud to have such a dedicated publication in the Sixth Congressional District.

MARIANA MICHELLE DAVILA
ROJAS

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mariana Michelle Davila Rojas for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Mariana Michelle has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Mariana Michelle, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic

that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Mariana Michelle's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Oberon Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Mariana Michelle Davila Rojas on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

OUTSTANDING TEXAS DISTRICT 8
NATIVE, MICHAEL BISHOP

HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an outstanding District 8 citizen, native of Willis, Texas, and star for the Kansas State Wildcats, Mr. Michael Bishop. It is my privilege to stand before you and pay tribute to Mr. Bishop, as he has now become the fourth Kansas State player to enter the College Football Hall of Fame.

Mr. Bishop attended Willis High School, my alma mater, and shined on their football team. He then went to Blinn Junior College where his team won two NJCAA championships. After that, he continued his collegiate football career in the Big 12 as a Kansas State University Wildcat. Michael then went on to have a career in the NFL, the CFL, and the Arena Football League.

On December 5, 2023, Mr. Bishop was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame for his many accomplishments. He was widely regarded as the best all-around quarterback in Kansas State history, with an overall 22-3 record and a total of 34 school records, and fourteen Big 12 records. He threw for over 4,400 yards, ran for over 1,300 yards, and totaled 59 touchdowns (39 passing) during his two-year tenure in Manhattan, Kansas. He currently holds eight K-State records and was inducted into the Kansas State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2016.

Mr. Bishop is now the head football coach at Legacy School of Sport Sciences in the Houston area, as well as the CEO of 4th Quarter Fitness. He continues to be a regular volunteer for youth football, and basketball teams. He also participates in Toys for Tots, Habitat for Humanity, and numerous activities with the Boys and Girls Club. As a fellow Willis High School graduate, I am proud of Mr. Bishop in all that he has accomplished, and the wonderful citizen that he continues to be in his community.

CONGRATULATING THE ORDER OF
THE POLKA DOTS

HON. JERRY L. CARL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Order of the Polka Dots, the first ladies' organization to parade in Mobile, Alabama. Despite others' claims, the very first Mardi Gras was held in Mobile in 1703.

Since then, the city has been the center of celebration with parades and parties, drawing

approximately one million people each year. The Order of the Polka Dots was started by a group of 20 women in 1949 and has now grown to include 480 members. This year, Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson is naming February 1st, "Polka Dot Day," in their honor. Mardi Gras in Mobile is one of my favorite traditions. It is a time where families and friends gather for parades, colorful floats, and flying Moon Pies. Congratulations to the Order of the Polka Dots on their 75th year anniversary. I am proud to commemorate this special day in the history of their organization.

MAXIE ALEXANDER

HON. BRITANNY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Maxie Alexander for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Maxie has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Maxie, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Maxie's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Maxie Alexander on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING KENNETH HARDING
WALLS III LIFE AND SERVICE TO
HIS COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Superintendent Kenneth H. Walls III and to grieve his passing. A dedicated public servant, his devotion to his community, state, and Nation is worthy of remembrance and commendation.

Superintendent Walls was born in 1977 in Ypsilanti and graduated from Ypsilanti High School. He showed his spirit at an early age, delivering his first service at the age of three at the former Wells Temple Church of God in Ann Arbor, where his grandfather, Esque Wells, Sr., served as Pastor. He was licensed as a Minister at the age of seven, making history in Michigan as the youngest licensed Minister in the Prelate of Michigan Southwest Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

At the age of 21, Superintendent Walls was ordained as an Elder in the Church of God in Christ, later becoming an Assistant Pastor at the Greater Shiloh Church of God in Christ. While there, Superintendent Walls filled many roles for the church, including District Youth President, National Adjutant in the Church of God in Christ, and Chief Adjutant for the Great Lakes Second Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. He was finally blessed with a Pastorship in 2019 when he founded Dunamis Institutional Church of God in Christ in Ypsilanti.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating and honoring the life and service of Kenneth H. Walls III. A leader in his community and a friend to many, his presence will be greatly missed but not forgotten. His memory lives on in his mother, Shirley, and his family. We offer them prayers of solace in this difficult time, and thank them for sharing their son, brother, and uncle with us. He made our corner of Michigan a better and more welcoming place for all.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MR. JOE SOBOTA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Joe Sobota. Over the course of his career, Joe spent over 40 years in public service primarily advocating for the best interests of American small businesses. Joe worked under four different chairs of the House Small Business Committee from 1978 to 1998. While working on the committee, he gained a reputation for his consummate professionalism and exhaustive knowledge of Small Business Administration programs. Joe had a wide range of responsibilities, including SBA oversight and budget activities, acting as liaison between the agency's authorizing and appropriations chairs, and serving as the committee's expert on disaster assistance issues. As the top Democrat on the committee for over two decades, I know just how vital the work of staffers like Joe is and recognize his positive impact on American entrepreneurs during his time in the House.

After leaving Congress, Joe joined the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy in March 1998. At Advocacy, his primary responsibility was addressing the issues facing millions of veteran entrepreneurs nationwide. He has a great deal of reverence for veterans who continued to serve their communities by starting a small business, and it showed in his work. Much of Joe's tenure at Advocacy was dedicated to overseeing the implementation of the landmark Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999. His work to help achieve the goals of this vital legislation helped provide much needed counseling and training to millions of veteran small business owners across the country.

Colleagues in government will remember Joe as a dedicated public servant whose work on behalf of small businesses helped support the dreams of countless American entrepreneurs. His impact and commitment to small businesses will not be soon forgotten. My thoughts are with his family and all who were fortunate enough to know him. May he rest in peace.

CELEBRATING KOREAN AMERICAN
DAY

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Korean American Day, celebrated

annually on January 13th in recognition of the first group of Korean immigrants who arrived in the United States on that date in 1903.

In 2003, President George W. Bush became the first to proclaim January 13th as Korean American Day, which went on to be officially recognized by the United States Congress in 2005. North Texas is blessed to be home to a large and vibrant Korean American population. On this day, we also celebrate the history, achievements, and contributions of our Korean American community.

HONORING MAYOR REVEREND
TASSIE D. YORK

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Tassie York as she was sworn in on January 1, 2024 as the first African-American female mayor of Neptune Township, New Jersey.

A lifelong resident of Neptune, Mayor York has served on the township committee since 2020, most recently as Deputy Mayor. She has dedicated herself to the residents of Neptune, focusing on health care, housing, women's rights, employment, and equality; issues she intends to make a priority under her administration.

Throughout her life, Mayor York has exemplified a commitment to serving the community. She began her career at Head Start, and currently works as a Family Service Specialist for the State of New Jersey. In addition, she established and co-owns a local estate sale business, volunteers at the Jersey Shore Rescue Mission in neighboring Asbury Park, and tutors young students. Having received her Theology and Divinity degree, Mayor York also serves as an Associate Minister of United Fellowship Baptist Church. Her broad background and personal experiences bring a unique perspective to her leadership and support her efforts to bridge and advance the diverse population of Neptune.

Mayor York has distinguished herself as an exemplary public servant, and I am confident she will lead the Neptune Township committee effectively. She has established herself as an advocate for the community of Neptune and beyond, and her service is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT OF
LUKE PAUN

HON. JUAN CISCOMANI

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the outstanding achievement of Luke Paun, an exemplary young man from Boy Scout Troop 747 who recently achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.

Becoming an Eagle Scout is no small feat; it requires undergoing a rigorous and comprehensive process that often takes up to a year. Luke's journey towards this rank has not only demonstrated his personal growth but

also showcased strong characteristics of resilience, perseverance, and determination.

Luke's Eagle Scout project was aimed at further recognizing the sacrifices made by recipients of the Purple Heart. Luke did so by making improvements and additions to Tucson's Purple Heart Park. He installed 11 trail marker signs along the path, each containing a quote or information relating to the Armed Forces. The signs also serve as a visible marker for distance traveled throughout the park. In addition to placing the trail markers, Luke added in many plants and helped landscape the yard. He then went on to add new gravel to the entrance of the park.

Luke's dedication and hard work are commendable, and his commitment to Troop 747 and the community does not go unnoticed. We take pride in having this outstanding young individual in our district and encourage him to continue their exceptional work.

STEELTON-HIGHSPIRE HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY FOOTBALL PROGRAM

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to recognize the Steelton-Highspire High School Varsity Football Program on their 2023 State Championship. The Single A title win is Steel High's second consecutive state title, and their third in just four years.

The game took place at Cumberland Valley High School, where the Rollers faced off against Fort Cherry. Both teams were undefeated coming in, but Steel-High triumphed with a decisive 42-8 victory. Steel-High came out hot in the first half, racking up a 34-point lead and played vigorously throughout the entire game.

This truly special Steel-High 2023 team broke their single season scoring record with an impressive 722 points in just 16 games. They lived up to their name—the "Steamrollers" (or "Rollers")—as their closest game of the season was early with a 29-22 win; a testament to years of hard work and dedication. The State title win established the Rollers as the No. 17 winningest high school football program in the Country—and further solidifies them in Pennsylvania sports history as one of only two teams since 2016 to win consecutive state titles.

Steel-High came home to a well-earned parade and cheering fans from a loyal and supportive community. The conclusion of the 2023 season marks the end of a special era for Roller football—with defensive leader Andrew Erby, Jr. headed to Ohio University, and record-setting quarterback Alex Erby committed to the United States Naval Academy. Coach Andrew Erby credits the team's drive, courage, focus, dedication, and ability to overcome adversity as the determining factors in their strong performance and season.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to recognize the Steelton-Highspire High School Varsity Football Program on their 2023 State Championship win. I wish them Godspeed in both their individual and team adventures.

CELEBRATING DELRAY ORTHODOX SYNAGOGUE'S ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Delray Orthodox Synagogue's 20th anniversary at their location in Delray Beach, Florida.

Delray Orthodox Synagogue is a small, vibrant Modern Orthodox Synagogue serving the spiritual and social needs of their members and guests. Currently led by Rabbi Zevi Saunders, the synagogue was created in 2003 and has grown the community over the past 20 years. In addition to services, the synagogue provides educational opportunities, sisterhood events, informational speakers, and more to give back to the community.

I congratulate the synagogue on their anniversary and wish them many more years of success.

Mazel tov.

ZACHARY PAVOL

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Zachary Pavol for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Zachary has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Zachary, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Zachary's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Zachary Pavol on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING THE LIFE OF L.M.
"BUDDY" PREUSS III

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, On Friday, January 5, 2024, my district lost a pillar of our community. While we mourn the loss of L.M. "Buddy" Preuss III, we know his legacy will live on for years to come in Giddings, Texas, and beyond.

Born and raised in Giddings, Buddy was hired as the editor for the Giddings News at just 19 years old. He went on to own and operate the Giddings Times and News, providing a reliable news service to the citizens of his county for more than five decades.

Buddy's life is a true inspiration. A member of the Giddings chamber of commerce, he constantly sought ways to contribute to his community's welfare. Buddy was also a remarkable husband to the love of his life, Louis,

and father to his five children. And above all, Buddy was a man of sincere faith. He held on to hope and his love for the Lord, even during his battle with cancer. While he is missed, I find comfort in knowing he is rejoicing in the presence of God, finally pain free.

Buddy was so much more than a reporter, businessman, and community leader—he was a dear friend to many, including myself. My stops in Giddings certainly won't be the same without him. Rest in peace, Buddy.

HONORING THE LATE DR. JIMMY
BELL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Dr. Jimmy Bell.

Dr. Jimmy Bell was born on January 4, 1944, in Indianola, MS, and graduated from Gentry High School in 1963. He later began his professional career at Mississippi Valley State University and later transitioned to Jackson State University.

He created the National Coalition of Community Researchers, Inc. at Jackson State University and started the Jackson State University Center for the Study of Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Intervention (CSJDPI). In addition, he was a founding member of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ).

Dr. Bell was known as a professor, researcher, and music connoisseur. His love for music allowed him to educate and mentor many up-and-coming jazz and blues musicians and established his own local jazz venue, THE JAZZ GALLERY, which was housed in the basement of the now historic site of the Summers Hotel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the late Dr. Jimmy Bell for his dedication to education and love for music.

HONORING PFC JAMES FRANCIS
PLOG

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Marine Corps veteran James Francis Plog.

James Plog was born in Poughkeepsie, New York on October 10, 1926. He was raised in Schenectady where he attended school before enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps on June 6, 1944. James served in the Pacific Theater, participating in the occupation of Japan from September 22, 1945 to June 15, 1946. He remained at Camp Lejeune until his honorable discharge on August 19, 1946, at the rank of Private First Class. For his service, PFC Plog was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, the Honorable Discharge Button, and achieved the Rifle Marksman qualification.

Returning to civilian life, James pursued an education, a career, and a family. He married his wife, Dorothy "Dot" Plog on October 25,

1947. Together, the couple had three children, James, Keith, and Paula. After his discharge from the Marine Corps, James began work as a herdsman and farm manager for the Vanderbilts' farm in Williamstown, Massachusetts, before returning to Cobleskill, New York to study agriculture for his own pursuits. He chartered two dairy farms of his own, a Jersey farm in East Greenwich and a Holstein farm in Easton. James eventually sold his herds and began working for General Electric Silicones in Waterford until his retirement in September 1990.

When he was not working, James remained an avid hobbyist and a dedicated member of the veteran community. He enjoyed golfing, metal detecting, fishing, and learning new skills such as playing the piano and using computers. He was a lifelong member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Marine Corps League Detachment in Troy. He participated in local events and parades, including the Uncle Sam's Flag Day Parade. He loved spending time with his children, five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, and his German Shepherd Helga.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, I am honored to recognize PFC James Plog.

HONORING THE AUTHORS OF
SOUTH VALLEY: THE POETRY
AND ART OF THE SOUTH VALLEY
ON THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS
TO NEW MEXICO

HON. GABE VASQUEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cheyenne Anderson, Isabel James, Pheladi MacDonald and their collaborators on the successful publication of their book, *South Valley: The Poetry and Art of the South Valley*. Their book is an inspirational reminder of young people's power to make positive change in their communities. I am grateful for the work they have done for the South Valley.

Cheyenne and Isabel are young activists with a history of contributions to the South Valley community. They have been involved with amazing local organizations such as La Plazita Institute and Crossroads for Women that work to break cycles of incarceration and celebrate indigenous culture in New Mexico. Their record of service at a young age is admirable.

Through their activism, Cheyenne and Isabel saw a need to change the unfortunate stereotypes about the South Valley and to create a positive depiction of their community for other young people. They collaborated with young poet Pheladi MacDonald, South Valley artist Bill Mohr, youth in the community, and poets Jimmy Santiago Baca, Luis Rodriguez and Mary Oliver to create a beautiful collection of art and poetry celebrating the South Valley. Their book depicts the unique heritage and thriving culture of the South Valley and will be an inspiration for future young community activists.

Since their book's publication, Cheyenne, Isabel and Pheladi have worked tirelessly to increase access to it throughout the state and their work has been featured on various news programs in New Mexico.

On behalf of the great people of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, I applaud Cheyenne Anderson, Isabel James and Pheladi MacDonald on their commitment to serving their community and supporting their goal of increasing access to their book. Their work has improved the South Valley and inspired other youth to contribute positively to our region. I thank them for their service.

HONORING MS. SHERRI SAGER ON
HER YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Sherri Sager for her critical accomplishments as Senior Vice President and Chief Government Relations Officer at Stanford Medicine Children's Health and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. Throughout Ms. Sager's 29 years of service, she demonstrated a sincere commitment to advocating for children and families and worked tirelessly to improve America's healthcare system for all.

Ms. Sager first joined Stanford Medicine Children's Health and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital in 1994, as the Director of Government Relations. Throughout her tenure, Ms. Sager's vast knowledge of public policy and her indispensable leadership made her a critical advocate for Stanford Medicine Children's Health patients. She was pivotal in facilitating community partnerships and was committed to monitoring the impact that proposed laws and public policies could have on American patients.

Ms. Sager exemplifies the spirit of leadership and altruism in all areas of her life. She has served on numerous nonprofit and regional business association boards, including as Board Chair of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association, board member of the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, and member of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group Working Council.

Ms. Sager's advocacy for patients and their families and her commitment to community service clearly demonstrate that her work to improve the lives of others expands beyond her position with Stanford Medicine. Ms. Sager's devotion to service has undeniably improved the healthcare landscape in Northern California and beyond.

While her presence in the Stanford Medicine community will surely be missed, Ms. Sager's 29 years of service have left a lasting legacy and significantly enhanced the lives of countless patients, families, and healthcare professionals. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Ms. Sager for her service and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING SUPERINTENDENT
JAMES JOHNSON

HON. ZACHARY NUNN

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate a resident of my

district—James Johnson of Gravity, Iowa—who was recently appointed by Governor Kim Reynolds to serve as the new Superintendent of Banking in the Iowa Department of Insurance and Financial Services.

Having spent his career in the banking industry, Superintendent Johnson brings a trove of experience to the role. Prior to becoming Superintendent, Johnson served as the President and CEO of PCSB Bank, a community bank in Clarinda, Iowa. He also served on the Board of the Iowa Bankers Association. As a member of the House Committee on Financial Services, I look forward to working with James on our shared mission to create new and prosperous opportunities for businesses across Iowa with the support of Iowa banks.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Superintendent Johnson for his appointment and his commitment to serving the people of Iowa. I wish him nothing but the best as he begins this new chapter.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK ALFORD

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I missed yesterday's vote due to a snow storm in Kansas City, MO. Had I been present, I would have voted PRES on Roll Call No. 1.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ARVID H. 'GUS' GUSTAVSON

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Arvid H. 'Gus' Gustavson, an Army Veteran and resident of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, who passed away in December. Gus was a beloved husband, father, son, and brother, who proudly dedicated his life to public service both in the United States Army and at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Born in Somerville, MA, Gus married Shirley Ambrose and joined the United States Army. After two years of service, Gus and Shirley moved to New Hampshire and Gus began his decades long career at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. During this time, Gus received many accolades, reflecting his hardworking nature and dedication to the community. His fellow coworkers have all been impacted by the legacy that he left behind after retiring in 1985.

Gus's family and friends also remember him for his giving nature and ever-present love and support. He has touched many lives through his unforgettable sense of humor and positive mindset, both of which his family carries on today.

On behalf of the constituents of New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I share my condolences with the Gustavson family, including Gus's children, Stephen, Karen, and Paul, and his many grandchildren, nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends. I would once again like to extend my condolences to the Gustavson family and wish them all the very best in this time of grieving.

CONGRATULATING MR. BERNARD "TONY" THIEMAN ON THE WENTZVILLE, MO CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Tony Thieman on the Wentzville, MO Citizen of the Year Award.

Mr. Thieman has long been a staple of the Wentzville community. In addition to his involvement in multiple community organizations, Mr. Thieman has reinvested in downtown Wentzville by buying several old buildings, renovating them, and then leasing them out to local businesses. Tony also volunteers his time to neighbors by plowing their driveways and mowing their fields when in need.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Mr. Tony Thieman as the Wentzville, MO Citizen of the Year.

BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN T. REIM, JR. (USA) PROMOTION TO MAJOR GENERAL

HON. MIKIE SHERRILL

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the promotion of Brigadier General John T. Reim to the rank of Major General. Major General Reim has served as the Joint Program Executive Officer Armaments & Ammunition and the Commanding General, Picatinny Arsenal since June 2022. It is my privilege to honor a New Jersey native that has served and supported New Jersey's 11th Congressional District, the State of New Jersey, and our country. I look forward to his continued success and contributions to our nation.

Throughout his time as the Joint Program Executive Officer Armaments & Ammunition, now-Major General Reim has been a fearless leader in the Army's innovation enterprise. The projects he has overseen have provided our warfighters with the systems, munitions, and capabilities necessary to defeat our enemies and maintain overmatch of our adversaries. General Reim's hard work has also revitalized our production of munitions, leading the charge to overhaul our outdated production systems and ensuring that our national stockpile is backfilled in the wake of conflict throughout the world. Major General Reim's support to the Department of Defense's munitions enterprise has been vital to our national defense priorities.

General Reim has led with tenacity as the Commanding General of Picatinny Arsenal. The installation employs more than 6,000 employees; all of whom he cares for as his own family. His leadership has prioritized the morale, health, and welfare of the Soldiers, Civilians, and Families of Picatinny Arsenal. Major General Reim has shaped Picatinny Arsenal into a pillar of national defense and a mainstay of the New Jersey Economy.

In this time at Picatinny, General Reim has also been a valued partner to me and to my

team. His expertise, openness, and willingness to think outside the box have strengthened my work in Congress and made me a better, more effective advocate for our military's future.

General Reim graduated from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY and commissioned into the Quartermaster Corps in 1990. He held a variety of leadership and staff positions as a Logistics Officer prior to entering the Acquisition Corps in December of 1998. I extend my most heartfelt thanks to Major General Reim, his wife Patty, and four children for their 33 years of service and sacrifice. I congratulate Major General Reim on his well-earned promotion and look forward to his continued success.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, January 11, 2024 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 17

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Cathy Ann Harris, of Maryland, to be Chairman, and Henry J. Kerner, of Virginia, to be a Member, both of the Merit Systems Protection Board, Suzanne Elizabeth Summerlin, of Florida, to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, Jeff Rezmovic, of Maryland, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, and Hampton Y. Dellinger, of North Carolina, to be Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel.

SD-562

10 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine closing corporate loopholes that reward offshoring jobs and profits.

SD-608

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Cyber Safety Review Board, focusing on expectations, outcomes, and enduring questions.

SD-562

2:30 p.m.

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine policy approaches to increasing the supply of af-

fordable housing, focusing on rebuilding the American Dream.

SH-216

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Interim Résumé of Congressional Activity.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S51–S77

Measures Introduced: Twelve bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 3565–3576, and S. Res. 518. **Pages S73–74**

Veto Messages:

Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act Rule: By 54 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. 5), two-thirds of the Senators voting, a quorum being present, not having voted in the affirmative, S.J. Res. 32, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to “Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)”, upon reconsideration failed of passage, and the veto of the President was sustained. **Pages S66–67**

Mehalchick Nomination—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the nomination of Karoline Mehalchick, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. **Pages S51–57**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination, be withdrawn. **Pages S68–69**

McEntarfer Nomination—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the nomination of Erika L. McEntarfer, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor. **Pages S67–69**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, January 11, 2024; that the motion to invoke cloture with respect to the nomination ripen at 11:45 a.m., and that if cloture is invoked on the nomination, all time be considered expired at 1:45 p.m. **Page S76**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 51 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. EX. 4), S. Kato Crews, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado. **Pages S57–66**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 51 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. EX. 3), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S57–58**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

Susan M. Bazis, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

Ernest Gonzalez, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

Robin Michelle Meriweather, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Kelly Harrison Rankin, of Wyoming, to be United States District Judge for the District of Wyoming.

Leon Schydlower, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

1 Army nomination in the rank of general.

2 Coast Guard nominations in the rank of admiral.

10 Marine Corps nominations in the rank of general.

4 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Marine Corps, and Navy. **Pages S76–77**

Messages from the House:

Page S71

Executive Communications:

Pages S71–72

Petitions and Memorials:

Pages S72–73

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages S74–75

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S75–76

Additional Statements: Page S76

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Page S76

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—5) Pages S58, S66, S66–67

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:21 p.m., until 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 11, 2024. (For Senate’s program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today’s Record on page S76.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

MUNICIPAL BONDS AND CLIMATE RISK

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine investing in the future, focusing on safeguarding municipal bonds from climate risk, after receiving testimony from Megan Kilgore, City Auditor, Columbus, Ohio; Thomas G. Doe, Municipal Market Analytics, Inc., Concord, Massachusetts; Chris Hartshorn, Zeus AI, Arlington, Massachusetts; Matthew E. Kahn, University of Southern California, Los Angeles; and Eric M. Leeper, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

AI AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine harnessing AI to improve government services and customer service, after receiving testimony from Beth Simone Noveck, New Jersey Chief Innovation Officer, Trenton; Jennifer Pahlka, Federation of American Scientists, Oakland, California; and Beth Blauer, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

AI AND THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law concluded an oversight hearing to examine AI and the future of journalism, after receiving testimony from Jeff Jarvis, City University of New York Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, Basking Ridge, New Jersey; Danielle Coffey, News/Media Alliance, Arlington, Virginia; Curtis LeGeyt, National Association of Broadcasters, Washington, D.C.; and Roger Lynch, Conde Nast, New York, New York.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 22 public bills, H.R. 6929–6950; and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 954–956, were introduced. Pages H50–51

Additional Cosponsors: Pages H52–54

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Molinaro to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H19

Recess: The House recessed at 10:46 a.m. and reconvened at 12 p.m. Page H24

Recess: The House recessed at 12:40 p.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m. Page H29

Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2023, Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to “Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status”, and Providing for con-

gressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to “Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers”—Rule for Consideration: The House failed to agree to H. Res. 947, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 788) to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party; providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to “Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status”; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 38) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to “Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers”, by a recorded vote of 203 ayes to 216 noes, Roll No. 3, after the previous question was ordered by a yeas-and-

nay vote of 213 yeas to 200 nays, Roll No. 2. Representative Moore (UT) moved to reconsider the vote on the resolution, on which further proceedings were postponed.

Pages H25–29, H29–31

Committee Election: The House agreed to H. Res. 954, electing a Member to a certain standing committee for the House of Representatives. Page H31

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Taiwan Non-Discrimination Act of 2023: H.R. 540, amended, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue more equitable treatment of Taiwan at the international financial institutions; Pages H31–33

Pressure Regulatory Organizations To End Chinese Threats to Taiwan Act: H.R. 803, amended, to direct certain financial regulators to exclude representatives of the Peoples Republic of China from certain banking organizations upon notice of certain threats or danger; Pages H33–35

China Exchange Rate Transparency Act of 2023: H.R. 839, amended, to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People's Republic of China; and Pages H35–37

OFAC Licensure for Investigators Act: H.R. 6370, amended, to require the Office of Foreign Assets Control to develop a program under which private sector firms may receive a license to conduct nominal financial transactions in furtherance of the firms' investigations. Pages H37–39

Discharge Petition: Representative DeGette presented to the Clerk a motion to discharge the Committee on Rules from the consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 916) entitled, a resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 625) to regulate large capacity ammunition feeding devices (Discharge Petition No. 8). Page H21

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H29–30 and H30–31.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Education and Workforce: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 6914, the “Pregnant Students’ Rights Act”; and H.R. 443, the “Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act”. H.R. 6914 and H.R. 443 were ordered reported, as amended.

PROTECTING CLEAN AMERICAN ENERGY PRODUCTION AND JOBS BY STOPPING EPA’S OVERREACH

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Materials held a hearing entitled “Protecting Clean American Energy Production and Jobs by Stopping EPA’s Overreach”. Testimony was heard from Joseph Goffman, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation, Environmental Protection Agency; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE DOL FIDUCIARY RULE: IMPLICATIONS FOR RETIREMENT SAVINGS AND ACCESS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Capital Markets held a hearing entitled “Examining the DOL Fiduciary Rule: Implications for Retirement Savings and Access”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

REGULATORY WHIPLASH: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF FSOC’S EVER-CHANGING DESIGNATION FRAMEWORK ON INNOVATION

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology and Inclusion held a hearing entitled “Regulatory Whiplash: Examining the Impact of FSOC’s Ever-changing Designation Framework on Innovation”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

HAVOC IN THE HEARTLAND: HOW SECRETARY MAYORKAS’ FAILED LEADERSHIP HAS IMPACTED THE STATES

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Havoc in the Heartland: How Secretary Mayorkas’ Failed Leadership Has Impacted the States”. Testimony was heard from Austin Knudsen, Attorney General, Montana; Gentner Drummond, Attorney General, Oklahoma; Andrew Bailey, Attorney General, Missouri; and a public witness.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on the Report Recommending that the House of Representatives Cite Robert Hunter Biden for Contempt of Congress. The Report Recommending that the House of Representatives Cite Robert Hunter Biden for Contempt of Congress was ordered reported, as amended.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands; and Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a joint hearing entitled “National Park Service’s Deferred Maintenance Backlog: Perspectives from the Government Accountability Office and the Inspector General”. Testimony was heard from Cardell Johnson, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office; and Mark Greenblatt, Inspector General, Department of the Interior.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Full Committee held a markup on the Resolution Recommending that the House of Representatives Find Robert Hunter Biden In Contempt of Congress. The Resolution Recommending that the House of Representatives Find Robert Hunter Biden In Contempt of Congress was ordered reported, as amended.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY,
JANUARY 11, 2024**

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine stopping the flow of fentanyl, focusing on public awareness and legislative solutions, 10 a.m., SD-538.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine federal electric vehicle incentives including the federal government’s role in fostering reliable and resilient electric vehicle supply chains, 10 a.m., SD-366.

House

Committee on Education and Workforce, Subcommittee on Health, Employment Labor, and Pensions, hearing entitled “Lowering Costs and Increasing Access to Health

Care with Employer-Driven Innovation”, 10:15 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled “Safeguarding Americans’ Communications: Strengthening Cybersecurity in a Digital Era”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Oversight of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Housing Administration”, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia, hearing entitled “Examining the Biden Administration’s Afghanistan Policy Since the U.S. Withdrawal: Part II”, 3 p.m., HVC-210.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability, hearing entitled “Exploitation and Enforcement Part II: Improving Enforcement in Countering Uyghur Forced Labor”, 10 a.m., 310 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration, Integrity, Security, and Enforcement, hearing entitled “The Impact of Illegal Immigration on Social Services”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled “Examining the Biden Administration’s Limits on Access to the OCS: Impacts on Consumers, States, and Operators”, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs, hearing entitled “The Risks of Progressive Ideologies in the U.S. Military”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Crime on the Rise: How Lawlessness is Impacting Main Street America”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled “Proposals for a Water Resources Development Act of 2024: Members’ Day Hearing”, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Full Committee, business meeting on a committee resolution to authorize a subpoena, 10 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Full Committee, hearing entitled “Rural Access: Is VA Meeting All Veterans Where They Live?”, 10 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 6918, the “Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Women and Families Act”, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Interim Résumé of Congressional Activity

FIRST SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 3, 2023 through January 3, 2024

	<i>Senate</i>	<i>House</i>	<i>Total</i>
Days in session	178	182	..
Time in session	841 hrs., 11'	657 hrs., 43'	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	6,087	7,031	..
Extensions of Remarks .....	..	1,270	..
Public bills enacted into law	40	23	..
Private bills enacted into law .....	..	..	..
Bills in conference .....	..	..	..
Measures passed, total	401	330	731
Senate bills	84	12	..
House bills	19	186	..
Senate joint resolutions	7	4	..
House joint resolutions	10	13	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	1	..	..
House concurrent resolutions	6	11	..
Simple resolutions	274	104	..
Measures reported, total	*256	332	588
Senate bills	223	..	..
House bills .....	..	274	..
Senate joint resolutions .....	..	..	..
House joint resolutions .....	..	11	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	2	..	..
House concurrent resolutions .....	..	5	..
Simple resolutions	31	42	..
Special reports	19	5	..
Conference reports	1	1	..
Measures pending on calendar	236	156	..
Measures introduced, total	4,149	8,036	12,185
Bills	3,555	6,903	..
Joint resolutions	53	106	..
Concurrent resolutions	24	81	..
Simple resolutions	517	946	..
Quorum calls	2	5	..
Yea-and-nay votes .....	..	274	..
Recorded votes	352	445	..
Bills vetoed	4	5	..
Vetoes overridden .....	..	..	..

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

January 3, 2023 through January 3, 2024

Civilian nominees, totaling 402, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	188
Unconfirmed	95
Withdrawn	9
Returned to the White House	110
Other Civilian nominees, totaling 1,901, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	1,156
Unconfirmed	745
Air Force nominees, totaling 6,063, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	5,952
Unconfirmed	111
Army nominees, totaling 8,714, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	6,808
Unconfirmed	1,906
Navy nominees, totaling 5,025, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	5,018
Unconfirmed	7
Marine Corps nominees, totaling 2,426, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	2,420
Unconfirmed	6
Space Force nominees, totaling 815, disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	813
Unconfirmed	2
<i>Summary</i>	
Total nominees carried over from the First Session	0
Total nominees received this Session	25,346
Total confirmed	22,355
Total unconfirmed	2,872
Total withdrawn	9
Total returned to the White House	110

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, January 11

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, January 11

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Erika L. McEntarfer, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon at 11:45 a.m. If cloture is invoked on the nomination, Senate will vote on confirmation thereon at 1:45 p.m.

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: To be announced.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Alford Mark, Mo., E22
 Bergman, Jack, Mich., E13, E18
 Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E14
 Carl, Jerry L., Ala., E19
 Carson, André, Ind., E16
 Ciscomani, Juan, Ariz., E20
 Dingell, Debbie, Mich., E19
 Frankel, Lois, Fla., E20
 Garamendi, John, Calif., E21
 Garcia, Mike, Calif., E13, E17, E18

Garcia, Sylvia R., Tex., E17
 Graves, Sam, Mo., E18
 Himes, James A., Conn., E15
 Luetkemeyer, Blaine, Mo., E22
 Luttrell, Morgan, Tex., E19
 McCaul, Michael T., Tex., E20
 McCollum, Betty, Minn., E16
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 Pallone, Frank, Jr., N.J., E20
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 Perry, Scott, Pa., E20

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 E17, E18, E18, E19, E20
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 Stefanik, Elise M., N.Y., E21
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