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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 28, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS 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, 2023, 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 1:50 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate insist upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2670) ''An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes,'' disagreed to by the House of Representatives and agrees to the conference asked by the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. WARREN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. KELLY, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. ERNST, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SCOTT (FL), Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. BUDD, and Mr. SCHMITT, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate, with instructions.

SANCTIONED FUNDS TO BE ACCESSED BY THE IRANIAN REGIME IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RETURN OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this September, the Biden administration paved the way for $6 billion in sanctioned funds to be accessed by the Iranian regime in exchange for the return of American hostages.

Authorizing this transfer puts us in an incredibly dangerous position and will only encourage Iran and other state sponsors of terrorism to kidnap more hostages in the future.

What we saw in the disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan and what we are seeing, once again, is that President Biden has failed to manage our Nation's foreign policy.

This deal gives Iran access to more money to fund more terrorist activities, including support for regional proxies like Hamas and Hezbollah.

We know that the Iranian regime is highly skilled in sanctions evasion, and they will do everything they can to hide the true use of these funds.

One thing is for certain, this money would not be used for humanitarian purposes, as the Biden administration has claimed.

It is time to pass the No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act and freeze this money in Qatari banks where it is currently being held.

We cannot allow the Iranian regime to enrich itself and continue to funnel money into the hands of known terrorists.

PUBLIC LANDS SHOULDN'T BE USED TO HOUSE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, in the past week, the Tucson, Arizona, sector of our southern border has encountered over 2,000 illegal immigrants each and every day.

This crisis has pulled in Border Patrol resources, including highly trained BORTAC units to confront the surge of illegal immigrants from across the southwest.

This has left dangerous gaps in our border security for cartels to exploit, smuggling deadly drugs like cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl into the United States.

Now, after repealing Trump's remain in Mexico policy, the Biden administration is attempting to use public lands and national parks to house illegal immigrants.

This policy shift is a failure, and it is a failure that will continue to have immediate and negative consequences for so many American communities.

Places like the Gateway National Recreational area in New Jersey should not be used to house illegal immigrants who have been allowed by President Biden to remain in America for far too long.

Our communities cannot afford to continue down this treacherous path.

It is time for Congress to pass legislation that prevents our public lands from being used to support the crisis that President Biden has failed to address with our failed ability to maintain the sovereignty of our country by making sure that all of our borders are secure.

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CONGRESS NEEDS TO REGULATE THE SALE OF AMMUNITION

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

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Madam Speaker, it is undeniable that we have a gun problem in our country and that too many people lose their lives to gun violence every single day.

We can't take on the issue of gun violence without also addressing ammunition access for criminals and for those who are choosing to harm others across our country.

This means holding people and institutions accountable for their role in the public commercial ammunition sales that can get into the wrong hands.

Just a few weeks ago, The New York Times released a report indicating that ammunition produced at the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant has also been sold widely in the civilian marketplace. Ammo from Lake City has been seized from drug dealers, violent felons, and even rioters from January 6.

Ammo from the plant has been tied to at least a dozen mass shootings, including at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde.

Let me be clear: This is completely unacceptable.

We are demanding oversight, not just over this plant, but the commercial sales of ammunition that is subsidized by the U.S. Government and then is turned around and used in mass shootings across the country.

We also need to pass my bill, along with Senator ELIZABETH WARREN's bill, the AMMO Act to regulate ammunition sales across the country. This is a serious challenge. People are losing their lives.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER BRIDGE WON FIRST PLACE IN THE ACI EXCELLENCE IN CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, the American Concrete Institute recognizes and awards construction projects across the world every year.

During the 2023 ACI Excellence in Concrete Construction Awards, the I–74 Mississippi River Bridge, located in Bettendorf, Iowa, took home first place in the infrastructure category.

This regional project was started with the intention of improving access across the Mississippi River. The bridge was recently updated to include interchange ramp reconfigurations and interstate and local roadways improvements.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the architects, engineers, contractors, and suppliers that worked so diligently to improve this vital link within the Quad Cities across the Mississippi River.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SAM RAYMOND, CARSON GUZMAN, AND RYAN PETERS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize three very impressive Norwalk High School students and their recent achievements.

I congratulate Sam Raymond, Carson Guzman, and Ryan Peters for receiving the National Speech and Debate Association's 2022–2023 Speaking and Service Award.

Every year the National Speech and Debate Association recognizes students who go above and beyond in their service to their teams, schools, and communities with the Speaking and Debate Service Award.

From more than 140,000 members, fewer than 140 students receive this recognition and reached the maximum number of service points in the student honor society.

These three individuals earned distinction through their impressive record for speech and debate competition, as well as community service, public speaking, and leadership activities.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I congratulate Sam Raymond, Carson Guzman, and Ryan Peters for their award.

RECOGNIZING ZACH GRAHAM, THE 2023 PAT TILLMAN SCHOLAR

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Zach Graham, the 2023 Pat Tillman Scholar.

This award is inspired by the legacy of Pat Tillman who left the NFL to serve as a U.S. Army Ranger and ultimately gave his life in service.

Zach Graham is a dedicated Army veteran and a third-year graduate student at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry.

In 2014, Zach graduated from Iowa State University with a double major in anthropology and international studies and a minor in military science. Zach commissioned as an intelligence officer in the Army and he was stationed in Germany as the lead intelligence officer for the Army's aviation unit in Europe.

Zach transitioned from the military to dentistry when he found his calling, a profession that allows him to make a tangible impact with precision and artistry.

Zach Graham's dedication to service above self is truly commendable, and we eagerly anticipate the remarkable contributions he will continue to make.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Zach on receiving this incredible honor and award.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. SUZI JONES AS THEATRE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate a passionate and impressive educator from Iowa's very own Pella High School, Mrs. Suzi Jones.

Mrs. Jones was recently recognized by the Iowa High School Speech Association as their Theatre Educator of the Year.

Every year, IHSSA selects the winner for this award based on community and statewide impact. Mrs. Jones was surprised with this award in front of the entire Pella High School student body.

As a parent, I am grateful to all educators and teachers dedicated to shaping the lives of our future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I thank them for their exceptional effort and, once again, I congratulate Mrs. Jones for her award.

LET'S DO THE RIGHT THING

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

Mr. MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, how often do we have a chance to do the right thing, defeat Communism, grow the economy, create jobs, reduce the deficit, and secure the southern border all at the same time?

It would be all good for America. It would be all good no matter what party you are from and no matter what part of the country you are from. This is a rare thing indeed.

I suggest we support the Make Putin Pay Act. I suggest we combine it with securing the southern border. How many opportunities are we going to have to do the right thing and use the right assets to do the mission?

We can right now use over $100 billion in frozen assets from Russia to pay for the military support required to defeat an invading Communist country into Europe.

We can secure 70 percent of Europe's grain stores so it is not sold to a foreign national government that is unfriendly, but to sustain a bigger, stronger, more friendly Europe. Meanwhile, that money is going to be spent back in the United States to support our defense industry, to create jobs, and through taxes, created by those jobs, to reduce the deficit, all while defeating our biggest adversary in the European theater.

If we can combine that with H.R. 2 and secure our southern border, even better. Let's just get this straight: We win for the economy; we win for reducing debt; we win for defeating Communism; and we win by securing our southern border. This is what we are working with right now with the Senate.

How many opportunities do we have to combine a Senate and a House resolution to actually do these things? We win, win, win, and win some more.

Mr. Speaker, I highly suggest that my comrades here in the House support the Make Putin Pay Act. It will use over $100 billion in frozen assets from Russia to support our economy, pay down debt, and secure our southern border.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Receive us, O Lord, this day into Your presence. Receive, too, these lawmakers as they return to the Capitol, having spent much-needed time with their families and friends, constituents, and communities. Receive us all into Your gracious plan for this day and equip us for the tests and rigors of this week.

Refreshed and renewed from the Thanksgiving holiday, we have opened our eyes and shown our gratitude for the many blessings You have bestowed on us. Remind us, then, that we have been so blessed that we, in turn, should be a blessing, that the country we serve and the people and concerns these Members have been elected to represent would be blessed by the words that are spoken and the decisions that are made here in these Chambers.

Restore us to the honor of bearing the responsibilities You have placed on our shoulders. Transform our hearts and minds so that we will discern and desire to return to You what is good, acceptable, and perfect in Your sight.

We give thanks that You would want to enfold us in grace this day and every day, and we offer our prayers in Your most holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. VAN ORDEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VAN ORDEN 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.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I rise to give notice of my intent to raise a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

H. Res. 114. Resolved, that, pursuant to Article I, Section 5, Clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States, Representative GEORGE SANTOS be, and he hereby is, expelled from the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VAN ORDEN). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from California will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

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 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EZELL) at 4 p.m.

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.

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

REPORT ON FRAUD RELATING TO CERTAIN COVID–19 LOANS

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4666) to require the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit a quarterly report on fraud relating to certain COVID–19 loans, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4666

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

SECTION 1. REPORT ON FRAUD RELATING TO CERTAIN COVID–19 LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 3 months thereafter, the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on the number of borrowers engaged in fraud with respect to a covered loan.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the period covered by such report—

(1) the number and total dollar amount of all covered loans made;

(2) the number of new cases of fraud and suspected fraud;

(3) the number of fraud cases resolved; and

(4) the types of fraud cases described in paragraphs (2) and (3).

(c) COVERED LOAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''covered loan'' means—

(1) a loan made under paragraphs (36) or (37) of section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)); or

(2) a loan made under section 7(b) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) in response to COVID–19 during the covered period (as defined in section 1110(a) of the CARES Act (15 U.S.C. 9009)).

(d) TERMINATION.—This Act and the requirements of this Act shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 2. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first, I say I am anxious for this to happen. I think we are going to show America that we have some bipartisan legislation that we can pass from both sides of the aisle. I am thankful that we have some good legislation, and we will see that that may happen, too.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4666 introduced by my friend from Florida (Mr. BEAN). For any small business owner, once a problem is identified, they need to get periodic updates until the problem is fixed. The Small Business Administration's pandemic lending programs should be held to the same standard.

The PPP and the EIDL Fraud Report Act of 2023 requires the Inspector General of the SBA to submit quarterly reports to Congress that keep Congress updated on the ongoing fraud investigations in the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loans.

It is estimated that $200 billion in potentially fraudulent COVID–19 EIDL and PPP loans were disbursed by the SBA. This massive loss of taxpayer dollars is unacceptable. The American people need to know what the status is of recouping these stolen funds as the SBA's Office of the Inspector General works through their investigations.

The report will provide Congress the most recent vital information on the number of both new fraud cases opened, the type of fraud suspected, and the number of investigations resolved to date.

Tracking the progress of the OIG's actions will be vital for Congress as we look to piece together the complete picture of how much fraud truly flowed through the SBA and how many of these funds were able to be recovered on the back end. This information will be vital to evaluate the role the SBA should play in future emergencies.

I urge full support from my colleagues on this commonsense bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of the six bills we are considering today. America's 33 million small businesses are the foundation of our Nation's economy and account for two-thirds of new jobs. The Small Business Committee has a long tradition of working together on behalf of our Nation's small businesses. I am pleased we are coming together yet again.

Let me start off by thanking Representatives BEAN and MFUME for their bipartisan work on H.R. 4666, which will help the committee fulfill its oversight responsibilities.

SBA was a lifeline to millions of small businesses throughout the pandemic. More than $1.2 trillion in economic aid was distributed to help businesses keep their doors open.

During these unprecedented times, the SBA, under the Trump administration, weakened and removed these internal controls in an effort to disburse funds swiftly.

This resulted in roughly 87 percent of likely fraud originating in the first 9 months of the pandemic, largely due to organized criminal syndicates and transnational gangs exploiting the weakened controls and stealing billions of dollars from the American people.

Upon taking office, Administrator Guzman strengthened internal controls, and they remain in place to this day, but the damage was done.

In order to improve our understanding and prevent future fraud, H.R. 4666 requires the OIG to send periodic reports over the next 2 years to provide the Committee with detailed information that it needs to conduct robust oversight.

Let me take a minute to commend our IG and their commitment to rooting out fraud and abuse. I also highlight the need to fully meet their budget request rather than make any cuts. Doing so harms their ability to hold fraudsters accountable.

As of this October, their work has resulted in nearly 1,200 indictments, almost 950 arrests, and over 600 convictions. Almost $400 million in seized or forfeited assets and more than $500 million in restitution orders have been returned to the American taxpayers.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4666, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the great State of Florida (Mr. BEAN).

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, the COVID pandemic is behind us, and with that, a lot of the problems associated with COVID have also managed to go away, but fraud remains. The bill to the American people associated with that COVID relief fraud is here. We have to deal with it.

Pandemic relief opened the door to wide-scale fraud. Due to the lack of guardrails within the SBA and the borrowing structure, over $200 billion of pandemic loan programs were potentially fraudulent.

Did you catch that, Mr. Speaker? $200 billion. That is not me. That is not AARON BEAN. That is the Inspector General of the United States overseeing the SBA.

He has identified more than 90,000 fraud cases, over one in five, which represents more than 100 years of investigative casework.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most disturbing stories to come out of the Inspector General's investigation is the Barbie doll face scam.

Do you know about this? This scam wasn't perpetrated by America's favorite Barbie such as Malibu Barbie, Presidential Barbie, Lawyer Barbie, or even Live Action Barbie.

No, no, no, Mr. Speaker. This was perpetrated—this was the job of swindler Barbie. Swindler Barbie's face was used as identification for fake identities who went on to collect millions in fraudulent loans when facial recognition software used at SBA verified the identities as real people.

Behind me, this poster shows real faces, real corrupt Barbie dolls that were used to collect fraudulent PPP and EIDL loans. Yes, it is absurd, Mr. Speaker, but what do you expect? This is crazy town.

That is why I rise today to speak in favor of my bill, H.R. 4666, the PPP/EIDL Fraud Report Act of 2023, but you know it, Mr. Speaker, as the we want our money back act.

The bill requires the Inspector General of the SBA to report to Congress every quarter with detailed updates on the ongoing fraud investigations of the PPP and EIDL loan programs.

Most importantly, we are not going to let it go. This will hopefully ensure that the pandemic loan fraud will not be swept under the rug. The American people want oversight over a runaway, unaccountable bureaucracy. We just don't like cheats. We don't like skippers. Somebody has to be held accountable.

As the Inspector General continues to uncover the abuse of taxpayer dollars, it is important for Congress to know the full extent of the fraud, and most importantly, the progress of getting our money back.

To the fraudsters: You can run, but you can't hide. We will find you, and we will prosecute you to the fullest extent of the law. We will never tolerate stealing from hardworking taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman said, it has been a delight working together, both within the committee and even on the other side of the aisle.

To the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. MFUME, what a treat it is to work with him as we come together to get our money back because that is what the American people want. We want our money back.

Get ready, Mr. Speaker, and get ready, America, accountability is coming. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important piece of legislation because the American people have made it clear: We want our money back.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS), as well as the cosponsor of this bill, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BEAN) for their work on this measure.

I rise today in full support, obviously, of this bill, which requires the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit a quarterly report on the fraud that has occurred and is being uncovered in the small business pandemic relief programs. We do want our money back, and this is about the first step in doing that.

On June 27 of this year, the SBA's Office of the Inspector General issued a white paper that the Small Business Administration disbursed more than $200 billion in potentially fraudulent pandemic relief aid in the form of loans and in the form of grants. It was all done through the COVID–19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and the Paycheck Protection Program.

The Small Business Administration also issued another report. It was titled: ''Protecting the Integrity of the Pandemic Relief Programs.''

In that report, they estimated that $36 billion of the $1.2 trillion in small business pandemic relief money was obtained fraudulently. The criminals and the fraudsters had a payday on the American public.

That level of fraud, highly significant in these programs, is absolutely astonishing. It also absolutely reflects the

years-long repercussion of the 2020 decision that the ranking member spoke about earlier to loosen the antifraud protections in an effort to fast-track pandemic relief. Well, I hope we are learning from our mistakes.

It is clear that we have to do all that we can to return all of the money stolen from the Federal Government and bring the fraudsters and the criminals to justice.

This bill, which I am proud to co-lead with my colleague from Florida (Mr. BEAN), ensures consistent reporting, regular reporting on progress toward the goal by requiring the Inspector General of the SBA, who has come before our committee on a number of occasions, to issue a report to Congress every 3 months, every 90 days, which includes the total dollar amount of small business pandemic relief funds that were made and the number and the type of fraud in both the new fraud cases and the suspected fraud cases, as well as the number of fraud cases that have been resolved to date at the conclusion of that 90-day period. We wanted to make sure we were regular in finding the money and reporting the money.

Again, I thank Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ, Chair WILLIAMS, and my colleague, Mr. BEAN, for their work on this measure. We do want our money back, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1615

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, while much of the focus today has been about pandemic fraud, we must also be mindful of the stellar work that the SBA did to help small businesses stay afloat throughout the pandemic. Distributing more than a trillion dollars in economic aid was a tall order for a small agency.

Today, we are seeing the fruits of their labor. Small businesses have been recovering with unprecedented speed and success, and more Americans are launching small businesses than ever before, with more than 14 million new starts since January 2021.

Once again, I thank Representative BEAN and Representative MFUME, and I urge my colleagues to support this measure, as amended.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, with an estimated $200 billion outstanding in potentially fraudulent COVID–19 EIDL and PPP loans, there has never been a more critical time for legislation like H.R. 4666.

I thank Representative BEAN for his work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join our committee in demanding answers to where this money is and how to rightfully return it to the American taxpayers.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4666, 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. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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.

RETURNING ERRONEOUS COVID LOANS ADDRESSING ILLEGAL AND MISAPPROPRIATED TAXPAYER FUNDS ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4667) to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue guidance and rules for lenders and the Small Business Administration on handling amounts of Paycheck Protection Loans returned by borrowers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4667

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 ''Returning Erroneous COVID Loans Addressing Illegal and Misappropriated Taxpayer Funds Act'' or the ''RECLAIM Taxpayer Funds Act''.

SEC. 2. PAYCHECK PROTECTION LOAN RETURN GUIDANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall issue guidance for borrowers and lenders on returning any unused amounts of PPP loans made to the borrower.

(b) GUIDANCE REQUIREMENTS.—The guidance required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) detailed guidance for borrowers on how to return to the lender that made a PPP loan to the borrower the unused amounts of such PPP loan;

(2) detailed guidance for lenders regarding the responsibilities of lenders, including that a lender must—

(A) accept the return of any unused amounts of any PPP loan from a borrower or any other source (including law enforcement) if the lender made such PPP loan;

(B) document the reason for the return of such unused amounts, the identification number of the PPP loan, the name of the borrower of the PPP loan, and the name of the person returning such unused amounts if different than the borrower;

(C) remit such unused amounts to the Administration;

(D) make the guidance described in paragraph (1) available to borrowers described in such paragraph; and

(E) if the lender made a PPP loan, periodically certify that the lender has reported and returned to the Administration all unused amounts of PPP loans returned to the lender;

(3) detailed guidance for financial institutions holding funds from a PPP loan on the procedure for returning such funds to the Administration if the financial institution suspects the borrower may be committing fraud with respect to the PPP loan or any other issue for which the financial institution should return the funds the Administration; and

(4) detailed guidance for borrowers and lenders of PPP loans, financial institutions described in paragraph (3), and other relevant individuals and entities on complying with the requirement to report to the Office of the Inspector General for the Small Business Administration any information indicating the occurrence of fraud with respect to a PPP loan.

SEC. 3. RETURNS HANDLING PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall issue guidance establishing a process for the Small Business Administration to track amounts of PPP loans returned to mitigate the risk of financial loss to the Federal Government.

(b) RETURNS HANDLING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.—The process established under subsection (a) shall require—

(1) the Administration to accept returns of unused amounts of PPP loans; and

(2) the Administrator to deposit in the general fund of the Treasury the unused amounts of PPP loans returned to the Administration.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Small Business Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administration of the Small Business Administration.

(3) PPP LOAN.—The term ''PPP loan'' means a loan made under paragraph (36) or (37) of section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)).

SEC. 5. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise today in full support of H.R. 4667, better known as the RECLAIM Taxpayer Funds Act, introduced by Representative SALAZAR of the great State of Florida. During the COVID–19 pandemic, banks and credit unions stepped up to administer the Paycheck Protection Program, or PPP.

They were able to disburse over $800 billion to small businesses in need.

I have said that what these financial institutions did in the early days of the pandemic was a reminder of the car manufacturers in World War II. They dedicated all their efforts to help support our Nation in its time of need.

Unfortunately, as we have seen in all the pandemic lending programs, some opportunistic criminals took advantage of these aid efforts. Fraudsters were able to steal an estimated $84 billion in these PPP funds.

While the SBA OIG continues to investigate many of these cases, lenders themselves have become aware of some of those stolen dollars sitting at their institutions. However, the OIG and some of these lenders have said there isn't any clarity on what they need to do to turn over these ill-gotten funds back to the government.

This bill fixes this problem. It requires the SBA to post guidance to lenders on how to return fraudulent PPP funds. The SBA would also be required to work with the Department of Treasury to see that these funds are returned promptly to the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill to take a commonsense step forward in returning stolen PPP funds to the taxpayers.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4667, as amended, which will ensure any unused PPP funds are properly returned to the American taxpayers.

The legislation requires SBA to issue guidance for financial institutions on how to return PPP funds.

In May, the IG released a management advisory that said SBA's lack of guidance, regulations, and ability to account for returned PPP funds is an obstacle for anyone who opts to return unused PPP funds.

Unfortunately, this has led to confusion for borrowers and lenders, leading some lenders to even inform borrowers that the SBA could not accept funds. This bill will resolve the problem by requiring SBA to establish clear and detailed guidance for returning PPP funds to the SBA.

The legislation will also require the SBA to establish a process on how to deposit unused PPP funds in the Treasury Department's general fund.

I thank Ms. SALAZAR and Mr. MCGARVEY for introducing this bill to enhance the PPP recovery process. The Federal Government needs to be a good steward of taxpayers' dollars, and this bill goes a long way to improve the Nation's fiscal health by ensuring the SBA has processes in place to account for returned PPP funds.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR).

Ms. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding his time and for supporting my bill.

Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago Congress created the Paycheck Protection Program in the CARES Act in response to the COVID–19 pandemic.

What was the goal of this program? To keep small businesses open and to keep employees on payroll.

The intention of the PPP program was clear, and it was very good. Unfortunately, bad actors took advantage of it and used it to steal billions of dollars from all of us.

The Small Business Administration Inspector General has reported that there are potentially $200 billion worth of fraudulent loans. That is nearly 20 percent of all COVID pandemic loans. That is appalling and unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, a time of reckoning is now coming for those who stole those billions of dollars from the taxpayers' funds.

My bipartisan bill, called the RECLAIM Taxpayer Funds Act, would require the Small Business Administration, the SBA, to create detailed rules and guidance for borrowers and lenders to return those stolen funds back to the United States Treasury Department.

My district, the city of Miami, is home to thousands and thousands of small businesses, including some of the best restaurants in this country. Let's continue to support hardworking small businesses while punishing those bad actors. We can definitely do both.

H.R. 4667 is the right step to regain government accountability in a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my Democrat friend from Kentucky, Mr. MCGARVEY, for introducing this bill with me, and I encourage my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 4667, which puts Americans first by ensuring that criminals are not stealing our constituents' money.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY), the ranking member of the Innovation Entrepreneurship and Workforce Development Subcommittee.

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4667, the RECLAIM Taxpayer Funds Act, which I am proud to co-lead alongside Representative SALAZAR. I am grateful for her partnership on this bipartisan bill, and I am glad to see it come to the floor today.

Small businesses are the backbone of the American economy. That is definitely true in my hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, and was on full display this past weekend as Louisvillians were encouraged to shop local and go and see our wonderful small business community.

As I visited small businesses from Saint Matthews to NuLu to West Louisville, I reflected on where we were, where these small businesses were just a few short years ago. I was reminded of earlier this year when we had Small Business Administrator Guzman come to Louisville and meet with small business owners from across my district.

We had listening sessions, and we heard the same message over and over again. That is what these businessowners told us. They told us they wouldn't be here today because they wouldn't have survived the pandemic if it weren't for the Paycheck Protection Program and other COVID relief programs.

PPP worked. It worked. It was a success. It is the reason we still have towns across this country full of vibrant, independent, local business. Nevertheless, in order to get that money out the door as quickly as possible, the previous administration loosened the guardrails designed to prevent fraud. That opened the door for bad actors to take advantage of the program.

There were people who flatout lied to obtain PPP loans. There were others who received more than they deserved; some who received more even through good-faith errors.

Mr. Speaker, we need to get that money back. That is why the Department of Justice and the SBA are working to prosecute those who took advantage of the program and recover stolen funds.

To date, there have been hundreds of arrests and convictions related to COVID relief fraud, and they have recovered billions of dollars.

We must have clear processes in place as this money comes back to lenders and to the SBA. That is why this bill requires the SBA to issue guidance and rules for lenders, for borrowers, and for the SBA itself on handling PPP loans that are returned.

H.R. 4667 is a commonsense bill that will establish these clear rules for the road and ensure that taxpayer dollars do not go to waste. It is a necessary step in the right direction as we continue our recovery from the pandemic.

I thank Chairman WILLIAMS, Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ, and Congresswoman SALAZAR for their leadership and support of this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4667.

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the RECLAIM Taxpayer Funds Act requires SBA to establish clear guidance for borrowers, lenders, and financial institutions on how to return PPP funds. It will ensure best practices are in place in the event of another global catastrophe.

I thank Representative SALAZAR and Mr. MCGARVEY for their effort, and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, as amended.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the COVID–19 pandemic broke the SBA, and as a result, American taxpayers and our Nation's

small businesses have had to foot the bill for the hundreds of billions of dollars in stolen funds.

I thank Representative SALAZAR for introducing H.R. 4667 as it creates a much-needed accountability and transparency with the SBA as we work to retrieve the taxpayer dollars wrongfully lost.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in our fight to reclaim these stolen funds and unanimously support H.R. 4667.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4667, 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. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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.

□ 1630

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOW TRANSPARENCY VIA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 2023

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4668) to amend the Small Business Act to require the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman to publish guidance documents for certain rules, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4668

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 ''Providing Opportunities to Show Transparency via Information Technology Act of 2023'' or the ''POST IT Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF GUIDANCE ON OMBUDSMAN WEBSITE.

(a) WEBSITE REQUIREMENT.—Section 30 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) to the extent practicable, hyperlinks for such guidance that is designed to set forth policy on a statutory, regulatory, or technical issue, or an interpretation of such issue, for any rule for which an agency produces a small entity compliance guide.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Subsection (e) does not require the public availability of information that is exempt from public disclosure under section 552(b) of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Freedom of Information Act').''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (3) of section 30(e) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657), as added by this section, shall apply with respect to guidance on, or interpretation of, a rule for which an agency produces a small entity compliance guide described under section 212(a)(1) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note) on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in full support of H.R. 4668, also known as the POST IT Act, introduced by Representative MOLINARO of the great State of New York.

Small business owners face some of the biggest challenges in understanding how to comply with Federal regulations. Oftentimes, small businesses are hiring compliance officers, which are a drag on their bottom lines, rather than focusing on their core business model and looking for growth opportunities.

This legislation would make it easier for small businesses to track the ever-changing agency guidelines on how to comply with any given regulation. The POST IT Act requires agencies to post their guidance, and all subsequent changes on how to comply, in a centralized location on the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman's website.

Businesses should not have to search through many different websites to try to find all the latest information on how to comply with any given requirement. If an agency updates a regulation or puts out more information, it should be easily accessible for any business to look up.

I hope this bill is just the first step in much-needed regulation modernization efforts in the committee. We have seen far too many new requirements coming from government agencies that are hurting our Nation's job creators. As businesses continue to deal with high interest rates and elevated inflation, we should not be adding additional costs in the form of new regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MOLINARO for leading this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I lend my support to H.R. 4668, as amended, which requires the Office of the National Ombudsman to publish links to guidance documents for rules that have been certified to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Guidance documents help inform small businesses of regulations, but they can be difficult to find. Having a centralized website with hyperlinks to these documents will save entrepreneurs time and resources.

This legislation builds off the One Stop Shop Act, which was enacted into law last Congress. The new law requires the Office of the National Ombudsman to create and maintain a centralized website with hyperlinks to small business compliance guides.

I am pleased the SBA has their website up and running. H.R. 4668 will add more useful links for small firms and give them tools to make it easier for them to comply with Federal rules and regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. MOLINARO and Ms. SCHOLTEN for working together on the POST IT Act.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO).

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership and yielding for this important bill. I also extend my appreciation to the ranking member, my colleague from the great State of New York, for her ongoing support. I am proud to speak to this bill this afternoon.

Small businesses know that, all too often, more than perhaps any other in this country, when it comes to Federal regulations and the Federal Government, the left hand not only doesn't know what the right hand is doing but the left hand doesn't know there is a right hand. Because of that, it creates a great deal of burden and confusion for small businesses.

My bill, H.R. 4668, the POST IT Act, is an important step to make it easier for small business owners to comply with Federal regulations that might otherwise be difficult for them to locate in the first place and then to understand.

I am grateful to Ms. SCHOLTEN for working together with me on this bill.

This bipartisan legislation simply requires Federal agencies to post follow-up guidance on the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman's website for any regulation that will have a significant impact on small businesses.

While there are official guidance documents that are released when rules are initially finalized, over time, agencies often release additional materials related to compliance. This leads to updated policy statements and technical clarifications that ultimately lead to a labyrinth of regulatory confusion and oversight by enforcement.

The POST IT Act ensures these updates will be housed in a centralized location so small business owners can worry less about abiding by government regulations and focus more on running their businesses, employing our neighbors, and investing in our communities.

There are over 33 million small businesses in the United States of America, which, as we all know and celebrate often, serve as the backbone of the American economy.

The thousands of small businesses I represent in upstate New York are vitally important to our communities, supporting local services through their taxes paid, supporting employees and their families, and making an honest living for themselves.

If Federal agencies are going to create new regulations for small businesses to comply with, we should seek to make it easier for them to understand and follow those rules, to relieve them of that burden so they are not further burdened with confusing requirements. This commonsense bipartisan legislation will help small businesses avoid unnecessary headaches.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Ms. SCHOLTEN, for her leadership on this bill. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. SCHOLTEN), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4668, the Providing Opportunities to Show Transparency via Information Technology Act, also known simply as the POST IT Act.

It has been an honor to co-lead this bill with Congressman MOLINARO to increase transparency in the small business space. Most Americans want more transparency from our government. This is an easy, straightforward, and bipartisan bill.

It is critical that Federal agencies produce smart, well-crafted regulations. I hear all the time from small business owners across different sectors in west Michigan that they want to comply and follow rules and regulations, but they need clear guidance. Far too often, it is hard to find.

Federal regulations can be a nightmare to navigate for small businesses who often serve as founder, CEO, president, store clerk, janitor, CPA, and attorney all in the same day. Most small businesses don't have attorneys, accountants, or compliance departments to learn and track all Federal regulations to make sure that they remain in compliance. That is why it is imperative on the agencies themselves that are setting the regulations to make sure that these regulations are open, available, and as easy as possible to follow and understand.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill with Congressman MOLINARO. This bill will help small businesses stay in compliance with Federal regulations by making compliance information from the Federal agencies easier to locate.

Specifically, this bill requires that Federal agencies post guidance on the Small Business Administration's Office of the National Ombudsman's website for any rule that has a significant impact on a small business. It seems pretty easy, doesn't it?

Now more than ever, as our Nation's small businesses are recovering from a global pandemic and are dealing with widespread worker shortages and rising inflation, it is our duty as lawmakers to take unnecessary hurdles for small business owners out of the way, whether that is increasing access to capital, ensuring access to technical assistance for SBA programs, or making sure that Federal regulations are easy to understand.

I am working hard in the Small Business Committee to keep Main Street alive and thriving. It is great to partner with Congressman MOLINARO in that effort.

Before I close, let me say a few words about another bill on suspension today, H.R. 4670, the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act, by Representative HOULAHAN, of which I am an original cosponsor and have been proud to help usher through the Small Business Committee, where I serve as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure.

This bill would ensure that the SBA is acquiring up-to-date data on where Federal procurement dollars are going. In addition, this data will inform my committee's work to ensure that all small businesses are able to compete in the Federal procurement space.

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

I understand that complying with Federal, State, and local regulations can be onerous for small business owners. Small businesses do not always have the resources that larger companies do to monitor regulatory actions. That is why having a centralized website for them to access Federal guidance and learn more about their responsibilities under a rule is vitally important.

We shouldn't be fooled by antiregulation rhetoric. Federal regulations can and do benefit small businesses and boost our economy.

Our jobs reports over the past 2 years attest to that. The Biden administration is building an economy that is delivering for Americans, adding more than 14 million new jobs since taking office. The U.S. economy is experiencing a record small business boom, with more Americans launching a business than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MOLINARO and Ms. SCHOLTEN for their bipartisan work in crafting a bill that we can all support.

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

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

H.R. 4668 is a step in the right direction to lessening the regulatory burden placed on our Nation's small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MOLINARO for his work on this crucial piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in creating a regulatory environment that allows Main Street America to thrive.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4668, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTING TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2023

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4670) to amend the Small Business Act to require reporting on additional information with respect to small business concerns owned and controlled by women, qualified HUBZone small business concerns, and small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4670

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 ''Small Business Contracting Transparency Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. REPORT ON SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(9) REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small

Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on small business concerns owned and controlled by women. Such report shall include, for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report, the following:

''(A) The number of applications for certification as a small business concern owned and controlled by women that have sufficient information for the Administrator to make a certification determination, disaggregated by—

''(i) the number of applications certified;

''(ii) the number of applications denied; and

''(iii) the number of applications for which a determination has not been made.

''(B) The number of concerns certified as small business concerns owned and controlled by women by a national certifying entity approved by the Administrator.

''(C) The amount of fees, if any, charged by each national certifying entity for such certification.

''(D) The total dollar amount and total percentage of prime contracts awarded to small business concerns owned and controlled by women pursuant to paragraph (2) or pursuant to a waiver granted under paragraph (3).

''(E) The total dollar amount and total percentage of prime contracts awarded to small business concerns owned and controlled by women pursuant to paragraphs (7) and (8).

''(F) With respect to a contract incorrectly awarded pursuant to this subsection because it was awarded based on an industry in which small business concerns owned and controlled by women are not underrepresented—

''(i) the number of such contracts;

''(ii) the Federal agencies that issued such contracts; and

''(iii) any steps taken by Administrator to train the personnel of such Federal agency on the use of the authority provided under this subsection.

''(G) With respect to an examination described in paragraph (5)(B)—

''(i) the number of examinations due because of recertification requirements and the actual number of such examinations conducted; and

''(ii) the number of examinations conducted for any other reason.

''(H) The number of small business concerns owned and controlled by women that were found to be ineligible to be awarded a contract under this subsection as a result of an examination conducted pursuant to paragraph (5)(B) or failure to request an examination pursuant to section 127.400 of title 13, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor rule).

''(I) The number of small business concerns owned and controlled by women that were decertified.

''(J) The total number of small business concerns owned and controlled by women.

''(K) Any other information the Administrator determines necessary.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 8(m)(2)(C) of the Small Business Act is amended by striking ''paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''paragraph (4)''.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY QUALIFIED HUBZONE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

Section 31 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection:

''(f) REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on HUBZone small business concerns. Such report shall include, for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report, the following:

''(1) The number of applications for certification as a qualified HUBZone small business concern that have sufficient information for the Administrator to make a certification determination, disaggregated by—

''(A) the number of applications certified;

''(B) the number of applications denied; and

''(C) the number of applications for which a determination has not been made.

''(2) The total dollar amount and total percentage of prime contracts awarded to qualified HUBZone small business concerns pursuant to this section.

''(3) The total dollar amount and percent of sole source contracts awarded to qualified HUBZone small business concerns under subsection (c)(2)(A).

''(4) With respect to an examination described in subsection (d)(5)—

''(A) the number of examinations due because of recertification requirements and the actual number of such examinations conducted; and

''(B) the number of examinations conducted for any other reason.

''(5) The number of HUBZone small business concerns that were found to be ineligible to be awarded a contract under this subsection as a result of an examination conducted pursuant to subsection (d)(5) or a verification conducted pursuant to subsection (d)(2).

''(6) The number of small business concerns that were decertified as qualified HUBZone small business concerns.

''(7) The number of qualified HUBZone small business concerns.

''(8) Any other information the Administrator determines necessary.''.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS.

Section 36 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657f) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j) REPORT.—Not later than May 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans. Such report shall include, for the fiscal year preceding the date of the report, the following:

''(1) The total number of small business concerns certified as small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans.

''(2) The total dollar amount and total percentage of prime contracts awarded to small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans pursuant to this section.

''(3) The total dollar amount and percent of sole source contracts awarded to owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans pursuant to subsection (c).

''(4) With respect to an examination described in subsection (h)(2)—

''(A) the number of examinations due because of recertification requirements and the actual number of such examinations conducted; and

''(B) the number of examinations conducted for any other reason.

''(5) The number of small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans that were found to be ineligible to be awarded a contract under this subsection as a result of an examination conducted pursuant to subsection (h)(2).

''(6) The number of small business concerns decertified as small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans.

''(7) The total number of small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans.

''(8) Any other information the Administrator determines necessary.''.

SEC. 5. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I support H.R. 4670, the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act, introduced by Congressman STAUBER from the great State of Minnesota.

The U.S. Government is one of the largest customers in the world. They contract out purchases of things as simple as office supplies to complicated rockets that go into space. Each year, the government sets a contracting goal that they look to hit so that small businesses can help service the various needs of the Federal Government.

To be considered a small business in contracting, there are certain verification procedures to ensure that a small business does, in fact, qualify. It would be problematic if larger corporations were posing as small businesses in order to compete for some of the small business set-aside contracts.

For some of these small business categories, the businessowner simply gets to self-certify that they are who they say the business represents. For others, the Small Business Administration or third-party entities do a more rigorous certification process.

Since there isn't a uniform process to verify the small businesses are who they claim to be, it calls into question the accuracy of the contracting data that we receive. The Small Business Contracting Transparency Act brings much-needed insight into these certification activities and whether the SBA is meeting its requirements.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Congressman STAUBER for introducing this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

□ 1645

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. HOULAHAN, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. STAUBER, and Ms. TENNEY for their work on H.R. 4670 and getting it to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, well over a decade ago, I helped enact and implement the SBA's Women-Owned Small Business program to better serve female entrepreneurs and small businesses contracting with the Federal Government. Unfortunately, setting up this program proved to be a challenge, and it was delayed longer than anticipated. As of now, it is up and running, and women-owned firms are certified by the SBA or a national certifying entity to participate in contracting programs.

This has led to improvements in the program's execution and enhanced its integrity. Most importantly, it has helped thousands of women-owned firms compete in the Federal marketplace.

However, there are some aspects of the program with less visibility, including and especially the operations of the four national certifying entities working with the SBA. That is why additional oversight is warranted, and this bill provides it.

This Small Business Contracting Transparency Act requires annual reports on the WOSB certification process to ensure it is serving female entrepreneurs as we intended.

Having this information is critical to further strengthening and improving the program to meet the needs of both the Federal Government and women-owned small firms.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4670, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act.

I thank my colleague, Representative HOULAHAN, for bringing this up. It is a very good bill and I am proud to stand in support of it.

In Minnesota, Feeding Our Future, a supposed nonprofit in Minnesota meant to feed children, used $250 million of COVID–19 Federal funds to buy luxury cars and real estate.

Since COVID–19, fraud has been on the rise. Bad actors are taking advantage of vulnerable government programs and stealing taxpayer dollars for their own benefit and wealth. We must be better stewards of taxpayer dollars and ensure proper safeguards are in place.

The Small Business Administration is charged with ensuring that only eligible firms are participating in its Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contract program, HUBZone programs, and the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business programs.

The Small Business Contracting Transparency Act would bring much-needed oversight to the certification process, ensure the SBA is only approving appropriate firms, and give Congress the tools to hold the SBA accountable, if necessary.

By supporting the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act, we will not only provide valuable assistance to small businesses but also ensure effectiveness in government contracting.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN).

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote for my bipartisan and very much commonsense legislation, the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act, that will help level the playing field for underrepresented entrepreneurs across the country.

I thank my Republican colleague, Representative PETE STAUBER, for his partnership on this legislation. Furthermore, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for their leadership in advancing this legislation through the Small Business Committee on a unanimous basis. I thank them for me being able to stand on their shoulders on this.

As a former entrepreneur myself, I understand the many challenges that come with running and scaling a business. Every day brings a unique challenge. I regularly hear from businessowners in my own community, in Pennsylvania's Sixth District, who are navigating inflation, supply chain challenges, workforce needs, and so much more.

One way that our Federal Government can help protect entrepreneurs is to address these issues and ultimately succeed. One way they can do that is by providing contracting opportunities for small business owners. For entrepreneurs who are seeking to do business with our Federal Government, I know that every single contract secured or lost can be the difference in keeping Americans on their payroll or losing them, expanding or scaling back their operations, or beating or missing their projections.

That is why the Federal small business contracting programs are so very important. Through these programs, the Federal Government maintains its various statutory goals that ensure equitable participation by small businesses, and importantly, by underrepresented small businesses in Federal contracting.

Across various agencies, the Federal Government aims to provide 5 percent of Federal prime contracts to women-owned small businesses, 3 percent to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, and 3 percent to the Historically Underutilized Business Zone, otherwise known as HUBZone, small businesses, as well.

While figures like 5 percent or 3 percent may not sound a whole lot like large targets, our Federal Government, unfortunately, struggles regularly to meet them.

Indeed, in fiscal year 2022, the Federal Government failed to reach its target goals for both women-owned businesses and HUBZone small businesses, as well. Even more troubling, the Federal Government has only met the statutory goal of awarding 5 percent of contracts to women-owned businesses twice in the last 23 years.

In addition, the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, has cited deficiencies in the Small Business Administration's oversight of the program.

It is clear that disadvantaged entrepreneurs continue to be underrepresented when it comes to Federal contract funding, and that is hurting the economy, both at a micro level and at a macro or national level. It is well past time that Congress is able to act to ensure that these programs are working as they were designed and intended to do.

That is why I introduced my bill, H.R. 4670, the bipartisan Small Business Contracting Transparency Act. My legislation will increase transparency, oversight, and will increase accountability of the Small Business Administration's Women-Owned, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned, and HUBZone Small Business Contracting programs.

Notably, this bill requires the SBA to submit to Congress annual reports that benchmark critical data, including: the number of small businesses that are certified, the total dollar amount of contracts awarded to qualifying businesses, and the number of contracts that are incorrectly awarded to ineligible recipients, among other figures, as well.

Simply put, my bill, the Small Business Contracting Transparency Act, will allow Congress and the SBA to improve these Federal contracting programs to ensure that these programs run efficiently and to ultimately benefit disadvantaged entrepreneurs in their pursuit of securing government contracts. In turn, we will strengthen our economy, we will support Main Streets all over in every ZIP Code, and we will grow the middle class.

The time to act is now, especially as the Federal Government works to award additional contracts through this historic implementation of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act, the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my Republican colleague, Representative PETE STAUBER, for his partnership in this really important legislation. Once again, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for their leadership in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this Small Business Contracting Transparency Act that will

help level the playing field for entrepreneurs in Pennsylvania, and indeed, across the Nation, as well.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government routinely fails to meet the goals of awarding 5 percent of contract dollars to women-owned small businesses. While this administration has prioritized meeting these goals and last year awarded over $28 billion to women-owned firms, more can be done.

H.R. 4670, as amended, is an important step in that direction. It ensures that we have the necessary information to conduct proper oversight of the SBA's programs designed to assist women who start and grow government contracting firms.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill and appreciate the bipartisan work of the committee to build in the HUBZone and SDVOSB programs. They face issues as well and could benefit from the additional reporting.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes,'' and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4670 provides a necessary check on the SBA as it brings much needed insight into certification activities verifying small business contractors and provides further transparency.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives STAUBER and HOULAHAN for leading this bill. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take a page out of our playbook and put politics aside to unanimously pass H.R. 4670.

I also thank the Democrats I missed earlier for their participation, specifically Representatives MFUME, MCGARVEY, and SCHOLTEN.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4670, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROHIBITING INDIVIDUALS CONVICTED OF DEFRAUDING THE GOVERNMENT FROM RECEIVING ANY ASSISTANCE FROM THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5427) to prohibit individuals convicted of defrauding the Government from receiving any assistance from the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5427

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

SECTION 1. ASSISTANCE PROHIBITED AFTER FRAUD CONVICTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 16 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 645) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROHIBITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An associate of a small business concern who is finally convicted of any crime involving or relating to financial misconduct or a false statement with respect to a covered loan or grant shall be ineligible to receive any financial assistance from the Administrator, other than financial assistance under section 7(b).

''(2) BUSINESS CONCERNS.—A small business concern that has as an associate an individual subject to paragraph (1) shall be ineligible to receive any financial assistance from the Administrator, other than financial assistance under section 7(b).

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) ASSOCIATE.—The term 'associate' means, with respect to a small business concern—

''(i) an officer, director, or owner of more than 20 percent of the equity of, or a key employee of, such small business concern;

''(ii) any entity not less than 20 percent owned or controlled by one or more individuals referred to in clause (i); and

''(iii) any other individual or entity in control of or controlled by such small business concern, except for a licensed small business investment company (as defined in section 103(3) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 662(3)).

''(B) COVERED LOAN OR GRANT.—The term 'covered loan or grant' means—

''(i) a loan made under—

''(I) paragraph (36) or (37) of subsection (a) of section 7 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636); or

''(II) subsection (b) of such section in response to the COVID–19 pandemic; or

''(ii) a grant made under—

''(I) section 5003 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (15 U.S.C. 9009c); or

''(II) section 324 of the Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Nonprofits, and Venues Act (15 U.S.C. 9009a).

''(C) FINALLY CONVICTED.—The term 'finally convicted' means, with respect to an individual or entity, that such individual or entity has been convicted of an offense and such conviction—

''(i) has not been appealed and is no longer appealable because the time for taking an appeal has expired; or

''(ii) has been appealed and the appeals process for such conviction is completed.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (h) of section 16 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 645), as added by subsection (a) of this Act, shall not apply to any contract or other agreement entered into by the Government prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 5427. This legislation prohibits any individuals convicted of defrauding the government's COVID–19 lending programs from ever receiving future financial assistance from the SBA.

When the COVID–19 pandemic hit America, the SBA took on an outsized role in helping small businesses. They partnered with banks and credit unions to set up the Paycheck Protection Program that ultimately got over $800 billion to Main Street to keep businesses from laying off employees. Additionally, the SBA ran the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, better known as the COVID EIDL program, that gave out close to $480 billion in low interest loans.

While both of these programs were successful in keeping businesses afloat during the pandemic, we have seen some very troubling data come out in recent months.

□ 1700

SBA's Office of Inspector General has estimated over $200 billion of these relief funds were given to fraudulent actors. This means that roughly 20 percent of all the money that was supposed to help businesses went to the wrong people, and, unfortunately, we have seen some estimates show that this 20 percent figure might be on the low end.

The committee is working to find creative ways to get this money back to the taxpayers, but in the meantime, we also cannot let those who committed these crimes off easy. That is where my legislation comes in. This bill prevents anyone who was convicted of defrauding the SBA's lending programs from receiving any future financial assistance from the agency. If someone saw the pandemic as an opportunity to enrich themselves, then they should never be given the opportunity to utilize any of these financial programs again.

These criminals took money away from businesses across the country that were in desperate need of assistance. This bill provides an additional layer of security for government programs so people who have taken advantage of past programs cannot commit a similar crime in the future.

A lot will need to be done to correct all of the issues within the SBA that allowed these unacceptable levels of fraud to occur, but as those internal issues are corrected, this bill will help rebuild confidence in the agency.

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of H.R. 5427, which puts into statute current rules

which prohibit anyone convicted of defrauding the government from receiving an SBA loan.

Over the course of the pandemic, the SBA disbursed approximately $1.2 trillion in economic aid. The vast majority of this aid was a lifeline to keep small businesses afloat during troubling and uncertain economic times. Unfortunately, bad actors took advantage of the program early in the pandemic when SBA removed or weakened internal controls. To that end, the Biden administration reinstituted longstanding antifraud controls and put new safeguards into place to curb the flow of pandemic dollars to fraudsters, and they remain in place today.

Before issuing a loan, SBA screens applicants on the government's Do Not Pay list and then checks its internal database for any fraudulent flags or holds. While borrowers have an opportunity to clear their names, the SBA will not move forward until the holds are cleared.

The bill we are considering today is closely aligned with the actions taken by the Biden administration, and it will send a strong message that SBA will not do business with anyone who defrauded the government. With that said, the single most important action Congress can take to recover fraudulent pandemic funds is to fully fund the SBA Inspector General and give the office the resources it needs to go after bad actors. In the last Congress, Representative LUETKEMEYER and I sponsored two laws to extend the statute of limitations for fraud in the PPP and EIDL program to 10 years. Without additional resources, the OIG will not be able to capitalize on these new laws.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the bipartisan work of Chairman WILLIAMS and Representatives MFUME and BEAN, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the great State of Missouri (Mr. ALFORD).

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the Small Business Administration and the Biden administration have continuously failed to take action to prevent this type of fraud that happened during COVID–19, ripping off you, ripping off me, ripping off everyone in this room, and ripping off the American taxpayer.

The SBA's Office of the Inspector General has estimated that at least $200 billion in COVID relief money given by the SBA ended up in the wrong hands of fraudulent actors. We believe it could be well up over $600 billion. Roughly 20 percent of that money intended to help small businesses went to the wrong people, and SBA Administrator Guzman refuses to testify before our very committee about these losses.

These losses must never happen again, Mr. Speaker, and Chairman WILLIAMS' bill addresses this by doing what the SBA is not willing to do right now, and that is to hold these fraudsters accountable and make sure they are unable to steal from us again.

I proudly support Chairman WILLIAMS' bill, H.R. 5427, which prevents anyone who is convicted of defrauding the SBA's lending programs from getting any future financial assistance from that agency.

We cannot live in an America that allows criminals to defraud taxpayers and hardworking small business owners especially during a time of need.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5427.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME), who is the ranking member of the Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations Subcommittee.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, my thanks to Chairman WILLIAMS and to the ranking member, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York for their leadership. She and I were having a conversation reminding ourselves that 84 percent of all of the loosening of the guardrails that created the problems occurred while the previous administration was in office. It is important for the facts to be noted in that regard. It is not in an effort to cast aspersions, but it is in an effort to make sure we tell the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today like the gentleman from Texas and the gentlewoman from New York in support of H.R. 5427 which prohibits, as you have heard, individuals convicted of defrauding small business pandemic relief programs from receiving future non-disaster financial aid assistance from the administration.

It sounds like it is common sense to me. If you put your hand in the cookie jar and you steal the cookies, why should you be rewarded later for that?

To this day, our Nation has to reckon with the fact that the consequences of that decision in 2020 to fast-track the allocation of the pandemic relief funds by weakening and removing the internal controls really caused the problems. It was a recipe for disaster.

Are we even astonished that something like this would happen?

This is why so many of us argued against this in 2020.

While many of these antifraud controls are being reinstituted by the Small Business Administration, fraud in these programs has run rampant. We let the horse out of the barn and are wasting time looking at it instead of trying to find a way to get it back in. So that is what this measure does in many respects.

As the ranking member of the Small Business Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Regulations, I have been, like many of my colleagues on the committee, incredibly concerned by the misuse and the abuse of pandemic relief funds.

Why?

It is a very simple answer: These funds could have been used to protect jobs. They could have been used to lift small businesses out of financial distress as they should have, and they could have created a circular flow of income in so many communities, urban and rural, throughout this country.

Instead, they lined the pockets of thieves and fraudsters. So that is why I am pleased to be the Democratic colead on this along with Mr. WILLIAMS.

This bill amends section 16 of the SBA Act to prohibit, as we said before, anyone convicted of crimes related to financial misconduct or making false statements with respect to small business pandemic relief moneys from not being able to receive nondisaster financial assistance in the future. It is kind of common sense. It really is.

So this bill ensures that those who knowingly and willfully stole Federal funds are not given a similar opportunity in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, thank the ranking member, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York; the chair, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas; Mr. BEAN of Florida; and others on both sides of the aisle for working to make sure that this bill has the support it needs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues later today to be able to stand up and to vote for it.

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

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, this bill prohibits anyone convicted of defrauding the government with respect to the SBA's pandemic programs from receiving loan disaster financial assistance from the SBA.

While there may be disagreement on the actual estimates of fraud in the pandemic programs, it is clear we need to work together to protect their integrity.

Administrator Guzman has taken steps to put strong controls into place that would prohibit anyone convicted of fraud from receiving financial assistance, and this bill will ensure those controls remain in place with future administrations.

I thank Chairman WILLIAMS, Mr. MFUME, and Mr. BEAN for their efforts, and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 5427, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5427 is simple. It needs to be passed.

I also want to thank my colleague from Maryland (Mr. MFUME) for all his support working on this bill. I thank him for his support.

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 Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5427.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR RESERVISTS AND VETERANS ACT

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4480) to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to report on the veterans interagency task force, to require the Comptroller General of the United States to report on access to credit for small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4480

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 ''Successful Entrepreneurship for Reservists and Veterans Act'' or the ''SERV Act''.

SEC. 2. REPORTING REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.

Section 32(c) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657b(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) REPORT.—Along with the budget justification documents for the Small Business Administration submitted to Congress in connection with the budget for a fiscal year submitted under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the Administrator shall submit a report—

''(A) discussing the appointments made to and activities of the task force; and

''(B) identifying and outlining a plan for outreach and promotion of the programs and services for veterans, including Veteran Business Outreach Centers, Boots to Business, Boots to Business Reboot, Service-Disabled Entrepreneurship Development Training Program, Veteran Institute for Procurement, Women Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Program, and Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship.''.

SEC. 3. GAO REPORT ON ACCESS TO CREDIT.

(a) REPORT ON ACCESS TO CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report on the ability of small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals to access credit to—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include, to the extent practicable, an analysis of—

(A) the sources of credit used by small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals and the average percentage of the credit obtained from each source by such concerns;

(B) the default rate for small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals, disaggregated by each source of credit described in subparagraph (A), as compared to the default rate for the source of credit for small business concerns generally;

(C) the Federal lending programs available to provide credit to small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals;

(D) gaps, if any, in the availability of credit for small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals that are not being filled by the Federal Government or private sources;

(E) obstacles faced by covered individuals in trying to access credit;

(F) the extent to which deployment and other military responsibilities affect the credit history of veterans and Reservists; and

(G) the extent to which covered individuals are aware of Federal programs targeted towards helping covered individuals access credit.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—The term ''covered individual'' means—

(A) a veteran;

(B) a service-disabled veteran;

(C) a Reservist;

(D) the spouse of an individual described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C); or

(E) the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces.

(2) RESERVIST.—The term ''Reservist'' means a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, as described in section 10101 of title 10, United States Code.

(3) SMALL BUSINESS ACT DEFINITIONS.—The terms ''service-disabled veteran'', ''small business concern'', and ''veteran'' have the meanings given those terms, respectively, under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

SEC. 4. COMPLIANCE WITH CUTGO.

No additional amounts are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 4480, also known as the SERV Act, introduced by Representatives DAVIDS of Kansas and ALFORD of Missouri.

Our Nation's veterans have an incredible impact on our small business community. The skills veterans gained in the military make them leaders uniquely positioned to start and grow successful businesses. Unfortunately, veterans often face barriers when starting or growing their businesses which can feel insurmountable. In May, the Committee on Small Business heard directly from veterans on how access to capital as well as awareness of available resources are major barriers to them.

The SERV Act seeks to identify these barriers and directs the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development to create an action plan to improve outreach to veterans informing them of available resources to address their unique needs. If we are spending taxpayer dollars to help these individuals, then we must ensure they are making the greatest impact possible.

Mr. Speaker, I, once again, thank the sponsors of this legislation, I urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 4480, the Successful Entrepreneurship for Reservists and Veterans Act, also known as the SERV Act, as amended.

Veteran entrepreneurs are powerful economic engines and job creators. More than 2.4 million veteran businessowners employ more than 5.7 million Americans and contribute approximately $1.2 trillion annually to our GDP.

With that said, one of the biggest challenges facing veteran-owned small businesses is access to capital. Servicemembers report that it can be difficult to build credit while serving in the military, and studies have shown that a higher percentage of veterans are turned down for loans.

The SERV Act requires GAO to conduct a study on the availability of credit to veteran-owned, service-disabled-, and reservist-owned small businesses. The study would provide a report on the obstacles facing veterans, including the extent to which deployment and other military responsibilities affect their credit histories.

Most importantly, it requires the SBA Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development to create an outreach plan to promote the many valuable programs available to help veteran small business owners.

Representative DAVIDS has been a staunch supporter of efforts to aid veteran entrepreneurs. She first introduced this legislation in the 116th Congress, and it passed the House with broad bipartisan support.

As the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access in the 117th Congress, she led efforts to make capital more affordable for all small firms.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this bill to ensure Congress is working to address the challenges veteran small employers face, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD).

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of H.R. 4480 because, as Members of Congress, it is our duty to protect and support our Nation's veterans.

Earlier this year, it was my distinct pleasure to have Lieutenant Commander Taylor Burks of Missouri's Fourth Congressional District and a former opponent of mine in the primary for this very congressional seat, testify at a Small Business Committee hearing on veteran entrepreneurship.

We learned not only about the unique skill set veterans can bring to the small business environment, but also the obstacles they face when trying to open small businesses and live out the American Dream and the challenge of even finding the programs available through the Small Business Administration.

It was very important for all Members to hear how the committee and the Small Business Administration can better serve those who have served our great Nation.

As a result, my colleague Representative SHARICE DAVIDS of Kansas and I introduced the Successful Entrepreneurship for Reservists and Veterans, or SERV Act.

This bipartisan legislation, which passed through the Small Business Committee unanimously, will help veteran small business owners and entrepreneurs succeed by studying the barriers when starting a business.

This bill will commission a report on the outreach and promotion of existing veteran-focused small business programs to make sure that veterans can access all available resources, capital, and credit.

There are programs out there, but a lot of veterans have never heard of them, such as the Veterans Business Outreach Centers, the Boots to Business program, and service-disabled veteran-owned small business contracting programs.

This legislation also mandates the Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development to devise an outreach and promotion strategy for these programs and many others available to veterans transitioning into the business world.

Veterans' service to our Nation should not end with difficulties in accessing capital and resources. With transparency and increased reporting, we can better ensure that they receive the support that they deserve.

I am proud to co-lead the SERV Act with my neighboring district Representative and colleague, Congresswoman SHARICE DAVIDS of Kansas, to promote veteran entrepreneurship in our great Nation.

This bill is a win for our districts. It is a win for veterans. It is a win for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. DAVIDS).

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in strong support of the Successful Entrepreneurship for Reservists and Veterans Act, or the SERV Act, which I introduced alongside my friend and colleague from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD).

The SERV Act not only honors our veterans; it honors their service. It empowers our veterans to embark on a new chapter as entrepreneurs and small business owners.

My mom served in the Army for 20 years. My grandfather served, as well. Through them, I learned so much about service, about leadership, and certainly about the dedication to country.

Our veterans have defended our freedoms from so many things and with unwavering commitment. We absolutely owe it to them to provide the support that they need to achieve personal and professional success as they return home.

The SERV Act is a testament to that commitment that we have to the brave veterans that have served, and it is necessary because veterans do face distinct barriers when transitioning to civilian life, specifically when starting a business.

Those challenges can include overcoming stigmas around physical disability or post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as difficulty accessing credit. It forces small businesses to sometimes turn to alternative lenders, which can be predatory or more expensive than traditional sources. While those challenges exist for all potential entrepreneurs and our small business owners, it can be especially difficult for our veterans who often have trouble accruing credit necessary to attract and attain capital.

These barriers have led to a 35 percent decrease in veterans starting small businesses since World War II, and the U.S. Small Business Administration currently works closely with the VA and the Department of Defense on several excellent programs that we heard about from my colleague, Mr. ALFORD, specifically designed to help our veterans transition to civilian life and entrepreneurship, but those programs are not always as easy to find as they should be.

The SERV Act recognizes those unique challenges and works to address them directly, fostering economic growth at the local level and harnessing the immense potential that our veteran communities have.

One key provision of this legislation is the commission of a Government Accountability Office report on the ability of veterans and reservists to access capital and credit, which are crucial building blocks to opening a business.

This report would include analysis on common sources of credit and how deployment of credit impacts our servicemembers and their individual credit.

Moreover, the bill requires an Interagency Task Force at the SBA to develop an action plan for greater outreach of programs that already exist for veterans transitioning into the business world. That task force would report its findings annually to Congress on how the SBA can better support veterans, service-disabled veterans, reservists, and their families.

The district I represent in Kansas includes a large rural population, and we know that businesses with fewer than 500 employees account for a majority of our rural establishments and employers.

By supporting our veteran entrepreneurs and making it easier for them to start small businesses, we are boosting local economies in both urban and rural settings. I often say that due to the specialized training and learned skill set, there are few people that are as well suited to start and operate a small business as our veterans.

The SERV Act is going to help those folks who served in uniform do just that. By providing enhanced access to SBA resources and programs, we are investing in the entrepreneurial spirit of our veterans. We are fostering economic growth. We are strengthening our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues, alongside my friend, Mr. ALFORD, on both sides of the aisle to stand united in support of this crucial legislation which did pass the House in a largely bipartisan way in the last Congress.

Let us send a powerful message to our veterans that we appreciate their service, their sacrifice, and that we are dedicated to helping them succeed in their endeavors, both while serving and after they hang up their uniform.

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, our country is experiencing a small business boom and veteran entrepreneurship is helping to lead the way.

SBA offers a number of counseling and training programs that can help them either launch or grow a small business. It is vitally important that we increase the awareness of SBA programs and services, particularly among veterans.

I applaud Ms. DAVIDS and Mr. ALFORD for their commitment to our Nation's veterans, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4480, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank Chairman WILLIAMS for bringing these six bills to the floor and for working in a bipartisan manner. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4480 is a step in the right direction. It is about our veterans, and what is more important than our veterans. Congressman ALFORD and Congresswoman DAVIDS have it right. It needs to be passed. We need to pass it tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for her support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS) that the House suspend the

rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4480, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING ON HAMAS TO IMMEDIATELY RELEASE HOSTAGES TAKEN DURING OCTOBER 2023 ATTACK ON ISRAEL

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 793) calling on Hamas to immediately release hostages taken during October 2023 attack on Israel.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 793

Whereas, on October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a brutal terrorist attack from Gaza into Israel and against the Israeli people;

Whereas, on October 16, 2023, the Israeli military confirmed that Hamas killed more than 1,400 people in the attack;

Whereas, on October 15, 2023, the United States Department of State confirmed that at least 30 Americans were killed in the attack;

Whereas, on October 16, 2023, the Israeli military confirmed that Hamas was holding 199 hostages in Gaza who were abducted during the attack;

Whereas Common Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions states that the taking of hostages is and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever;

Whereas, on October 10, 2023, President Joe Biden confirmed that Americans are known to be among the hostages;

Whereas it is reported that children and senior citizens are among the hostages; and

Whereas Hamas has threatened to execute hostages and videotape the killings: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns Hamas for its brutal attack on Israel;

(2) condemns Hamas for the taking of hostages;

(3) condemns Hamas for threats made against hostages;

(4) demands that Hamas immediately release all hostages and return them to safety;

(5) recognizes that the taking of hostages is a violation of international humanitarian law; and

(6) expresses sympathy to the hostages, wounded, deceased, and their families for this travesty to justice and personal hardship.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. 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 measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, on October 7, Israel suffered one of the worst days in its history as it came under attack by the Hamas terror group. These terrorists stormed across the border at Gaza and murdered 1,200 people and took 240 innocent people hostage, dragging them against their will into Gaza.

From elderly Holocaust survivors to young babies, Hamas did not discriminate in its cruelty.

Mr. Speaker, American citizens are still among the hostages. Many of us in this House have met with these hostage families. The pain and suffering that these families are enduring is beyond what any human should have to go through.

Young children forced to be witness to their parents' murder right in front of them, babies ripped from their mothers arms, teenagers at a music festival gunned down.

The atrocities that were committed that day and the glee with which the terrorists acted is unimaginable, Mr. Speaker, and it is the height of human depravity.

Hamas filmed and broadcast these atrocities. This savage, sick terrorist group wanted to brag to the world about the massacre at their hands.

These terrorists, Mr. Speaker, are monsters, and we have not seen this type of violence and cruelty since ISIS was running rampant in the Levant. The Jewish people have not witnessed this much diabolical death in one day since the Holocaust.

After holding these hostages for 7 long weeks, Hamas has agreed to release some of these innocent women and children in an exchange for Israel temporarily pausing its military campaign and releasing Palestinians in jail.

All of us on this House floor are grateful for those hostage releases, and we are grateful for the leadership of the United States, Qatar, and the Government of Israel to achieve that modicum of peace and help for those families.

However, listen to the deal, Mr. Speaker. It was three jailed criminals for each innocent person captured and drug across the Gaza fence line on October 7. Despite the good news that we have witnessed in the last few days, Hamas is still holding over 150 innocent people.

Hamas must release all the remaining hostages. The United States continues to stand alongside our ally Israel in their fight to secure that safe release of all the hostages unconditionally and safely.

It was an honor and privilege working together with Congresswoman HALEY STEVENS, and I am so proud to be on the House floor tonight alongside Congresswoman HALEY STEVENS to introduce this resolution.

With this resolution, the House of Representatives strongly condemns Hamas' attack. It calls on Hamas to immediately and unconditionally release all the hostages taken on October 7.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee has marked up this legislation earlier in the month, and it received unanimous support. I expect it will receive that today on this House floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to stand with the hostages, with their families, and support this measure.

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

□ 1730

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 793, calling on Hamas to immediately release hostages taken during the October 7 gruesome and savage attack on Israel. I am grateful for my dear friend and colleague from Michigan, Representative HALEY STEVENS, for introducing the resolution together with my friend, Representative FRENCH HILL.

Representative STEVENS' extraordinary leadership on hostage and wrongful detention issues has given a voice to families of hostages and detainees and helped ensure that we never relent in our pursuit of bringing wrongfully detained Americans home.

The Hamas terror attack on October 7 resulted in the abduction of more than 240 innocent civilians and the heinous murder of more than 1,200 people.

In specifically targeting a civilian population, Hamas' abductions are among the greatest crimes against humanity. The sheer scale of the casualties and murder is the greatest attack against the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

Hamas has compounded the unimaginable human suffering it has caused through the use of its own people and the hostages as human shields, something we should never forget.

The hostages abducted by Hamas include civilians, soldiers, women, children, grandparents, and Holocaust survivors. Many are Israeli. Some are foreign or dual nationals, including American citizens.

Dozens of hostages have finally been released, thanks to the painstaking, difficult, and necessary negotiations assisted by the United States, including President Biden, and Qatar. I hope that, after this latest round of releases, we will continue to work to bring home all the remaining hostages.

This resolution calls attention to these abductions perpetrated by Hamas. Hamas specifically captured these innocent people so they could be used as bargaining chips and human shields while Hamas attempts to wipe Israel off the map.

Yet, while the situation is dire, there is hope. There are experienced public servants across the United States Government who have already helped secure the release of some Americans and dozens of other hostages from Hamas'

clutches. These dedicated officials in the White House, the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, the Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell, and elsewhere across our government continue their tireless work to bring all the remaining American hostages and all the hostages home.

This resolution is simple and straightforward. It condemns the horrific actions of Hamas, correctly notes that hostage taking is a violation of international humanitarian law, expresses solidarity with the victims, and demands Hamas release all hostages immediately.

It is incredibly important that we give it our full support to send a clear message about the need to bring them home. We must stand with the hostages and their families in Israel and all over the world until they come home.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and, in particular, Representative STEVENS for her tireless efforts on behalf of these Americans and their families and all Americans taken hostage or wrongfully detained overseas.

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER), a very passionate supporter of our ally Israel and a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, I was in Israel with Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member MEEKS, and a bipartisan delegation. We met with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and we watched 21 minutes of unedited, raw footage of the October 7 terrorist attack. We watched Hamas terrorists indiscriminately kill women, children, and babies. We watched them take innocent civilians hostage, including Doron Katz Asher and her two daughters, Raz and Aviv. Doron's uncle is a constituent of mine in the 17th Congressional District of New York.

We met with families of the hostages, including the brother of Emily Hand. I sat next to him as he tearfully told his sister's story, bringing the rest of us to tears as he talked about the fact that his 8-year-old sister would spend her ninth birthday—the Friday after our meeting—alone, held captive by Hamas terrorists.

A few weeks ago, in New York City, I met with the mother of Or Yaakov and Yagil Yaakov, 13- and 16-year-old young men who were held captive. All of them have since been released.

I thank the administration for negotiating to get their release, but let's be clear: Hamas is a vile, barbaric terrorist organization.

We hear Members calling for a cease-fire. There was a cease-fire on October 6. In fact, there have been eight cease-fires in 15 years, each time violated by Hamas. In this most recent one, the biggest slaughtering of Jews since the Holocaust, 240 innocents were taken away from their families.

While they are releasing hostages, it is not enough. I have a simple way for this to end. If people want a cease-fire, Hamas must surrender. It is that simple. We want these hostages home, and we want to make sure that the innocent lives lost are not in vain.

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, we saw news reports that Hamas would not release a 10-month-old baby and, in fact, was turning that baby over to another terrorist organization. That is the type of people, if you can even call them that, who you are dealing with.

The United States must do everything it can to stand by its greatest ally in the Middle East and, indeed, across the world, the State of Israel. We will vote on a resolution that makes it clear that not only does Israel have a right to exist, but they have a right to defend themselves, and the only way that this ends peacefully is for Hamas to surrender.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from the great State of Michigan (Ms. STEVENS).

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding. She is a true leader in this country on Middle East issues. I also thank the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. MCCAUL, for his steady hand and dedication to leading the Foreign Affairs Committee during this pivotal moment in world history and for moving this resolution forward alongside the ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the indefatigable former Chairman MEEKS.

Congressman FRENCH HILL and I chair the Congressional Task Force on American Hostages and Americans Wrongfully Detained Abroad, and I thank him for being my lead sponsor on this bill. It is an honor to work with him in that capacity. This resolution speaks to our collaboration and dedication to the hostages taken by Hamas on October 7.

On October 7, a day that will live in infamy, 1,200 were killed in a surprise attack during a Jewish holiday. The attack didn't stop there because over 200 were taken hostage in one of the greatest hostage takings in world history.

We are now in a moment when the House of Representatives is called to speak, to demand on behalf of our government the return of all the hostages held in Gaza.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hundreds of cosponsors and supporters of this resolution. It is worth noting that fellow Members of Congress who span the country and the political spectrum have joined together to call out Hamas.

Mr. Speaker, the time is more than now. We have seen some hostages in the last handful of days being returned, and now we have learned of their harrowing time held in tunnels, nearly starved, with no beds. Right now, too many are left in those tunnels injured, uncared for, and victimized at the hands of those who killed their fellow countrymen and -women.

Introduced on October 17, a week-and-a-half into this hostage nightmare, this resolution, H. Res. 793, called out Hamas and demanded the return of the innocents—women, elderly, children, infants. Over the weekend, Israel and her allies secured the release of 58 hostages at 7 weeks into captivity. On Monday, 11 more hostages were released. Just moments ago, we have learned of more, for a total of 85. Among those are Aviv Asher, age 2; her sister Raz, age 4; Emma Cunio, age 3; Yuli Cunio, age 3; Avigail Idan, age 4; and Oria Brodutch, age 4—toddlers, children, preschoolers, the most innocent people on planet Earth. Those freed also included senior citizens: Yafa Adar, age 85; Elma Avraham, age 84; and Channa Peri, age 79.

Why on Earth did Hamas take these people? Why did they force them to watch the murder of their loved ones? This is absolutely unconscionable, and it is an attack on all humanity.

These people have been used as pawns. We are relieved that some are home, but we must condemn those who have kidnapped. We must condemn the terrorists who seek to attack the Jewish state. They have brutally killed relatives, neighbors, and fellow Israelis. We must continue to push to return the remaining hostages.

Let us not forget that over 150 remain in Gaza, and many of those released still have family members held—nearly 200 people held for 52 days at gunpoint. Nine Americans continue to be held.

Hundreds of families are waiting with bated breath for the return of their precious loved ones, waiting for relief and joy or the worst pain known to humankind. We cannot even imagine their anguish. It is unfathomable. What Hamas did was evil, and it was an attack on the Jewish state.

□ 1745

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS).

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I cannot in my allotted time name those who are remaining in Gaza, but we are making progress, and we will come together united as a House of Representatives to condemn this evil.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for her passionate words and her outstanding work in crafting this H. Res. 793, which calls on Hamas to release everyone unconditionally to return to their families.

Ms. STEVENS has done a great thing. Between us, we come to this House

floor with some 236 cosponsors for this resolution, Mr. Speaker.

I would certainly hope that on both sides of this aisle that we have a unanimous vote on this important statement of the American people, representing the American people, calling out against the atrocities that have been committed against the innocent people in Israel.

I thank my friend from Michigan, too, for our work together and partnership and co-chairing the Congressional Task Force on American Hostages and Americans Wrongly Detained Abroad.

This is important work. It has been truly tested in these past 7 weeks. Our congressional family is grieving with our Israeli families and other nationalities who have someone as a murder victim of these terrorists or someone who remains a hostage of these terrorists.

It is our goal to be a resource to our fellow Members through that task force to try to help them work with our State Department and make sure those families understand what information they can have and how they can be helped through this challenge. We want to bring all these Americans home.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I just would say we were all on the front steps of the Capitol together, Democrats and Republicans, and we stood as Americans that night with our new Speaker, MIKE JOHNSON; our minority leader, HAKEEM JEFFRIES; Ms. STEVENS, myself, our colleagues; our committee chairs, Mr. MEEKS of New York as our ranking member of Foreign Affairs; and our committee chairman, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, in solidarity against the atrocities in Gaza and in Israel.

That night, I had the opportunity to have the most wonderful visit with the most hopeful mother, Adi Marciano—a beautiful woman.

We hugged and talked, and we had in the candlelight of that moment on the House steps a moment of hope, but just a few hours later, she learned that her daughter, Noa, 19 years old, Mr. Speaker, a soldier in the Israel Defense Forces, was among the murdered, not among the hostages.

We don't want to forget those who have been killed in this process as we pray for the release of the hostages, and we call politically on this House floor for the release of the hostages.

We lift up these families, and we lift up all those who are grieving over the loss and tragedy on both sides of the fence in Gaza.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H. Res. 793. I reserve the balance of my time, and I have no additional speakers.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent the past 6 weeks meeting with families of innocent civilians who were taken hostage by Hamas.

Just like the stories of Holocaust survivors, each story is unique. Each story is heartbreaking because each of these hostages has loving family members whose lives have been torn apart, who are living with the agony of not knowing what has become of their loved ones. Are they okay? Are they healthy? Are they injured? Are they alive? Will they ever see them again?

I have heard stories that have brought me to tears, that haunt my dreams, that should make all of us redouble our efforts to bring those hostages home.

Mr. Speaker, the past few days have seen significant breakthroughs in attempts to bring the hostages held by Hamas home to their families. Dozens of hostages, including a few Americans, have been released, especially over the past few days.

I applaud the efforts of this administration, Israel, Qatar, and others who have worked to ensure that the temporary cease-fire holds and that the agreed-upon hostages are released, but there is much more work to be done.

Even after these last rounds of releases, dozens of hostages still remain imprisoned by Hamas. This is unacceptable.

We cannot afford to go back to the status quo. It is imperative that the United States, Israel, and our other allies and partners continue to press forward with efforts to secure the release of all the remaining hostages, including Keith Siegel from my State of North Carolina, including Yarden Roman who made the excruciating decision to hand her daughter, Geffen, to her husband, Alon, because he could run faster to escape the terrorists and save their daughter.

Yarden herself is the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor whose great-grandparents made the same excruciating decision to sacrifice themselves for their daughter.

There are more than 150 more young people, mothers, fathers, civilians, soldiers, Americans, Israelis, Thai, and others. We must continue to work so that they can be brought home and reunited with their families.

I strongly support this resolution. Again, I thank Representative STEVENS for all her work on this issue and on this resolution, and I urge all my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for leading the discussion on our House floor today on the gentlewoman from Michigan's excellent resolution, H. Res. 793.

I am proud to be a cosponsor, proud to stand with 236 Members on both sides of the aisle to demand an unconditional release of those still held hostage by the terrorists in Gaza and their coconspirators.

I urge a ''yes'' vote, Mr. Speaker, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 793.

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. HILL. 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 motion will be postponed.

REAFFIRMING THE STATE OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 888) reaffirming the State of Israel's right to exist.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 888

Whereas the Jewish people are native to the Land of Israel;

Whereas throughout history and across the reign of multiple kingdoms, the Jewish people were persecuted and expelled from the Land of Israel, forced to live as minority diaspora communities in other lands;

Whereas Jewish diaspora communities were historically violently persecuted in, and in some cases expelled from, other countries throughout the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Asia due to their religion;

Whereas the Nazis attempted to annihilate the entire Jewish population of Europe during the Holocaust, murdering 6,000,000 Jews during this time;

Whereas this genocide provided new urgency to re-establish a Jewish homeland for the Jewish people following the Holocaust, where they would not be a vulnerable minority, where they could freely practice their faith, and where something like the Holocaust could never happen again;

Whereas the modern State of Israel was established on May 14, 1948;

Whereas even after the establishment of the State of Israel, other countries and terrorist entities continued to attack Israel, reject its right to exist, and call for its destruction; and

Whereas Israel is the only Jewish State, and therefore, despite persistent external threats, the existence of Israel provides Jews a place to live free from persecution and discrimination: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms the State of Israel's right to exist;

(2) recognizes that denying Israel's right to exist is a form of antisemitism;

(3) rejects calls for Israel's destruction and the elimination of the only Jewish State; and

(4) condemns the Hamas-led terrorist attack on Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAWLER. 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 measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to urge the House to agree to my resolution that reaffirms Israel's fundamental right to exist.

This is a pretty simple and straightforward resolution. Israel has a right to exist. You either believe that or you don't. The American people should see very clearly whether or not the Members of Congress affirm Israel's right to exist.

President Harry Truman recognized Israel 11 minutes after its founding. America was the first country to recognize the State of Israel, and for good reason.

Over the last 75 years, Israel has become the greatest ally of the United States—our shared values, shared heritage. The relationship between our two Nations is unbreakable.

I fundamentally believe that the terrorist attacks of October 7 perpetrated by Hamas are about one thing: Hamas does not believe Israel has the right to exist. Hamas wants to eradicate the Jewish people from the face of the Earth. They say so.

Other bad actors like Hezbollah share that perspective. Iran, the greatest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, the backer and funder of Hamas, has been calling for the eradication of the State of Israel for millennia. They don't believe they have the right to exist.

This resolution seeks to reaffirm the commitment made by President Truman upon Israel's founding. We not only recognize Israel, we reaffirm Israel's fundamental right to exist.

In the wake of the horrific October 7 attacks on Israel, we saw Members of this body and other opponents of Israel call for the elimination of Israel. When they chant: ''From the river to the sea, Palestine shall be free,'' they mean that Israel will not exist.

I want Palestinians to be free. I want them to be free from their oppressors: Hamas and the Palestinian authority.

Hamas has used Palestinians as human shields even until today. As Israel prosecutes this war against this terrorist organization, Hamas uses Palestinians as human shields, camping out in hospitals and schools, launching missiles, shooting innocent civilians.

I watched in horror the 21-minute unedited, raw footage of the October 7 terrorist attack. Every Member of Congress was offered the opportunity to watch a 45-minute viewing of that attack.

Nearly half of Congress chose not to come, including some of the Members who have made it clear that they don't support Israel's right to exist.

□ 1800

On college campuses and city streets, we see people calling for an intifada, actively promoting the destruction of the Jewish state. Everyone has a right to say what they want about a foreign government, to say what they want about war, but they don't have the right to delegitimize the very existence of the Jewish state to justify terror.

The State of Israel was created 75 years ago to reestablish the native homeland of the Jewish people. For centuries, Jews were discriminated against and persecuted wherever they went. This culminated in the attempted genocide of European Jews during the Holocaust; 6 million Jews slaughtered.

This most recent genocide provides new urgency to reestablish the Jewish homeland where the Jewish people were displaced, and we wanted to create a homeland where they weren't a vulnerable minority, where they could freely practice their faith, and where something like the Holocaust could never happen again.

Yet, on October 7, we saw the largest slaughtering of Jews since the Holocaust. Yet, still today, many Jews view Israel as the safest place for them to live, even as rockets and missiles come from all sides.

Denying Israel's right to exist is denying the Jewish people the right to self-determination. It is denying the Jewish people's historic ties to the land. It is justifying war crimes against babies, and let's call it what it is, it is anti-Semitic.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense resolution that makes one thing fundamentally clear: Israel has a right to exist. Congress must never stop pushing back against Israel's opponents, and we must reject biased attempts to destroy our greatest ally.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 888 introduced by my friends, Representatives MIKE LAWLER and JARED MOSKOWITZ.

Mr. Speaker, on many occasions this House of Representatives has reaffirmed Israel's right to exist, and it is important that we do so again today. It is incomprehensible to me that after Hamas' horrific terrorist attack on October 7, the largest attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust, we are seeing a growing wave of anti-Semitism rear its ugly head at home and around the world.

Since Israel's independence in 1948 and its admission into the United Nations the following year, international law has mandated Israel's right to exist. Yet, as of this year, 28 of the 193 United Nation member states still do not recognize Israeli sovereignty.

The terrorist organization, Hamas, has declared that Israel has no right to exist and for decades has targeted Israel for destruction with suicide bombs, with missiles and rockets, and most recently, with gruesome and savage terror attacks targeting civilians.

The destruction of Israel and the killing of Jews is Hamas' sole focus. They have murdered babies, raped women, executed parents in front of their children, and massacred 260 young people at a music festival. They have taken 250 innocent civilians, including American citizens, hostage.

They are not working to help the Palestinian people who elected them. Indeed, the Palestinian people are shamelessly used and abused by Hamas as human shields.

As a proud, lifelong supporter of a two-state solution, I know that with Hamas in control of 2 million Palestinians in Gaza, real progress on a two-state solution cannot being achieved. Hamas has always only ever played spoiler. The same is true of Iran's other regional proxies, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and others, who also exist only to destabilize and destroy Israel, not to strive for a two-state solution.

There cannot be peace when a party to a conflict doesn't recognize the other parties' right to exist. With recognition comes peace and mutual prosperity, security, and innovation. That is why efforts to facilitate and expand the Abraham Accords are so historic and important. The Abraham Accords countries, along with Egypt and Jordan, all recognize this fact and are advancing their nations in the spirit of regional cooperation and peace.

Here at home, whether it is on public streets, on college campuses, or online, we have seen a deeply disturbing and aggressive increase and despicable call for Israel to cease existing as a Jewish State.

The phrase, ''from the river to the sea,'' a sickening call for the destruction of the State of Israel and the genocide of the Jewish people, has become a rallying cry for those hoping for Israel's destruction. Calling for total Palestinian control of all Israeli territory from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea is a call to eliminate the Jewish State of Israel.

This resolution states that denying Israel's right to exist is a form of anti-Semitism. I wholeheartedly agree with this statement. To be clear, it is not necessarily anti-Semitic to criticize the State of Israel or its leaders for particular policies. That is free speech, and no country is above criticism for its policies, including our own. It is absolutely anti-Semitic to treat Israel as a pariah based on the claim that Jews alone should be denied the right to define themselves as a people and to exercise any form of national self-determination.

This is the crucial difference. It is anti-Semitism, and we must totally reject it.

In 2015, former President Barack Obama stated the following in an interview: I think it would be a moral failing for me as President of the United

States, a moral failing for America, and a moral failing for the world if we did not protect Israel and stand up for its right to exist, because that would negate not just the history of the 20th century, it would negate the history of the past millennium.

Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with that statement. For thousands of years, Jews have suffered persecution and lack the safety and stability of a homeland. Today, the modern Jewish State of Israel thrives in the ancient Jewish Holy Land where it is a robust democracy and productive and treasured member of the international community of nations.

Israel has signed peace treaties with two of its most important neighbors and has come to the table for many rounds of peace negotiations with the Palestinians. Israel is a country that wants peace, whereas Hamas and its Iranian patron do not.

Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people and will always remain a place of refuge where Jews can be truly safe and control their own destiny. Israel is certainly worthy of the support of this House and the United States of America.

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

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 888 reaffirming the State of Israel's right to exist.

I thank my good friend from New York, MIKE LAWLER, for introducing this timely, extremely important, and ever-necessary resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Israel is the only state in the world whose fundamental right to exist is openly denied by other states. Some of them, including Iran, even call for Israel's complete destruction and support transnational terrorist organizations to work toward its demise.

It is also the only state in the world whose fundamental right to exist is constantly undermined and challenged by intergovernmental organizations, such as and most shamefully of all, the United Nations.

The anti-Semitism motivating those who deny Israel's right to exist is apparent, but it is important to connect, as this resolution does, the denial of Israel's right to exist, to anti-Semitism, and to connect them both as enabling causes to the monstrous crimes Hamas has unleashed on Israel.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, anti-Semitic bigotry is at the root of the U.N.'s hostility toward Israel, which is ugly, evil, and manifests itself at almost every U.N. entity.

On November 8, I chaired a hearing of my subcommittee, and we called it United Nations' Bigotry Towards Israel.

We heard expert testimony from Hillel Neuer, the executive director of U.N. Watch; and Jonathan Schanzer, the senior vice president for research at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies.

Hillel Neuer testified: ''Teachers and schools at the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, which runs education and social services for Palestinians, regularly call to murder Jews, and create teaching materials that glorify terrorism, encourage martyrdom, demonize Israelis, and incite anti-Semitism.''

He further said: ''In 2022 alone, UNRWA received $344 million in U.S. funding. Yet, a March 2023 report by U.N. Watch and Impact-SE identified 133 UNRWA educators and staff who were found to promote hate and violence on social media, and an additional 82 teachers and other staff affiliated with 30 UNRWA schools who were involved in drafting and distributing hateful content to their students.''

That is just the tip of the iceberg.

Jonathan Schanzer testified that: ''The U.N. doesn't recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization. Nor does it recognize Hezbollah either. That means U.N. resources can be and regularly are provided to members of those terrorist groups.''

Mr. Speaker, according to the great human rights defender, Nathan Sharansky's famous 3–D test for anti-Semitism, which he articulated at a hearing that I chaired way back in 2004, criticism of Israel is nothing less than anti-Semitic when it passes over into the demonization of Jews and Israel, delegitimizes the Jewish state, or applies double standards; that is, one standard for Israel, and another for every other country on Earth.

That is what many U.N. entities and agencies do every single day.

Yesterday, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the JTA, reported on the latest example of the double standard and said: ''Nearly 50 days after Hamas' attack on Israel left 1,200 dead, and after weeks of criticism over its silence about allegations of sexual violence during the attack, the women's rights group, U.N. Women, issued a statement condemning the terror group on Friday.

Then it deleted the post.''

Here is what it said originally:

''''We condemn the brutal attack by Hamas on October 7 and continue to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages,' read the initial statement posted on U.N. Women's Instagram page.

It was soon replaced with a statement that dropped the condemnation of Hamas and only called for the release of hostages.''

Mr. Speaker, there are so many examples.

In 2022, the U.N. General Assembly targeted Israel in a total of 15 harshly critical resolutions, compared to 13 country-specific resolutions for the entire world: China, North Korea, Iran; 13 for all of them combined, 15 for Israel.

In large measure, it is because of the U.N., which unquestionably is the world's foremost legitimizer of anti-Semitism, that it remains necessary, 75 years after the founding of the great State of Israel, to reaffirm its right to exist.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague from New York, and my friend from Florida, for authoring this important resolution.

□ 1815

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MOSKOWITZ).

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, Israel has a right to exist. There are only two ways to vote on this. Either you vote ''yes'' or you vote ''no.'' ''No'' means you do not believe Israel should be a country. ''No'' means you believe a country should be wiped off the face of the Earth. A ''present'' vote means you do not believe Israel should be a country. Hanging out in the cloakroom, having a hot dog, or missing the vote means Israel shouldn't be a country.

This is a moment for people in this body, on a bipartisan basis, to stand together and say they believe Israel has a right to exist.

Hamas doesn't think Israel has a right to exist. Hezbollah doesn't think Israel has a right to exist. Iran doesn't think Israel has a right to exist. People who vote ''no'' or vote ''present'' side with them. They pick a side with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran.

I don't want to hear excuses. ''Oh, I didn't like this 'whereas' clause,'' or, ''Oh, there was a period or a comma out of place,'' as if somehow we always vote on perfect resolutions around here. Again, it is an opportunity to show the world that we believe Israel has a right to exist.

We see anti-Semitism in the streets and at rallies. At cease-fire rallies, which is a foreign policy position, we see people holding signs that say: ''Gas the Jews,'' ''Kill the Jews,'' and ''Cleanse the Jews.'' That is not a foreign policy. If it is, it is a foreign policy of Germany in the early 1940s.

This is a moment for people in this body, some of whom sit in the rows behind me, to show they believe Israel has a right to exist.

I am for a two-state solution, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important that the Palestinian people get a state. But rest assured, in that two-state solution, one of those states is going to be Israel.

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I conclude with this: Anyone who believes that Israel doesn't have a right to exist is calling for genocide. We hear that word thrown around a lot now on

social media, ''genocide.'' We have a war in the Middle East. We don't have genocide.

If you believe a country should not exist, the millions of people in that country should also not exist, which means you are calling for genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to vote ''yes'' on this resolution. Israel has a right to exist.

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. AMO), the newest member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to affirm our ally Israel's right to exist.

The unprovoked October 7 attack by Hamas has left a deep wound. Israel has a right to defend itself against this barbarism consistent with international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians.

Far too many Israeli families do not know the fate of their loved ones at the hands of Hamas. While some have relief, there are still many who need to be reunited with their families. My hope is that the success President Biden has had will secure the release of all the hostages.

Importantly, the extended pause has meant additional humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the innocent Palestinian families in Gaza for whom Hamas has no regard. There must be sustained and safe access to food, water, and medical care.

Paramount is the prevention of this conflict from spreading, preserving stability in the Middle East, and working toward a durable peace.

These events have brought forward a rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Anti-Semitic incidents have involved violent assaults on Jewish students on college campuses and protesters extolling terrorist organizations.

Close to home, I was especially horrified that this past weekend, three students of Palestinian descent, one a Brown University student, were shot. I pray for their recovery and that the assailant be brought to justice.

This crisis of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia demands an urgent and collective response. There is no place for violence or hate in America.

In recognition of Israel's right to exist and for the immediate release of hostages taken during the October 7 attack, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 888 and H. Res. 793.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, the Jewish people have connections to the State of Israel that go back thousands of years. Indeed, the Jewish people are indigenous to that land.

Yes, Israel has a right to exist. This multicultural, multiethnic, multireligious nation, a nation of laws, a nation with free speech and free press, a nation of innovation, and a vibrant, thriving democracy, an incredible country, has much to teach the world and will continue to do so. This country, our only democratic ally in the Middle East, is here to stay.

This resolution puts the House of Representatives on record as affirming the State of Israel's right to exist. It recognizes that denying Israel's right to exist is a form of anti-Semitism. It rejects calls for Israel's destruction and the elimination of the only Jewish state and condemns the October 7 Hamas-led terrorist attack on the State of Israel and its people.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution, and I urge all my colleagues to do the same. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

It should be clear by now to each and every Member of this body on both sides of the aisle and every American that Israel has a right to exist. This sentiment is unequivocal and is a critical point to unequivocally voice now in our ally's time of need.

Harry Truman recognized the State of Israel 11 minutes after its founding. For 75 years, the United States and Israel have had a special bond. Israel is the only multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious democracy in the Middle East. It is a beacon of hope, of freedom, and of opportunity.

If anyone in this body believes that they do not have the right to exist, please explain to us and the American people what nation does.

This is a simple vote, and every Member should be on record in support of Israel's right to exist. If they cannot muster the courage to support Israel's right to exist at this moment, they don't belong in Congress, period.

This is a simple vote, and I encourage all of my colleagues to stand with Israel, to defend and reaffirm their very right to exist, and to defend the right of the Jewish people to practice their faith.

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 New York (Mr. LAWLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 888.

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. LAWLER. 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 motion will be postponed.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS REQUIRED TO ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO TO FULFILL ITS WATER DELIVERIES ON AN ANNUAL BASIS TO THE UNITED STATES UNDER THE TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 683) expressing support for the diplomatic relations required to encourage the Government of Mexico to fulfill its water deliveries on an annual basis to the United States under the treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding the utilization of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 683

Whereas the treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding the utilization of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, signed at Washington, February 1944 (59 Stat. 1219), commits the Government of Mexico to send an average of not less than 350,000 acre-feet of water annually over a 5-year cycle to the United States;

Whereas Mexico repeatedly waits until the end of this 5-year cycle to fulfill such water commitment; and

Whereas each year, farmers in south Texas are experiencing water shortages: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the diplomatic relations required to encourage the Government of Mexico to fulfill its water deliveries on an annual basis to the United States under the treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding the utilization of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, signed at Washington, February 1944 (59 Stat. 1219);

(2) encourages Mexico to fulfill such commitments on an annual basis;

(3) acknowledges that farmers in south Texas are experiencing water shortages;

(4) supports negotiations on a Minute that will ensure more predictable and reliable water deliveries to users in the United States; and

(5) encourages new commitments to ensure that the United States receives annual deliveries of at least 350,000 acre-feet of water under such treaty.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, stretching from the mountains of Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico, the Rio Grande River also forms over 1,200 miles of the international border between the United States and Mexico.

The Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, signed in 1944, secures consistent and dependable water supplies for both countries, which is critically important in our desert Southwest.

The treaty obligates Mexico to make available to the U.S. not less than 350,000 acre-feet of water per year from the main channel of the Rio Grande, averaged over a consecutive 5-year period. However, since 1994, Mexico has, on multiple occasions, failed to fulfill its Rio Grande water delivery commitments.

The latest data indicates that we have now moved into year 4 of the 5-year cycle, and Mexico is in arrears of over 680,000 acre-feet of water, nearly two full years' worth. Mexico's recurring failure has reached real-world repercussions, especially for American farmers and ranchers, who have suffered devastating crop and cattle losses.

U.S. diplomats and officials must urge Mexico to honor its commitments and establish regulations to regularize water deliveries.

With this resolution, the House of Representatives affirms its support for the United States to use its resources to secure compliance by the Mexican Government.

I thank my colleague from Texas, Congresswoman MONICA DE LA CRUZ, for introducing this bipartisan measure, which received unanimous support in the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I rise in strong support of H. Res. 683, introduced by my colleague, Representative MONICA DE LA CRUZ.

I had the opportunity to support this resolution as it made its way through the House Foreign Affairs Committee earlier this month, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage here.

Mr. Speaker, climate change has led to more prevalent and severe climate events across North America and has affected us all. Lack of rain, for example, has caused severe drought, impacting farming communities and businesses that provide critical crops and jobs. Rising temperatures have affected the volume and distribution of rainfall and snowfall over time. Without water, farmers have had to make difficult choices about whether to plant their crops, resulting in major losses all around.

In these challenging times, I recognize the importance of engaging constructively with our neighbors to resolve issues that may seem local but have broad global implications and downstream effects. One instance where we must improve our international cooperation concerns the share of water between the United States and Mexico from the Colorado and the Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande.

□ 1830

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 683 recognizes that, as farmers in south Texas experience greater water shortages, we must work with the Government of Mexico to ensure its deliveries of water to the U.S. are made more consistent and timely and encourages new commitments to be made for that purpose.

I am particularly impressed by the International Boundary and Water Commission's engagement this year to advance the goals of the 1944 treaty relating to the utilization of the waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and the Rio Grande.

The Commission's work to ensure that commitments made to distribute water are upheld in a timely manner and in the right quantities have not gone unnoticed. No doubt these changes in regular access to water will have a positive impact on those who grow the food and livestock we depend on.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the dialogue and diplomacy necessary to confront this urgent issue.

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

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. DE LA CRUZ), the author of this resolution.

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Res. 683. This is a matter of utmost importance that impacts the lives and livelihoods of families in south Texas and across all of America.

The ongoing drought and resulting water scarcity in the Rio Grande Valley represents a crisis for our farmers and our communities. Under the 1944 water treaty, our neighbors in Mexico have pledged to supply the United States of America with an average of 350,000 acre-feet of water annually over a 5-year cycle.

Unfortunately, there have been consistent delays in meeting these obligations that have severely affected American agriculture.

The absence of adequate water threatens to drastically reduce their yields, potentially cutting their usual production in half. This situation poses a threat not only to local communities but also to our national food security, escalating the costs for American families, and increasing our reliance on imported produce.

This shortfall is also leading to stringent water restrictions in our community, further burdening families and businesses. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the Mexican Government to fulfill their treaty obligations. It is not fair for American families, American farmers, and ranchers to be penalized due to noncompliance by Mexico.

In response to this pressing issue, I introduced this bipartisan House resolution that expresses support for the diplomatic relations necessary to ensure Mexico adheres to the 1944 water treaty.

This resolution emphasizes the need for consistent water delivery to the United States and encourages renewed commitments to uphold the annual water deliveries.

Mr. Speaker, I express my sincere thanks to the bipartisan coalition of House Members, including my esteemed colleague, HENRY CUELLAR, for their support in bringing the resolution to the House floor. Additionally, I thank the chairman, my fellow Texan (Mr. MCCAUL), for his efforts with this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bipartisan House resolution. It is crucial that the 1944 water treaty be honored as it provides vital support for American farmers who are pivotal in sustaining our Nation's food supply.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my community and all of south Texas, we are thankful for the attention given to this urgent matter.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes that, as farmers in south Texas are suffering from water shortages, dialogue and diplomacy will be critical to ensuring that water deliveries from the Government of Mexico, per the 1944 treaty, are made in a timely and consistent manner.

H. Res. 683 supports the negotiations being undertaken to secure water deliveries on an annual basis that would allow farmers to have predictable quantities of water for their crops and their livestock.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 683.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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:

Motions to suspend the rules and agree to:

H. Res. 793; and

H. Res. 888.

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.

CALLING ON HAMAS TO IMMEDIATELY RELEASE HOSTAGES TAKEN DURING OCTOBER 2023 ATTACK ON ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 793) calling on Hamas to immediately release hostages taken during October 2023 attack on Israel, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 414, nays 0, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 676]

YEAS—414

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amo
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Boebert
Bonamici
Bost
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brecheen
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Mike
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, Vicente
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lee (PA)
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lieu
Lofgren
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Mann
Manning
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Murphy
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Peltola
Pence
Perez
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Ross
Rouzer
Roy
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Santos
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (GA)
Bush
DesJarlais
Evans
Gaetz
Jackson Lee
Kelly (PA)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
McCarthy
McHenry
Nehls
Pelosi
Phillips
Posey
Scott, Austin
Steel
Swalwell
Veasey
Weber (TX)

□ 1905

Mr. COHEN changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 28, 2023.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter received from Mr. Ryan Cowley, Director of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, State of Utah, containing unofficial results of the Special Election for Representative to Congress for the Second Congressional District of Utah held on November 21, 2023.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Acting Clerk.

Enclosure.

STATE OF UTAH,
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,
November 27, 2023.

KEVIN MCCUMBER,
Office of the Clerk,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. MCCUMBER: Below are listed the unofficial results from the special Utah Second Congressional District election held November 21, 2023. These results are not official at this time and will not be certified as final until the canvass on December 8, 2023. The counties administering the special congressional election will post updated results as they process and count ballots up through their respective county Board of Canvassers meetings which, under the Utah Election Code, may be held as late as December 6th.

The State Board of Canvassers will convene on December 8, 2023 to canvass the returns and will certify the election results at that meeting. As soon as possible after the canvass, the Lieutenant Governor will send the certified election results and an official Certificate of Election to you, both by email and UPS.

The following link directs you to our website where you may observe unofficial results as they are posted. https://electionresults.utah.gov/results/public/utah/elections/2023-Nov-General. I have listed the preliminary vote count below and have attached a screenshot of the website as of the morning of Monday, November 27, 2023.

The following results are unofficial and likely to change up through the canvasses that are performed by the county legislative bodies.

Perry T. Myers (Unaffiliated): 1.42 percent 2,195 votes.

Celeste Maloy (Republican): 56.87 percent 87,649 votes.

Cassie Easley (Constitution): 2.31 percent 3,556 votes.

January Walker (United Utah): 1.82 percent 2,808 votes.

Kathleen Riebe (Democratic): 33.90 percent 52,253 votes.

Bradley Garth Green (Libertarian): 2.84 percent 4,374 votes.

Joe Buchman (Unaffiliated): 0.82 percent 1,260 votes.

Write-in: 0.03 percent 39 votes.

As of today we are not aware of any challenges or contests to these election results but note that, per statute, the deadline for an individual to contest the results is 10 days after the canvass, December 18, 2023.

Sincerely,

RYAN COWLEY,
DIRECTOR OF ELECTIONS,
Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE CELESTE MALOY, OF UTAH, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentlewoman from Utah, the Honorable CELESTE MALOY, be permitted to take the oath of office today.

Her certificate of election has not arrived, but there is no contest and no question has been raised with regard to her election.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. Will the Representative-elect Maloy and the Members of the Utah delegation present themselves in the well.

All Members will rise and the Representative-elect will please raise her right hand.

Ms. MALOY appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 118th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE CELESTE MALOY TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CURTIS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, as the dean of the Utah delegation, I have the distinct honor to rise today to introduce the newest Member of the House of Representatives, CELESTE MALOY. CELESTE was born in southern Utah, raised in rural Nevada, and then, as an adult, chose Utah as her home. CELESTE earned an agricultural degree from Southern Utah University in Cedar City which she now calls home.

She began her career in public service as a soil conservationist at the USDA in Beaver, Utah, also located within her district, where she worked for 10 years.

She left Beaver to go to law school at BYU, where she got her law degree, in my hometown, and she was a law student there, in fact, while I was her mayor.

Since beginning her late career, she has worked as a deputy county attorney, a public lands attorney for the Utah Association of Counties and, most recently, as the chief legal counsel to former Congressman Chris Stewart.

In a special election, CELESTE assembled a coalition of both rural and urban voters. She was unafraid to stand for conservative principles, calling for debate in each of her 13 counties. In her district, she is known to be a hard worker, levelheaded, and consistently conservative.

We were all a little surprised that she won the election since the last thing she won was her 7th grade spelling bee, but the secret to her heart is simple: offer her a Dr. Pepper and her number one food staple, cottage cheese. Better yet, ask her about her 90-year-old grandmother, who is her biggest political fan and best critic, or her other grandmother who was her roommate when she was in high school and they worked at the same truck stop.

She is the fourth of six kids—this is how we do families in Utah—which means that most of her life she has been in a bunk bed.

Finally, my colleagues will remember her predecessor, Chris Stewart. He was known for having several speed records around the world in his plane. Celeste does not have a flight speed record, but I hear, unbeknownst to the Utah Highway Patrol, she has several speed records on I–15 in her district.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield to my fellow Utahn, CELESTE MALOY.

□ 1915

Ms. MALOY. Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute honor and privilege to be here right now. It is very humbling. Since this was a special election, they let me have a few friends and family come in the gallery. I want everyone on the floor to notice how many people are up here to support me.

I have talked a lot on the campaign trail, and the media has talked a lot about how I went to college on a scholarship I won in an FFA soil judging contest. I was very involved in FFA in high school. In my freshman year, I memorized the FFA creed and then participated in a creed speaking contest where I totally lost.

I repeated one of the paragraphs three times, but in the first paragraph, which I had down pat, there is a sentence that says, ''I believe . . . in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.''

I think that perfectly describes how I feel right now about being a Member of the United States House of Representatives. I believe in the promise of better days through better ways. I am excited to be here now, when there are really important conversations happening and when an individual can have a huge impact.

I also acknowledge the struggles of former years and that we live in an absolutely wonderful, great country because of the people who came before us and had important conversations and struggles and inched us ever closer to the ideal, the American Dream, the principles that are embodied in our Constitution and our Declaration of Independence.

Let me humbly say how excited I am to be here and how much it means to me to be representing the people in Utah's Second Congressional District. I don't take that title lightly. I want to make sure my constituents know that I am here to truly represent them and that I am optimistic, that I am excited to serve, and that I understand what a great honor and rare privilege it is to be standing here on the House floor right now giving a speech, so thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentlewoman from Utah, the whole number of the House is 435.

REAFFIRMING THE STATE OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 888) reaffirming the State of Israel's right to exist, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 412, nays 1, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 677]

YEAS—412

Adams	Barr	Bowman
Aderholt	Barragán	Boyle (PA)
Aguilar	Bean (FL)	Brecheen
Alford	Beatty	Brown
Allen	Bentz	Brownley
Allred	Bera	Buchanan
Amo	Bergman	Bucshon
Amodei	Beyer	Budzinski
Armstrong	Bice	Burchett
Arrington	Biggs	Burgess
Auchincloss	Bilirakis	Burlison
Babin	Bishop (NC)	Calvert
Bacon	Blumenauer	Cammack
Baird	Blunt Rochester	Caraveo
Balderson	Boebert	Carbajal
Balint	Bonamici	Cárdenas
Banks	Bost	Carey

Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fletcher
Flood
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Mike
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, Vicente
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lee (PA)
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lieu
Lofgren
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Murphy
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Peltola
Pence
Perez
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Ross
Rouzer
Roy
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Santos
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Titus
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—1

Massie

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Tlaib

NOT VOTING—21

Bishop (GA)
Buck
Bush
DesJarlais
Evans
Gaetz
Jackson Lee
Kelly (PA)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
McCarthy
McHenry
Nehls
Pelosi
Phillips
Posey
Scott, Austin
Steel
Swalwell
Veasey
Weber (TX)

□ 1930

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote on two roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 676 and "yea" on rollcall no. 677.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, during roll call votes on H. Res. 793 and H. Res. 888, my vote was not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 676 and "yea" on rollcall No. 677.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during today's vote series. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 676 and Present on rollcall No. 677.

□ 1930

MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING HERB KLEIN

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I stand with the New Jersey delegation. I rise today to mark the passing of my predecessor and my friend, Congressman Herb Klein. Herb only served one term in this institution, but he was a giant for north Jersey.

Our communities are tight-knit, hardscrabble, fiercely loyal, and Herb embodied those qualities. It was Herb who laid the groundwork for what Passaic County is today. He helped build it.

Herb Klein was a brilliant lawyer and remarkable public servant and a great human being. He was always accessible and always available.

Over the years, I cannot count the number of times I called on Herb for his wisdom. I will miss his counsel, and I will miss his friendship.

We send our love and admiration to Herb's family, Roger, and all the kids and friends, in their time of mourning.

I ask the House to join me in a moment of silence in memory of Herb Klein.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I rise to give notice of my intention to raise a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

H. Res. 878 submitted by Mr. GUEST, providing for the expulsion of Representative GEORGE SANTOS from the United States House of Representatives.

Whereas, Representative GEORGE SANTOS is a Member of the United States House of Representatives;

Whereas, soon after his election in November of 2022, Representative SANTOS' background came under public scrutiny;

Whereas, on February 28, 2023, the Committee on Ethics of the House unanimously voted to impanel an investigative subcommittee (hereinafter in this resolution referred to as the ''ISC'') to review whether Representative SANTOS may have engaged in unlawful activity with respect to his 2022 congressional campaign, failed to properly disclose required information on statements filed with the House, violated Federal conflict of interest laws in connection with his role in a firm providing fiduciary services, and engaged in sexual misconduct toward an individual seeking employment in his congressional office;

Whereas, the ISC met nine times and, over the course of the investigation, authorized 37 subpoenas and 43 voluntary requests for information (RFIs) leading to its receipt of over 172,000 pages of documents, contacted or interviewed over 40 witnesses, and reviewed materials received from the Office of Congressional Ethics and relevant court records;

Whereas, the ISC determined in its investigation that there was substantial evidence of violations of Federal law, the rules of the House, and other applicable standards related to many of the allegations charged in the indictment and substantial evidence of additional unlawful and unethical contact not charged in the indictment;

Whereas, these additional violations relate to falsely reported loans reportedly received by his 2020 campaign and

leadership political action committee, GADS PAC, improper loan repayments to himself, systemic reporting errors in his 2020 and 2022 campaigns' Federal Election Commission filings, and substantial evidence that campaign funds were converted to personal use;

Whereas, the ISC also identified additional errors and omissions in his 2020 and 2022 Financial Disclosure Statements, as well as violations of Federal law and the rules of the House related to his unfiled 2021 and 2023 Financial Disclosure Statements, which were not charged in the indictment;

Whereas, the ISC also found that Representative SANTOS failed to meet his duty of candor with respect to the ISC's investigation and instead presented the ISC with misrepresentations and delay tactics;

Whereas, on May 10, 2023, Representative SANTOS was charged in Federal court in the Eastern District of New York with wire fraud in connection with a fraudulent political contribution scheme, unlawful monetary transactions in connection with the wire fraud allegations, theft of public money in connection with his alleged receipt of unemployment benefits, fraudulent application for and receipt of unemployment benefits, and false statements in connection with his 2020 and 2022 House of Representatives Financial Disclosure Statements;

Whereas, Nancy Marks, who served as treasurer to Representative SANTOS' campaign, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud, falsifying records, and identity theft in connection with the Santos campaign;

Whereas, a superseding indictment was filed on October 10, 2023, charging Representative SANTOS with additional violations related to his 2022 campaign, including allegations of falsifying Federal Election Commission reports in connection with a $500,000 personal loan that was never made, falsifying the names of contributors to his campaign, engaging in aggravated identity theft and access device fraud, and enriching himself through a fraudulent contribution scheme;

Whereas, Sam Miele, who served as a fundraiser to Representative SANTOS' campaign, pleaded guilty to a Federal wire fraud charge after impersonating a senior congressional aide for the purposes of soliciting funds;

Whereas, the ISC that was established to review the allegations against Representative SANTOS adopted a report of its findings and submitted the report to the full committee;

Whereas, the Committee on Ethics of the House unanimously voted to adopt the ISC report based upon the investigation providing substantial evidence that Representative SANTOS—

One, knowingly caused his campaign committee to file false or incomplete reports with the Federal Election Commission, used campaign funds for personal purposes, engaged in fraudulent conduct in connection with Redstone Strategies, LLC, and engaged in knowing and willful violations of the Ethics in Government Act as it relates to his Financial Disclosure Statements filed with the House;

Two, was a knowing and active participant in the wrongdoing; and

Three, was given an opportunity, pursuant to committee rule 17(b), to submit a signed written statement responding to the allegations raised in a complaint filed by his fellow Members but did not do so;

Whereas, the ISC—

One, requested that Representative SANTOS provide all documents and information responsive to its request for information, but he did not do so;

Two, asked Representative SANTOS to voluntarily testify, but he did not do so, and

Three, provided Representative SANTOS the opportunity pursuant to committee rule 19(b)(3) to provide a statement under oath, but he did not do so;

Whereas, as a Member of the United States House of Representatives, Representative SANTOS must be held accountable to the highest standards of conduct in order to safeguard the public's faith in this institution;

Whereas, the Constitution of the United States of America charges the House with policing the behavior of its own Members, and the House should take action against Representative SANTOS commensurate with his violations of Federal law and the rules of the House, and

Whereas, given his egregious violations, Representative GEORGE SANTOS is not fit to serve as a Member of the United States House of Representatives.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that pursuant to Article I, Section 5, Clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States of America, Representative GEORGE SANTOS, be, and he hereby is expelled from the United States House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from New York will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

□ 1945

RECOGNIZING ASTRONAUT VIRGIL ''GUS'' GRISSOM

(Mrs. HOUCHIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a hero, a trailblazer, and an inspiration to all, astronaut Virgil ''Gus'' Grissom.

Growing up in Indiana, I am honored to pay tribute to this remarkable man as he is inducted into the Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame.

Gus Grissom's contributions to space exploration are tremendous. He was one of America's original astronauts.

In 1961, he made history when he became the second American to travel to space. He later commanded the Gemini 3 mission, paving the way for the Moon landing.

Gus was a man of courage, unwavering dedication, and profound commitment to his country. Gus was a native son of Indiana. Born and raised in Mitchell, he embodied the spirit of the heartland and carried those values into space.

Though his life was tragically cut short during a prelaunch test for the Apollo 1 mission, his legacy continues.

He exemplified the qualities that define our military veterans: bravery, sacrifice, and service to a cause greater than oneself.

Today, we remember Gus Grissom not just for his achievements in space exploration and service to his country, but for the inspiration he continues to provide to countless Americans young and old. His name will forever be etched in the archives of American history.

As we honored him with this induction into the Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame this month, let us be reminded of the courageous spirit of exploration and of the bravery of all of our veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifices.

Gus Grissom's legacy lives on, and we are privileged to celebrate his life and achievements. May his memory continue to inspire generations to come.

HONORING WYNONA LIPMAN

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great trailblazer from my district, Wynona Lipman.

Mrs. Lipman was the first African-American woman to be elected to the New Jersey State Senate in 1971, and she was the longest serving senator in New Jersey's history when she passed in 1999.

During her 27 years in the New Jersey State Senate, she fought for the rights of children, minorities, and the LGBT+ community.

She was a crucial member of the Governor's Advisory Council on AIDS and Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. Her work earned her the induction into New Jersey's Women's Hall of Fame in 1998. Her legacy lives on throughout my district.

There is the Wynona Lipman Ethnic Studies Center at Kean University. There is the Wynona Lipman Child Advocacy Center for abused children; and there is also the future Wynona Lipman Courthouse in Essex County.

Mrs. Wynona Lipman was an exceptional leader, and I am proud to recognize her on the House floor today.

CELEBRATING JUDD BURCHFIELD'S 102ND BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a distinguished World War II veteran, Judd Burchfield of Rockland Township in Venango County.

Mr. Burchfield celebrated his 102nd birthday on Sunday, November 19. Mr. Burchfield is believed to be the oldest veteran in Venango County. He grew up in Mt. Joy, and later returned to the area following his service in World War II.

Over the course of the war, Mr. Burchfield was an auto equipment mechanic as part of the Army Air Corps. He spent time in both North Africa and Italy, and eventually rose to the rank of staff sergeant. Because of his courage, he was awarded the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with a Bronze Star, a Good Conduct Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

After returning home to Venango County, Mr. Burchfield started his own farm, raising just about every farm animal. He started his own business, B&M Farm Supply, and worked for Richland Township running a road grader and a backhoe.

We thank Mr. Burchfield for his gallant service to our country and wish him the happiest birthday.

RECOGNIZING NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

(Ms. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional achievements of the Women's Cross Country Team at North Carolina State University.

Go pack.

The Wolfpack women have dominated the NCAA once again, winning their third national championship in a row.

Senior Sam Bush and all-American Katelyn Touhy helped NC State storm to victory in a close finish against Northern Arizona.

With their latest trophy, the NC State women's cross country team has now passed the men's basketball team for the most national titles in the university's history.

In addition, no college team has won three straight women's cross country titles since Stanford in 2007.

Far too often, outstanding women athletes don't get the recognition that they deserve. I am proud to represent the Wolfpack women and congratulate them on their fantastic accomplishment.

OSCE FIGHTS CORRUPTION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I was grateful last weekend as chairman of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe to chair the American delegation for the Fall Meeting in Yerevan, Armenia.

Parliamentarians from nearly 50 countries were present with sessions led by OSCE Parliamentary Assembly president Pia Kauma of Finland.

Armenian Head of Delegation Sargis Khandanyan was a very successful host for the warm Armenian welcome. Sessions featured active participation of many productive points of view on corruption as a fundamental threat and respect for all people affected by conflict.

There was wide recognition the civilized world is sadly in conflict as it did not choose of dictators with rule of gun invading democracies with rule of law as war criminal Putin has invaded Ukraine and Iran puppet Hamas invading Israel.

It was impressive the dynamic economy of Armenia, 9 time zones and 6,441 miles from Washington. It was encouraging to meet National Assembly Deputy Ruben Rubinyan serving as special envoy on a normalization with Turkiye, America's valued NATO ally.

God bless Armenia. God bless America.

ABIGAIL EDAN'S RELEASE

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, imagine at the age of 3 being taking out of the arms of your dying father by terrorists, and having a birthday, turning 4 years old as a hostage.

Indeed, this was the case for Abigail Edan, who was taken at the hands of Hamas terrorists.

The story doesn't stop here. Not only did they kill her father, but they also killed her mother.

Abigail, I remind you, Madam Speaker, is an American citizen. Her young life has been forever scarred by this unspeakable tragedy.

At the calls for the release of hostages, Abigail's return brings us relief, but also highlights the urgent need for Hamas terrorists to free all citizens still held captive immediately. As Abigail returns to her brother and sister, it is time for all hostages to embrace their loved ones.

CONGRATULATING ARIEL BROWN, 2023 FIRST TEE NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ariel Brown, a teacher at Savannah Legacy Academy on her recent 2023 First Tee National Teacher of the Year award.

First Tee is a youth development organization that enables children to develop personally, athletically, and socially through golf lessons.

A First Tee alum herself, Ms. BROWN was the first coach at First Tee Savannah when the chapter relaunched in 2021. The organization is making the game more accessible to youth, and it is clearly working as they currently have more than 3 million children in the program nationwide.

Ms. BROWN's involvement in First Tee shows her commitment to students in and out of the classroom. I thank her for her efforts to help guide her students intellectually, socially, and athletically.

Congratulations, Ariel, on this wonderful accomplishment.

HONORING POSTAL WORKER ROBERT JONES

(Mrs. FLETCHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FLETCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and memory of Robert Denzel Jones, Jr., a resident of Texas' Seventh Congressional District, where he served his neighbors and our community as a United States letter carrier.

His commitment to going above and beyond earned him the nickname ''Super Postman'' as his radiant smile and diligent work impacted people he met on the job.

Tragically, he was killed in a hit-and-run accident while he was working to make sure the U.S. mail was delivered.

The work that Robert and letter carriers like him do in our community is critically important, whether it is connecting loved ones with letters or delivering essential packages.

He was not only an outstanding letter carrier, he was an exceptional father to his daughter, Rylee Love Jones; a loving partner to J'La Anderson; and a beloved son to his proud parents, Robert and Felicia Jones.

That is how he will be remembered, as he should be: a father, a son, a partner, a super postman, and a beloved member of our community.

May his memory be a blessing and may his service be an example to us all.

RESTORING BUFFALO HERDS ON INDIAN RESERVATION LANDS

(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, I have introduced the bipartisan Indian Buffalo Management Act to create a permanent buffalo program at the U.S. Department of Interior and help promote and develop Tribal capacity to manage buffalo.

The act provides secure, consistent funding for Tribes, and Tribal organizations to have an established buffalo herd and management program, as well as provide resources for Tribes that would like to establish new herds of buffalo.

This bill passed out of the House last Congress and was led by my dear friend, our late Congressman from Alaska, Mr. Don Young.

This bill will help bolster our Tribal sovereignty, create economic opportunities, and ensure a stable supply of nutritious, locally sourced protein.

Additionally, the American buffalo has a deep historical and cultural connection to many Tribes and has always held great meaning for Indian peoples.

Buffalo has provided the Tribes with everything from clothing, to food, to shelter, to utensils, to pouches, to headdresses, to containers, and much more.

It is impossible to overstate their importance to Native Americans historically and to this day, culturally, as well as all Americans as a symbol of the rugged West.

This program will greatly help with Intertribal Buffalo Council's goal of restoring buffalo herds on Indian reservation lands.

Madam Speaker, I hope we can get the support for that and get it out of the House, out of the Senate, and in front of the President.

DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT AND MEDICINE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, what America makes and grows, makes and grows America and grows our middle class. Thus, let me applaud the Biden administration's decision to utilize the Defense Production Act to reshore the domestic manufacturing of essential medicines critical for our national security.

This move is a strategic response to the challenges America faces, particularly keeping inflation in check and healing the vulnerabilities in our pharmaceutical supply chain.

The book, ''China Rx,'' highlights the growing number of our country's reliance on foreign-made medicines, particularly from China. They pose a significant national security risk to both our military and civilian sectors.

The Defense Production Act offers a vital tool to onshore and increased domestic production of essential medicines. In a world where the availability of essential medicines can be a matter of life and death, our Nation must take strong measures to resecure our domestic pharmaceutical supply chain.

The Defense Production Act is a significant step toward achieving this goal. What America makes and grows, makes and grows a stronger and more secure America.

HONORING LIBRERIA GIRON

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

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Libreria Giron, a family-run Spanish language bookstore in my district that will be closing its doors after 50 years.

At a time when Spanish language books were hard to find in Chicago, Ada Alicia Giron, a former elementary school teacher from Guatemala, and her husband, Julio Giron, opened an electronic shop in 1957.

An educator at heart, Alicia Giron placed a stack of Spanish language books in the shop next to televisions and radios, and to her surprise became the shop's main selling point.

Libreria Giron went on to become a beacon of knowledge to immigrant communities and at its peak expanded to 10 locations in Chicago.

As Libreria Giron prepares to close its doors for good, I would like to thank the Giron family for their service to the Little Village and Pilsen communities and for fostering a love of books spanning generations.

□ 2000

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ROSALYNN CARTER

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to pay tribute and honor the activities of the great First Lady, the first that I ever had the opportunity to know, and that is First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who was funeralized earlier today.

As a young activist, as we organized and tried to organize community health centers and community mental health centers, along with us was First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who was often at the meetings. Sometimes, she wouldn't say anything. She would take notes.

Not only did we have a friend in the White House in President Carter, but we also had a great friend and advocate in the person of First Lady Rosalynn Carter.

May she rest in peace.

OUR MILITARY HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER

(Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, today, the junior Senator from Alabama said that our military has never been weaker in his lifetime. Of course, that statement is false. Our military has never been stronger, not just in the history of our country but in the history of any country.

This is just the latest example of what happens when we allow partisan politics to infect everything. We shouldn't let this moment pass without acknowledging how destructive it is for our country when you can just say anything you want without any concern about whether or not it is true.

We also should acknowledge the 2 million servicemembers who have dedicated their lives to defending the right of that Senator to smear them. They are owed an apology, although I assure you none is coming.

RECOGNIZING APPOINTEES TO THE SERVICE ACADEMIES FROM THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HOUCHIN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SANTOS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, it is a source of immense pride that numerous prospective high school graduates in my district aspire to join a service academy.

Following a rigorous selection process, I have put forth nominations for 29 applicants. Thus far, four of them have received appointments to academies.

Alex Gao from Levittown has been appointed to West Point. David Yoon from Great Neck has been appointed to West Point. Joseph Kim from Little Neck has been appointed to West Point. Tanner Schultz from Northport has been appointed to the Merchant Marine Academy.

Embarking on the journey of attending a service academy is no easy feat. It requires diligent effort to master your chosen major and acquire the necessary knowledge to serve your country upon graduation 4 years later.

I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to nominate all 29 applicants. I anticipate the appointment of many more nominees from New York's Third District to serve in the coming weeks.

CONGRATULATING RICHARD XU

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, we just hosted the Congressional App

Challenge recently, and this week, we revealed the winner for New York's Third District. Richard Xu emerged victorious with his innovative creation VolunHour, an app designed to streamline the tracking of volunteer hours.

Among the 17 impressive applicants from my district, each contributing fantastic app ideas, Richard Xu's VolunHour stood out as the winning entry.

Richard cited his passion for volunteering and community service as the driving force behind the creation of this app. He started a volunteer organization with a small group of friends, witnessing its expansion from 5 members to 30. Throughout this experience, he recognized the cumbersome and time-consuming nature of tracking volunteer hours, prompting him to develop a solution.

I congratulate Richard and send a big shout-out to all the participants from the Third District of New York who submitted applications to the Congressional App Challenge. Well done.

RECOGNIZING DEDICATED STAFF FOR CASEWORK

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, let me take a moment to discuss my office. Regarding my team, they consistently dedicate substantial effort to handle casework for our constituents.

We operate from three locations, two within the Third District of New York and one in Washington, D.C., ensuring accessibility and a commitment to serving the residents of New York's Third District.

To this day, we have received a total of 1,286 cases. We have successfully resolved 1,149 cases, leaving us with 137 cases currently under the diligent attention of my team.

The completed casework encompasses a variety of matters, including passports, immigration issues, and distinctive cases like securing a Purple Heart medal for the surviving family members of a World War I hero.

The work of my office does not go unnoticed, and I and the constituents of the Third District of New York are extremely grateful. I thank my entire team for all the hard work they have put forward throughout these last couple of months.

ON THE MATTER OF EXPULSION

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, on the matter of expulsion, we are now going down a third attempt for a privileged resolution to expel me from the House of Representatives this week. One was introduced earlier today, and just earlier this evening, we had a second.

Here is the case in point. In history, five Members of Congress have been expelled. All five had suffered convictions in a court. All five had due process.

This expulsion vote simply undermines and underscores the precedent that we have had in this Chamber. It starts and puts us in a new direction, a dangerous one, that sets a very dangerous precedent for the future.

Are we to now assume that one is no longer innocent until proven guilty, and they are, in fact, guilty until proven innocent? Are we now to simply assume that because somebody doesn't like you, they get to throw you out of your job? Or better more, does the Constitution bear no consequence where a duly elected Member of the House of Representatives is elected by the general public but then a couple of politicians decide that they don't like that person?

These are all matters and questions that can be brought up. I will leave it at this. The process in which the Ethics Committee engaged was incomplete, irresponsible, and littered with hyperbole and littered with biased opinions.

The chairman of the committee himself admitted that it wasn't the full extent of process. Therefore, he couldn't recommend from the committee a punishment or action, therefore cheapening the process of the Ethics Committee, cheapening the process that this country has expected from this Chamber.

It is not a right to be a Member of Congress. The media will always remind me of that every time I talk to them. It is a privilege, a privilege you work hard for. You get elected to Congress as a privilege to represent those who have chosen you.

Madam Speaker, I think we can all agree that due process matters and that we should all be very concerned about the way that we are conducting this process. I ask that all of my colleagues in the House consider and understand what this means for the future.

To set the record straight and put this in the RECORD, I will not be resigning.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

OATH OF OFFICE MEMBERS, RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AND DELEGATES

The oath of office required by the sixth article of the Constitution of the United States, and as provided by section 2 of the act of May 13, 1884 (23 Stat. 22), to be administered to Members, Resident Commissioner, and Delegates of the House of Representatives, the text of which is carried in 5 U.S.C. 3331:

> ''I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.''

has been subscribed to in person and filed in duplicate with the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the following Member of the 118th Congress, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. 25:

CELESTE MALOY, Second District of Utah.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC–2407. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Organic Program (NOP); Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards [Doc. No.: AMS-NOP-21-0073] (RIN: 0581-AE06) received November 14, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

EC–2408. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Fair Trade Practices, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Economic Adjustment Assistant for Textile Mills [Doc. No.: AMS-FTPP-21-0055] (RIN: 0581-AE26) received November 8, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

EC–2409. A letter from the Assistant Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Technical Amendments: Special Financial Assistance Withdrawal Liability Condition; SECURE 2.0 Act; and Other Updates (RIN: 1212-AB56) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC–2410. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Locomotives and Locomotive Engines; Preemption of State and Local Regulations [EPA-HQ-OAR-2022-0985; FRL-8952.1-01-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AW12) received November 8, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2411. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Kentucky; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [EPA-R04-OAR-2022-0409; FRL-8790-01-R4) received November 8, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2412. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New York; Elements of the 2008 and 2015 Ozone National Air Quality Standards [EPA-R02-OAR-2022-0648, FRL-11358-02-R2] received November 8, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2413. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Changes to Reporting Requirements for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and to Supplier Notifications for Chemicals of Special Concern; Community Right-to-Know Toxic Chemical Release Reporting [EPA-HQ-TRI-2022-0270; FRL-8741-04-OCSPP] (RIN: 2070-AK97) received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2414. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Vehicle Miles Traveled Emissions Offset Demonstrations for the 2015 Ozone Standards; California [EPA-R09-OAR-2022-0681; FRL-10386-02-R9] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2415. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Disapproval; Colorado; Serious Attainment Plan Elements and Related Revisions for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard for the Denver Metro/North Front Range Nonattainment Area [EPA-R08-OAR-2023-0272; FRL-11237-02-R8] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2416. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Revisions to Miscellaneous Particulate Matter Rules [EPA-R04-OAR-2022-0391; FRL-11368-02-R4] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2417. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; FL; Miscellaneous SIP Revision[EPA-R04-OAR-2023-0056; FRL-11369-02-R4] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2418. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Revisions; California; Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District; Imperial County Air Pollution Control District; Correcting Amendments [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0760, EPA-R09-OAR-2020-0476, and EPA-R09-OAR-2021-0176; FRL-11409-01-09] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2419. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's interim final determination — Determination to Defer Sanctions; California; California Air Resources Board [EPA-R09-OAR-2023-0479; FRL-11425-02-R9] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2420. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Extension of Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions; Multiple Chemicals [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-507; FRL-11517-01-OCSPP] received October 31, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2421. A letter from the Deputy Division Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Numbering Policies for Modern Communications [WC Docket No.: 13-97]; Telephone Number Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers [WC Docket No.: 07-243]; Implementation of TRACED Act Section 6(a)-Knowledge of Customers by Entities with Access to Numbering Resources [WC Docket No.: 20-67]; Process Reform for Executive Branch Review of Certain FCC Applications and Petitions Involving Foreign Ownership [IB Docket No.: 16-155] received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2422. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Electric Reliability Organization Proposal to Retire Requirements in Reliability Standards Under the NERC Standards Efficiency Review [Docket No.: RM19-17-001; Order No. 902] received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2423. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule and guidance — Emergency Preparedness for Small Modular Reactors and Other New Technologies [NRC-2015-0225] (RIN: 3150-AJ68) received November 15, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2424. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final safety evaluation — Electric Power Research Institute Technical Report 3002018337, ''Use of Data Validation and Reconciliation Methods for Measurement Uncertainty Recapture: Topical Report'' [EPID No.: L-2021-TOP-0006] received November 13, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC–2425. A letter from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Entity List Additions[Docket No.: 231013-0245] (RIN: 0694-AJ41) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2426. A letter from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Export Controls on Semiconductor Manufacturing Items [Docket No.: 231013-0246] (RIN: 0694-AJ23) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2427. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 21-045 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2428. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 22-059 Certification of Proposed Issuance of an Export License Pursuant to Sec 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2429. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management, Office for Acquisition and Assistance, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's final rule — USAID Grant Regulations: Removing the Program Income Restriction on For-Profit Entities (RIN: 0412-AB01) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2430. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Management, Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, US Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's interim final rule — Implementation of the HAVANA Act of 2021 (RIN: 0412-AB11) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–2431. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 25-300, ''Ambulatory Surgical Facility Amendment Act of 2023'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

EC–2432. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 25-301, ''Prior Authorization Reform Amendment Act of 2023'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

EC–2433. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act (RIN: 0412-AA97) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

EC–2434. A letter from the Biologist, Branch of Recovery and Conservation Planning, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of the Gray Wolf in Colorado [Docket No.: FWS-R6-ES-2022-0100; FXES11130600000-223-FF06E00000] (RIN: 1018-BG79) received November 14, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–2435. A letter from the Marine Mammal Specialist, Office of Protected Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Testing and Training Operations in the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range [Docket No.: 230410-0096] (RIN: 0648-BL77) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC–2436. A letter from the Chief, Regulatory Development Division, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Incorporation by Reference; North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria; Hazardous Materials Safety Permits [Docket No.: FMCSA-2023-0122] (RIN: 2126-AC61) received November 9, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–2437. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Elimination

of Debit Voucher Interest Accruing Before the Issuance of a Bill (RIN: 1515-AE81) received November 6, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EC–2438. A letter from the Senior Regulatory and Policy Coordinator, Centers for Medicare an Medicaid Servcies, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Disclosures of Ownership and Additional Disclosable Parties Information for Skilled Nursing Facilities and Nursing Facilities; Medicare Providers' and Suppliers' Disclosure of Private Equity Companies and Real Estate Investment Trusts [CMS-6084-F] (RIN: 0938-AU90) received November 17, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. MCHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. House Joint Resolution 66. Resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau relating to ''Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)'' (Rept. 118–279). Referred to the committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 891. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5283) to prohibit the use of Federal funds to provide housing to specified aliens on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5961) to freeze certain Iranian funds involved in the 2023 hostage deal between the United States and Iran, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the 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)'' (Rept. 118–280). Referred to the House Calendar.

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. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 6481. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to reimburse the fee for an expression of interest if the expression of interest becomes inactive, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FULCHER:

H.R. 6482. A bill to amend the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to promote timely exploration for geothermal resources under geothermal leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUIZENGA:

H.R. 6483. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require greater transparency and accountability within the grantmaking process of the National Institutes of Health; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE (for herself, Mr. BACON, and Mr. EVANS):

H.R. 6484. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure health insurance coverage continuity for former foster youth; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mrs. LESKO, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, and Mrs. MILLER of Illinois):

H.R. 6485. A bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCGARVEY (for himself and Mr. ALFORD):

H.R. 6486. A bill to establish the position of Coordinator for Community Financial Institutions within the Small Business Administration to enhance the performance of community financial institutions and support access to capital for small business concerns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. KILMER, Mr. BERA, and Ms. SCHRIER):

H.R. 6487. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to prohibit health plans from imposing fees on health care providers for electronic funds transfers and health care payment and remittance advice transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. NORTON:

H.R. 6488. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain tax benefits related to empowerment zones to the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. PELTOLA:

H.R. 6489. A bill to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to provide that Village Corporations shall not be required to convey land in trust to the State of Alaska for the establishment of Municipal Corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. PORTER (for herself, Mrs. KIM of California, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 6490. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to limit the penalty for late enrollment under part B of the Medicare Program to 15 percent and twice the period of no enrollment, and to exclude periods of COBRA, retiree, and VA coverage from such late enrollment penalty; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 6491. A bill to authorize the seizure and forfeiture of assets of Russian kleptocrats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Judiciary, 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. MANN (for himself and Mr. MRVAN):

H. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the National Prayer Breakfast; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H. Res. 892. A resolution expressing support for a whole child approach to education and recognizing the role of parents, educators, and community members in providing a whole child approach to education for each student; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. BACON, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. NUNN of Iowa, Mr. MCGARVEY, Ms. BUSH, Ms. CARAVEO, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. TRONE, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. TOKUDA):

H. Res. 893. A resolution designating November 2023 as ''National Homeless Children and Youth Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KUSTOFF (for himself and Mr. MILLER of Ohio):

H. Res. 894. A resolution strongly condemning and denouncing the drastic rise of antisemitism in the United States and around the world; to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. LANDSMAN (for himself and Mr. GOLDMAN of New York):

H. Res. 895. A resolution condemning calls from Members of Congress for the expulsion of Palestinians from the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. HAGEMAN:

H.R. 6481.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to reimburse the fee for an expression of interest if the expression of interest becomes inactive, and for other purposes.

By Mr. FULCHER

H.R. 6482.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 allows Congress to make all laws ''which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution'' any of Congress' enumerated powers, including Congress's power over appropriations.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill revises environmental reviews of certain geothermal energy projects on federal land in order to expedite such projects,

By Mr. HUIZENGA:

H.R. 6483.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section Eight of the US Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require greater transparency and accountability within the grant-making process of the National Institutes of Health.

By Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE:

H.R. 6484.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 CI. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1Sec. 8CI. 18). Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of

The single subject of this legislation is:

to expand Medicaid eligibility for our nation's foster youth

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 6485.

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 prohibits the federal government, states, tribal nations, or localities from discriminating or taking adverse action against a child welfare provider that declines to provide services due to the provider's sincerely held religious beliefs or moral convictions. However, government entities may still take adverse action against a provider that declines to provide adoption or foster care services based on race, color or national origin.

By Mr. McGARVEY:

H.R. 6486.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Small Business

By Mr. MURPHY:

H.R. 6487.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend title XI of the Social Security Act to prohibit health plans from imposing fees on health care providers for electronic funds transfers and health care payment and remittance advice transactions.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6488.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

to designate certain areas of the District of Columbia as empowerment zones.

By Mrs. PELTOLA:

H.R. 6489.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3.

The single subject of this legislation is;

To amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to provide that Village Corporations shall not be required to convey land in trust to the State of Alaska for the establishment of Municipal Corporations.

By Ms. PORTER:

H.R. 6490.

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:

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to limit the penalty for late enrollment under part B of the Medicare Program to 15 percent and twice the period of no enrollment, and to exclude periods of COBRA, retiree, and VA coverage from such late enrollment penalty.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 6491.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To expedite administrative forfeiture of oligarch assets connected to Vladimir Putin and allow for proceeds to be transferred to Ukraine.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 16: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 40: Ms. GARCIA of Texas.
H.R. 152: Mr. ROSENDALE and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 239: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 396: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
H.R. 443: Ms. SLOTKIN.
H.R. 513: Ms. SLOTKIN.
H.R. 537: Ms. SEWELL and Mr. BERGMAN.
H.R. 594: Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 595: Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 613: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 619: Ms. ADAMS, Mr. SORENSEN, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 681: Ms. SLOTKIN and Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 683: Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER.
H.R. 720: Mr. SELF.
H.R. 724: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 807: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. HARDER of California, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 866: Ms. BARRAGÁN.
H.R. 884: Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.R. 894: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 895: Ms. PETTERSEN, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. FEENSTRA.
H.R. 936: Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 1015: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. FITZGERALD.
H.R. 1097: Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. MCGARVEY, and Mr. VAN ORDEN.
H.R. 1103: Ms. SALINAS.
H.R. 1117: Mr. PETERS and Ms. CRAIG.
H.R. 1150: Ms. STEVENS and Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California.
H.R. 1202: Mr. NADLER, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.
H.R. 1222: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 1235: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 1305: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. LATURNER.
H.R. 1321: Ms. CARAVEO and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 1385: Mr. BENTZ.
H.R. 1413: Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 1432: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 1433: Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ.
H.R. 1458: Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 1491: Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 1492: Mr. GOOD of Virginia.
H.R. 1503: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 1586: Mr. CARBAJAL and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 1610: Mr. NEHLS.
H.R. 1624: Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 1694: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 1764: Mrs. PELTOLA.
H.R. 1801: Mr. CROW.
H.R. 1815: Mr. PASCRELL and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 1833: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. RYAN, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. MCGARVEY, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mr. HORSFORD, and Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 2367: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 2377: Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina.
H.R. 2385: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 2400: Mr. LALOTA.
H.R. 2403: Mr. MRVAN.
H.R. 2407: Mr. TIMMONS and Ms. JACOBS.
H.R. 2413: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2423: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 2604: Ms. JAYAPAL and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2645: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 2666: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 2693: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 2706: Mr. STEUBE, Ms. TENNEY, and Ms. SLOTKIN.
H.R. 2713: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2870: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Ms. WATERS, and Ms. PRESSLEY.
H.R. 2880: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 2889: Mrs. RAMIREZ.
H.R. 2891: Mr. THANEDAR.
H.R. 2922: Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEU, and Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 2945: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 2965: Ms. BUDZINSKI.
H.R. 2966: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 3000: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 3005: Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 3029: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 3036: Mr. PHILLIPS and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 3074: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 3086: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 3136: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 3139: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 3183: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 3312: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 3325: Mr. BACON, Mr. TRONE, Mr. LAWLER, and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 3380: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 3382: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 3433: Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. YAKYM, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. CASTEN, Ms. DE LA CRUZ, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. COHEN, Ms. TITUS, Ms. BROWN, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. SLOTKIN.
H.R. 3475: Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. FROST, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. CASAR.
H.R. 3497: Mrs. CAMMACK and Mr. VAN DREW.
H.R. 3519: Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mrs. FLETCHER, and Mr. MOYLAN.
H.R. 3520: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 3530: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 3539: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 3611: Mr. FEENSTRA.
H.R. 3639: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 3651: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. VAN ORDEN.
H.R. 3662: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 3682: Mr. MAGAZINER.
H.R. 3719: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 3777: Mr. D'ESPOSITO and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 3781: Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 3847: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3850: Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. STANTON, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. LIEU, and Ms. OMAR.
H.R. 3853: Mr. LIEU.
H.R. 3879: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 3910: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. PHILLIPS.
H.R. 3970: Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Ms. PORTER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CASAR, Mr. LANDSMAN, and Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 4006: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 4046: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4052: Mrs. RAMIREZ.
H.R. 4068: Ms. TLAIB, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 4144: Mr. D'ESPOSITO.
H.R. 4149: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 4157: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.
H.R. 4212: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4261: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. BUSH, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 4274: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 4278: Mr. VAN ORDEN.
H.R. 4289: Mr. BOWMAN and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 4293: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4326: Ms. WEXTON, Ms. BROWN, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. MCCLELLAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MAGAZINER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. PORTER, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 4335: Mr. VARGAS and Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 4393: Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California.
H.R. 4417: Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina.
H.R. 4422: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WEXTON, Ms. BROWN, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. RYAN, Mr. MAGAZINER, Ms. PORTER, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. NORCROSS, and Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 4438: Mr. VAN DREW.
H.R. 4442: Mr. GOTTHEIMER and Mr. TRONE.
H.R. 4524: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.
H.R. 4541: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4551: Mr. LAWLER.
H.R. 4565: Mr. SMUCKER and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 4569: Mr. EVANS, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 4571: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 4576: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 4579: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DELUZIO, and Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
H.R. 4581: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 4602: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4619: Mr. MOOLENAAR.
H.R. 4663: Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Ms. CRAIG, and Mr. GIMENEZ.
H.R. 4713: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 4721: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas.
H.R. 4731: Mr. TRONE.
H.R. 4736: Mr. SMUCKER, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. VALADAO, and Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 4764: Mr. MOORE of Alabama.
H.R. 4840: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4856: Mr. SMUCKER.
H.R. 4867: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 4893: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 4899: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 4931: Mr. RASKIN and Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 4937: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 4966: Ms. LEE of California and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 5012: Mr. SOTO, Mr. GOMEZ, Ms. SPANBERGER, and Mrs. FLETCHER.
H.R. 5035: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 5075: Ms. LEE of California and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 5077: Mr. WILLIAMS of New York.
H.R. 5099: Mr. VAN ORDEN.
H.R. 5217: Mr. LIEU.
H.R. 5246: Mrs. HAYES.
H.R. 5254: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 5256: Mr. NUNN of Iowa.
H.R. 5399: Ms. TENNEY, Mr. LANDSMAN, Ms. STANSBURY, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, and Mr. LIEU.
H.R. 5401: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 5467: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 5487: Ms. SCHRIER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. STRICKLAND, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 5526: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. BACON, Mr. NEHLS, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. KUSTOFF, and Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 5530: Mr. BENTZ.
H.R. 5532: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 5535: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 5539: Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS.
H.R. 5555: Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 5564: Ms. PORTER and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 5577: Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 5631: Mr. SMUCKER and Mr. ALFORD.
H.R. 5634: Mr. CRANE.
H.R. 5646: Ms. WILD, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. BALDERSON, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.
H.R. 5647: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 5675: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
H.R. 5685: Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. STANTON, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. LIEU, Ms. OMAR, Mr. IVEY, and Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 5790: Mr. MOORE of Alabama and Mr. EZELL.
H.R. 5796: Mr. TIMMONS.
H.R. 5806: Mr. BOST.
H.R. 5807: Ms. ROSS and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 5816: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 5819: Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Ms. PETTERSEN, Ms. STANSBURY, and Mr. BACON.
H.R. 5838: Mrs. HINSON.
H.R. 5863: Mr. CASE, Mr. LIEU, and Ms. PORTER.
H.R. 5908: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 5928: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CROW, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. TRONE, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 5988: Mr. PANETTA, Mr. HERN, and Mr. FINSTAD.
H.R. 5989: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 5995: Ms. BALINT.
H.R. 6031: Ms. MCCLELLAN, Mr. CASAR, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Ms. PORTER, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. OMAR, Mr. MORELLE, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. COHEN, Mr. STANTON, and Mrs. TORRES of California.
H.R. 6033: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ and Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 6043: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 6045: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 6049: Mr. HIMES, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 6053: Mr. CASE, Mr. MAGAZINER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. OMAR, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 6093: Mrs. SYKES and Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 6161: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 6175: Mrs. LESKO, Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina, Mr. NORMAN, and Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 6178: Mr. MAGAZINER.
H.R. 6179: Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 6186: Ms. LEE of Florida.
H.R. 6189: Ms. STEFANIK and Mr. FEENSTRA.
H.R. 6198: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 6203: Mrs. HAYES, Ms. CARAVEO, Mr. TORRES of New York, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 6205: Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. BUCSHON, and Ms. CRAIG.
H.R. 6244: Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. ALLRED, Mr. NEHLS, and Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas.
H.R. 6246: Ms. SEWELL.
H.R. 6248: Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
H.R. 6249: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. GOLDMAN of New York.
H.R. 6281: Mr. CASE.
H.R. 6282: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 6285: Mr. CAREY, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. BURLISON.
H.R. 6298: Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.
H.R. 6309: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 6318: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 6319: Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 6341: Ms. BALINT.
H.R. 6348: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. MFUME, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. CHU, Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. LIEU, and Mr. NEGUSE.
H.R. 6373: Ms. MACE and Mr. VAN ORDEN.
H.R. 6377: Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. BUDZINSKI, and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 6378: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 6379: Ms. CARAVEO.
H.R. 6380: Mr. FERGUSON.
H.R. 6382: Mr. BACON.
H.R. 6399: Mr. EDWARDS.
H.R. 6408: Ms. TENNEY, Mr. FERGUSON, and Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.R. 6416: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. CROW.
H.R. 6417: Mr. CROW and Mr. TRONE.
H.R. 6437: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 6438: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 6451: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. BEYER, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 6456: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 6459: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 6460: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 6470: Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. JACOBS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 6473: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.J. Res. 13: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.J. Res. 66: Mr. DUNN of Florida.
H.J. Res. 76: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BALINT, and Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.J. Res. 98: Mr. LANGWORTHY and Mr. MEUSER.
H.J. Res. 99: Mr. AMODEI.
H. Con. Res. 47: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H. Con. Res. 76: Mr. SCHIFF.
H. Res. 105: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H. Res. 149: Mr. DOGGETT.
H. Res. 317: Ms. SLOTKIN.
H. Res. 319: Mr. RYAN.
H. Res. 332: Mr. MENENDEZ.
H. Res. 485: Ms. PORTER.
H. Res. 527: Ms. TITUS.
H. Res. 532: Mr. RASKIN.
H. Res. 561: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H. Res. 627: Mr. BENTZ.
H. Res. 644: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 677: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H. Res. 683: Mr. HUNT.
H. Res. 685: Ms. DE LA CRUZ.
H. Res. 697: Mrs. BICE.
H. Res. 717: Mr. RUIZ.
H. Res. 720: Mr. LAWLER.
H. Res. 738: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. BERGMAN.
H. Res. 762: Ms. TITUS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. GARCIA of Texas.
H. Res. 793: Ms. SCANLON, Ms. VAN DUYNE, and Mr. HUNT.
H. Res. 806: Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. LESKO, Ms. ROSS, and Mr. BUCSHON.
H. Res. 839: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. FERGUSON.
H. Res. 850: Mrs. LESKO, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, and Mr. D'ESPOSITO.
H. Res. 861: Mr. COSTA.
H. Res. 867: Ms. CARAVEO.
H. Res. 874: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. TRAHAN, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. SCANLON, Mrs. FOUSHEE, and Mr. MCGARVEY.
H. Res. 881: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H. Res. 883: Mr. GARBARINO.
H. Res. 885: Mr. BACON and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H. Res. 888: Mr. LALOTA, Mrs. GONZALEZ-COLÓN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. LANGWORTHY, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. MANN, Mr. FRY, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. GUEST, Mrs. BICE, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H. Res. 889: Mr. LALOTA.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 10:01 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God and provider, we thank You for the many blessings we enjoy as citizens of this great Nation. May we be good stewards of Your gifts. Lord, as we reflect on the future, we pray that Your sovereign presence will protect our Nation and world from evil. Equip us to do what is right and just and good.

We pray for our Senators today, asking that You would keep them courageous and focused on Your plans to guide and prosper us. We are grateful that You are here on Capitol Hill, listening, watching, and judging. May all of our elected leaders do what is right for Your everlasting glory.

We pray in Your loving 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, November 28, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BENNET thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the 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 Jeffrey M. Bryan, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

ISRAEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in the coming weeks, Congress has a responsibility to equip America and our allies to face a historic array of national security challenges. To understand the urgency of this moment, just look at the impossible choices facing our ally Israel as it works to bring innocent people home from terrorist captivity.

These brutal terrorists bankroll their existence with the blood of innocent people. They know that their hostages can be cashed in for a brief reprieve from justice or in exchange for terrorists incarcerated in Israel. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza is one of Hamas's own design. Just as there is no moral equivalence between terrorism and self-defense, there is no moral equivalence between innocent hostages and convicted terrorists and criminals.

Unfortunately, this is not just a reminder for the activists on elite campuses and in national newsrooms who uncritically lapped up and regurgitated activist propaganda. It is also for some of our colleagues here in Congress.

According to some reports, Senate Democrats will use their caucus lunch today to discuss placing restrictions on U.S. military assistance to Israel. One of our colleagues is already on the record demanding that President Biden ''be more aggressive with the Israelis.'' Another has declared that ''not one penny will be coming to Israel'' unless our ally bends to his view—offered from the comfort of a Senate office—on how Israel should conduct self-defense operations.

If Senate Democrats want to vote to tie the hands of Israeli soldiers as they defend their country against vicious terrorists, I welcome such a debate.

For anyone who needs to hear it again, the conflict unfolding today is between a sovereign democracy that takes great pains to avoid civilian casualties and terrorist butchers who go out of their way to inflict civilian casualties and put their own civilians in harm's way. Israel deserves the time, the space, and the resources to restore its security, and I will stand by our ally 100 percent.

For that matter, our own people—American men and women in uniform—deserve the same unwavering commitment to restoring credible deterrence against Iran.

Since October 17, Iran-backed terrorists have launched at least 73 attacks against U.S. personnel in Iraq and

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Syria. Clearly, President Biden's strikes against desert warehouses have not given our adversaries pause. The world's leading state sponsor of terrorism remains demonstrably undeterred.

Right now, we have a responsibility to equip Israel to destroy Hamas, deter violence against American servicemembers, and invest seriously in American hard power—a language our adversaries in Iran, in Moscow, and in Beijing actually understand. Supplemental national security legislation is our chance to uphold this responsibility.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, on another matter, as my colleagues and I on this side of the aisle have made abundantly clear, national security begins with border security, and any serious supplemental legislation with a shot at passing the Senate in the coming weeks will have to take meaningful steps toward fixing the Biden administration's border crisis.

On President Biden's watch, record-setting illegal migration has strained border protection facilities and personnel to their breaking point. On this President's watch, catch-and-release has gone from a shortsighted policy option to the dangerous first resort for a profoundly broken asylum and parole system. Right now, immigration courts are facing over 2 million pending asylum cases. That backlog has grown by 50 percent just since President Biden took office. The average asylum case waits more than 4 years for judgment. Talk about sending the wrong signal to legitimate asylum seekers and to bad actors alike.

A wide, bipartisan consensus continues to acknowledge that this broken system is the central problem driving the border crisis. Even the administration's border czar, Secretary Mayorkas, has acknowledged that the way the United States handles asylum claims needs to be ''reformed from top to bottom.'' Well, that is exactly what Senate Republicans have been working on for weeks. Senators LANKFORD, GRAHAM, COTTON, and CORNYN are trying in good faith to help DHS solve its problem by identifying policy changes that restore a measure of common sense to the way we process asylum claims and grant parole.

But at the same time, the Democratic leader has called border security measures ''the biggest holdup'' for passing a national security supplemental. Well, he is right about one thing: The single largest obstacle in the way of urgent resources to help Israel, Ukraine, and Taiwan is Democrats' refusal to address the crisis at the southern border.

National security begins right here at home, and the sooner our colleagues admit it, the sooner the Senate can move forward on the urgent business before us.

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.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, artificial intelligence—or what is referred to as AI—has been with us for quite some time now. And whether it is the chatbot providing help on Amazon, or personalized recommendations on Netflix, or the algorithms that are curating your social media feeds, these days, most of us interact with artificial intelligence on a daily basis. But as the release of ChatGPT to the public last year demonstrated, artificial intelligence is about to take a giant step forward.

The AI applications I have mentioned, like chatbots and personalized recommendations, are examples of so-called narrow AI, which is AI trained to perform specific tasks. But ChatGPT is an example of the next generation of AI—artificial intelligence systems set up to imitate the human brain and produce original content based on the assimilation of vast sets of data.

This next generation of AI—so-called foundation models which underpin systems like ChatGPT—offers tremendous possibilities: advances in medicine, in farming, in manufacturing, the automation of routine tasks, new ways to manage infrastructure, better and more resilient supply chains, advances in national defense. And the list, literally, goes on and on.

But as with any sophisticated technology, this next generation of AI presents risks as well. And those risks are heightened by the enormous capabilities of AI and the potential for this technology to pervade every corner of our society. And our goal needs to be encouraging the promise of AI while putting safeguards in place to minimize potential dangers.

The light-touch approach the United States has taken to internet regulation is a good model to follow as we approach AI regulation. The explosive growth of internet innovation in the United States is, in large part, a result of the fact that the government has not weighed down this sector of the economy with heavyhanded regulation. And we should maintain a similarly light touch when it comes to AI to encourage innovation and keep the United States at the forefront of the next generation of artificial intelligence.

Leadership in AI will benefit our economy. And there are also serious security reasons why staying at the forefront of the AI revolution is important. There is no question that AI will come to play an important role in national defense, and falling behind adversaries—like the Chinese Communist Party—could put our country at a serious disadvantage when it comes to our national security. So we need to start establishing some basic rules of the road that will allow AI innovation to flourish, while at the same time minimizing the dangers that it presents.

The race to regulate AI has already started. President Biden has released a sweeping Executive order that empowers multiple government Agencies and Departments to regulate all AI systems, and even the algorithms that recommend our next movie on Netflix or remind us that we need to order more paper towels.

And internationally, the European Union has continued to press forward with a heavyhanded regulatory regime. It is time for Congress to ensure that innovation in the United States continues. Regulating AI by Executive order is not the way to go about things.

Even if the President's Executive order on AI weren't overly broad and heavyhanded, Executive orders are, by their very nature, not permanent, since they have the potential to be reversed or amended at any time—and stand a good chance of being reversed or amended when a new administration comes into office. This creates uncertainty for companies, which can stunt expansion and innovation.

The right way to approach AI regulation is to pursue a bipartisan, nationwide approach in Congress that will protect innovation while putting in place the necessary safeguards for the riskiest applications of this technology.

To that end, shortly before Thanksgiving, I introduced bipartisan AI legislation with Senator KLOBUCHAR and several of our Commerce Committee colleagues from both parties. Our bill is intended to establish some basic rules of the road for artificial intelligence while protecting the ability of companies to innovate and advance this technology.

Our bill focuses on two things: transparency for consumers and a tiered, risk-based framework for oversight of the highest impact applications of AI. On the transparency front, our bill would require any large-scale internet platform that uses generative AI to create content to clearly inform consumers of that fact. One of the risks presented by generative AI is the difficulty distinguishing AI-produced content from human-produced content.

Now, that may not be a huge issue if the content we are talking about is an amusing meme, but it is a real issue if a consumer is trying to figure out whether information or an image is real or whether it has been generated by AI. So requiring transparency about whether content is being produced—or at least partially produced—by generative AI needs to be a priority.

The second part of our bill deals with high-impact and critical-impact AI, that is, AI applications used to make significant applications in particularly high-risk sectors. Our bill establishes a two-tiered system for overseeing these applications.

Critical-impact AI applications—for example, like those used to make significant decisions in the operation of critical infrastructure—would be required to self-certified compliance with testing evaluation, validation, and verification standards.

What does all that mean? High-impact AI applications will be subject solely to transparency reporting requirements. Importantly, this part of the bill is carefully tailored to apply only to AI applications making complex decisions in high-risk sectors and is meant to respond directly and narrowly to the recent leap in capabilities of foundation models that power them.

I believe that the bill Senator KLOBUCHAR and I have introduced is the right first step when it comes to AI technology. Unlike the White House's Executive order, our bill doesn't instantly assume that artificial technology is bad and that it should be subject to heavyhanded government intervention, nor does our legislation rush us into regulations before we have a clear idea of what aspects of this technology need to be regulated and in what way.

Instead, our bill puts in place guardrails to mitigate the dangers posed by the highest-impact AI application, while leaving American innovators and entrepreneurs free to move forward with innovation.

I am grateful to Senator KLOBUCHAR and our other cosponsors for working with me on this bill, and we will continue to welcome ideas to further improve our legislation. Legislation on this issue of this magnitude calls for the deliberation of the committee process and regular order consideration, and I will work to ensure that we take it up in the Commerce Committee in the coming months.

This bill will probably not be the last bill that Congress needs to consider when it comes to AI, but I believe it is the right place for us to begin. And I look forward to working with colleagues from both parties to getting this bill through Congress and across the finish line.

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. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO PEGGY J. DUNN

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to address my colleagues here on the Senate floor today.

I come here with a smile on my face because the individuals I want to recognize today are friends, and they are wonderful people who have made a difference in the lives of many of their fellow citizens back home in Kansas.

I want to recognize a lifelong Kansan who has served her family, her community, and her State. Peggy Dunn has been serving the city of Leawood as mayor since 1997 and has cultivated a flourishing and beautiful community. In January, Mayor Dunn's last term will come to an end. Her dedication to the city of Leawood will not be forgotten, and she will be greatly missed.

Peggy J. Dunn was born in greater Kansas City and has been serving the city of Leawood for 31 years. Prior to being mayor, she was a city council member for 4 years until she was sworn in as mayor in 1997.

Mayor Dunn has played a critical role in the growth of Leawood, and during her years in office, many, many notable developments have been made. Shopping centers such as Park Place and Town Center, Mission Farms and Prairiefire have brought immense expansion and success to the area. Buildings like the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection reveal the architectural beauties of the city. These developments were deliberately planned and came to fruition with guidance from Mayor Dunn.

Mayor Dunn has dedicated her life to creating a lasting community by forming relationships with Leawood's business leaders, volunteer organizations, religious communities, and residents, working together for the city's success.

I have seen her meet people and I know when I meet her—every time there is a conversation, you know that she cares about you. She listens, and she cares that way for the people of her city and the people of the State of Kansas.

Through Mayor Dunn's work, new fire stations, police headquarters, and courts protect the community. Beautiful parks, golf courses, and recreational centers provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy what the city has to offer. Mayor Dunn is a servant leader. She is an innovator, and she is totally dedicated to her community.

Leawood, the city, has close relationships with sister cities. In 2003, Mayor Dunn and Mayor Peter Weiss of the Gezer region in Israel signed a resolution in agreement to become sister cities. Since then, Mayor Dunn has hosted delegations from abroad and traveled to Israel multiple times. Additionally, Leawood dedicated the I-Lan Park to its sister city in Taiwan. The park is home to a lovely Taiwanese garden, an open play space, and a piece of art called Cloud Gate.

Through Mayor Dunn's leadership, Leawood has a very bright future ahead.

Mayor Dunn's family has played a key role in her success as a leader. She has 4 children with her husband Terry and 14 grandchildren. I guess, needless to say, Mayor Dunn has plenty to keep her busy as she retires as mayor.

Thank you to her family for supporting Peggy during her tenure.

I congratulate Peggy on her retirement and wish her the very best in the future.

Thank you, Mayor, for all you have done for the city of Leawood, its citizens, and all you have done for the State of Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BOEHM

Mr. President, for two decades, Michael Boehm has served as the mayor of Lenexa, KS, and he will now retire in January, having served as the longest serving mayor in the city's history.

Mike has built his life and career in Lenexa. He is a lifetime resident, and Mike knows the ins and outs of his community. I have never met anyone who knows more about Lenexa than Mike Boehm. He understands the unique importance of every single business on Main Street and the men and women who run those businesses.

During his 20 years as mayor, the population of Lenexa has grown by nearly 20,000 residents. That is remarkable growth, and it is a testament to the quality of the community he has led.

Under Mike's leadership, downtown Lenexa was transformed with the relocation of city hall and the development of a new downtown district known as City Place. With new shops, restaurants, parks, and public spaces, Lenexa is attracting new families and young people who want to put roots down in Kansas. Mike also worked to open the Lenexa branch of the Johnson County Library system, as well as to bring the District Aquatic Center to the city of Lenexa.

I admire Mike's leadership and determination for the city. I have always, always appreciated my conversations with Mike, whether he is visiting me here in Washington DC or when I am meeting with him in Lenexa. He is a true public servant, and the city and State are better because of Mike's service.

I have enjoyed many times conversations on the phone and in person, with solid and good advice about what is in the best interest of the people of Lenexa and Johnson County and Kansas. Mike has been significantly helpful to me as we have worked to try to make sure good things happen in all places across our State.

I congratulate Mike on his retirement and look forward to seeing what this next chapter holds for him.

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY M. BRYAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge Jeffrey Bryan to the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota.

Judge Bryan received his B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and his J.D. from Yale Law School. After clerking for Judge Paul A. Magnuson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota, Judge Bryan worked in private practice at Robins Kaplan Miller & Ciresi LLP on a range of complex civil matters and Federal white collar criminal cases. Judge Bryan then went on to serve as a Federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's

Office for the District of Minnesota for 6 years, where he handled more than 1,000 hearings in Federal court. During his time as an assistant U.S. attorney, he directed the largest cocaine and methamphetamine investigations ever conducted in the district, recovering more than 9,600 grams of methamphetamine and securing the convictions of more than 60 defendants. In 2013, Judge Bryan was appointed as a trial court judge for the Second Judicial District of Minnesota, where he presided over more than 8,000 cases and nearly 120 trials. In 2016, Judge Bryan was appointed to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, where he has participated in more than 500 decisions and has authored over 180 written opinions and orders.

The American Bar Association unanimously rated Judge Bryan ''well qualified'' to serve on the district court, and he has the strong support of Senators KLOBUCHAR and SMITH. With nearly two decades of public service, as well as his extensive courtroom experience, Judge Bryan is well-positioned to handle the demands of the District of Minnesota from day one.

I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

Mr. MORAN. I yield the floor.

VOTE ON BRYAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bryan nomination?

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, 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 Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 315 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Butler	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Luján	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Collins	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Welch
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Padilla	Wyden
Fetterman	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Boozman	Britt
Blackburn	Braun	Budd
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Rubio
Cornyn	Kennedy	Schmitt
Cotton	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Lee	Scott (SC)
Crapo	Lummis	Sullivan
Cruz	Marshall	Thune
Daines	McConnell	Tillis
Ernst	Moran	Tuberville
Fischer	Mullin	Vance
Grassley	Paul	Wicker
Hagerty	Ricketts	Young
Hawley	Risch	
Hoeven	Romney	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Markey	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Ossoff	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET M. GARNETT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Margaret M. Garnett to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Ms. Garnett earned her B.A. from the University of Notre Dame in 1992, her M.A. and M. Phil. from Yale University in 1995 and 1997, and her J.D. from Columbia Law School in 2000. Ms. Garnett began her legal career working as an associate at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz from 2000 to 2004, where she focused on bankruptcy litigation. She then clerked for the Honorable Gerald E. Lynch on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York from 2004 to 2005. Following her clerkship, Ms. Garnett joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, where she would go on to rise in the ranks throughout her 15-year tenure with the office. Although she presently serves as special counsel, Ms. Garnet has also served the Office as Deputy United States Attorney, Chief of Appeals, Deputy Chief of Appeals, Chief of the Violent and Organized Crime Units, Deputy Chief of the Violent Crimes Unit, and assistant United States attorney. From 2017 to 2018, Ms. Garnett served in the Office of the New York Attorney General, serving as the executive deputy attorney general for criminal justice.

In 2018, Ms. Garnett was nominated by the mayor of New York City and confirmed by the New York City Council to serve as the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, an agency charged with investigating individual and systemic corruption, waste, fraud, and abuse in city government. A substantial majority of the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary rated Ms. Garnett as ''well qualified,'' and her nomination is strongly supported by her home State Senators, Mr. SCHUMER and Mrs. GILLIBRAND.

With deep ties to the Southern District of New York and significant experience working on criminal matters, Ms. Garnett will serve on the bench with distinction. I am proud to support her nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Could we have a bit of order, please?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Order in the Chamber.

NOMINATION OF MARGARET M. GARNETT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so in a few minutes, we are going to proceed on the nomination of an outstanding public servant, Margaret M. Garnett, whom I was proud to recommend to President Biden as district judge for the Southern District of New York. She is a proud resident of Brooklyn, a brilliant legal thinker, and someone whose entire life story has been defined by public service.

She has had more than a decade of experience prosecuting cases, ranging from murder to robbery, to financial fraud, and more, as part of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Fifteen times, she has tried a case all the way to jury verdict, including what was, at the time, the largest tax fraud case in U.S. history.

But Ms. Garnett is also a fierce defender of the rights of the accused. She was instrumental in exonerating five individuals wrongly convicted of murder.

She once said that ''our job is to do justice, and that is a much broader task and quest than racking up convictions.''

Our courts need more public servants like Margaret Garnett, described by her colleagues not just as brilliant but wise, not just determined but kind, not just an outstanding lawyer but a true friend and defender of our system.

If anyone—anyone—has mastered the recipe for serving as an excellent jurist, it is certainly Margaret Garnett. So I was eager to recommend her to the President for the Federal bench, and I am proud to support the nomination of Margaret Garnett today and encourage my colleagues to support her as well.

I yield the floor.

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 senior assistant 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. 308, Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Mazie K. Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A.

Coons, Alex Padilla, Patty Murray, Sheldon Whitehouse, Debbie Stabenow, Tina Smith, Benjamin L. Cardin, Chris Van Hollen, Tim Kaine, Brian Schatz, Christopher Murphy, Peter Welch.

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 Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 316 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Butler	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Luján	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Collins	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Welch
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Padilla	Wyden
Fetterman	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Tuberville
Crapo	McConnell	Vance
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Mullin	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Ricketts	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Markey	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Ossoff	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 46.

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 Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:28 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON GARNETT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Garnett nomination?

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 317 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schatz
Booker	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Kelly	Shaheen
Butler	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Luján	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Collins	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Welch
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Padilla	Wyden
Fetterman	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Marshall	Tuberville
Crapo	McConnell	Vance
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Mullin	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Ricketts	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Markey	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Ossoff	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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 senior assistant 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. 117, Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Charles E. Schumer, Tina Smith, Tammy Baldwin, Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeff Merkley, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Debbie Stabenow, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Duckworth, Peter Welch.

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 Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 44, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 318 Ex.]

YEAS—44

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Rosen
Bennet	Hassan	Sanders
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Shaheen
Brown	Kaine	Sinema
Butler	Kelly	Smith
Cantwell	King	Stabenow
Cardin	Klobuchar	Tester
Carper	Luján	Van Hollen
Casey	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murphy	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murray	Welch
Duckworth	Padilla	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden
Fetterman	Reed	

NAYS—51

Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Blackburn	Hagerty	Ricketts
Boozman	Hawley	Risch
Braun	Hoeven	Romney
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Budd	Johnson	Rubio
Capito	Kennedy	Schmitt
Cassidy	Lankford	Schumer
Collins	Lee	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lummis	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Manchin	Sullivan
Cramer	Marshall	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	Menendez	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Vance
Ernst	Mullin	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young

NOT VOTING—5

Graham Markey Warnock
Hickenlooper Ossoff

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 44, the nays are 51. The motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Motion to Proceed

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 379, Micah W.J. Smith to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Executive Calendar No. 379, the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

Mr. SCHUMER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as in legislation session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1250; that the Durbin amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I think I would like to——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I am sorry. Proceed.

Mr. DURBIN. I thought that they told me the script was for some other reason.

I ask consent to withdraw the request until—I made a misstatement, and Senator GRASSLEY and the Senator from Idaho would agree.

Mr. CRAPO. I would. I would agree.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you. I am new here. I am sorry I made that mistake.

Mr. President, for years, one of the greatest challenges facing American families has been the rising cost of prescription drugs. A recent AARP survey found that the price for the top 25 medications used by seniors has tripled, on average, since those drugs came to market. Those drugs include: Xarelto, Trulicity, Januvia, Jardiance, Humira, and Eliquis.

Now, I imagine most Americans already recognize the names I have read. They sound familiar because they are among the most heavily advertised products and medications on television. You may even have seen one of these ads during the Thanksgiving parade you and your family watched or while you watched a football game this weekend.

Every year, Big Pharma spends more than $6 billion each year on ads. That is the size of the entire budget of the Food and Drug Administration. In fact, we know that most pharma companies spend more on advertising than on drug research and development of new drugs.

It turns out, the United States is one of only two countries in the world that allows people to run ads on television for prescription drugs. Anybody want to guess the name of the other one? New Zealand. That is the only other country that allows this to occur.

You want to know why pharmaceutical companies spend so much money promoting their drugs? Because it increases their profits dramatically. The average American sees an average of nine ads per day, nine. Pharma thinks if they pummel you with enough ads that you will finally learn how to pronounce and spell Xarelto. You will insist to your doctor that this is the one blood thinner you really need. Sometimes it is easier in a 10-minute meeting for a doctor to just write the prescription than to take the time to explain why the drug may not be needed or a generic version might be just as good for a lot less money.

With billions in targeted spending, patients are bombarded with information but kept in the dark about one fact. Of all the things they mumble and chatter about at the end of these ads, the one thing they never want you to know is how much these drugs cost, the price.

This name is probably familiar to you if you watch television at all, Rinvoq. With billions in targeted spending, patients are bombarded with information like the name of this drug. Take Rinvoq—which is manufactured by an Illinois-based company, AbbVie, for eczema and arthritis—it is now the most advertised drug on TV.

AbbVie spent $315 million last year on TV ads for Rinvoq alone, but nowhere in the ad did they tell you how much it would cost. Want to guess what it costs for Rinvoq each and every month? The figure is $6,100. Think about that for a moment.

Well, Senator GRASSLEY and I think it is time for Big Pharma to end the secrecy about the real cost of these drugs. If they are advertising a drug, they should disclose the price upfront. It is a basic transparency measure for patients.

We have introduced bipartisan legislation to require price disclosure in direct-to-consumer drug ads. Our plan is very simple. It has actually passed the Senate once before in 2018. In a minute, we are going to ask consent to pass it again.

Here is why we think this transparency is so important. Earlier this year, a study found that more than two-thirds of drugs advertised on TV were considered ''low value.'' Those pricey wonder drugs with ads showing people golfing and having fun, they are often no better than the other, more affordable versions of the drugs. So don't you think it is worth knowing right away that Rinvoq is going to cost you $6,100 per month rather than waiting for that moment of truth at the pharmacy counter?

One in five Americans do not take their medications as prescribed because they cannot afford it. They cut their pills in half or skip doses because they can't afford to take the medications as prescribed. Don't take my word for it. These advertisements often urge you to ''ask your doctor if it is right for you.'' So we did.

The American Medical Association said:

Direct-to-consumer advertising . . . inflates demand for new and . . . expensive drugs, even when these drugs may not be appropriate.

Think about that—inflating demand for new and expensive drugs, even when they are not the best drug that the person should take.

In 2018, Senator GRASSLEY and I asked the GAO to look at the impact of these ads on television on Medicare's budget. The GAO found that between 2016 and 2018, these drugs accounted for 58 percent of Medicare spending on drugs. The drugs on television are more than half of the budget of Medicare's spending on drugs. These ads ballooned Medicare spending to $320 billion over 3 years. Humira topped the list with $500 million in advertising in 2018, which contributed to 2.4 billion in Medicare costs.

Let me show you this Humira chart so you get an idea of what we are talking about. I used this chart in 2017 when I first introduced this legislation and when the monthly cost of Humira was a mere $3,743 a month. Guess what has happened. The cost of Humira has now risen to $6,900 per month. Shouldn't AbbVie, the pharmaceutical company that makes Humira, disclose that real cost of the drug to you so you can use the information in making treatment decisions?

Our bill is supported by AARP, which speaks for seniors across America; the American Medical Association, which speaks for doctors across America; the American Hospital Association and 88 percent of Americans support the concept of this bill. How can anyone object to it?

Hold on tight. You will find out.

In fact, President Trump supported it. After our bill passed the Senate but

was stopped by a single House Republican, President Trump issued rules to require these pricetags. Famous for his tweets, here is one that I want to advertise. Look what he said:

Big announcement today. Drug companies have to come clean about their prices in TV ads.

This is from former President Trump.

Historic transparency for American patients is here. If drug companies are ashamed of those prices—lower them.

I didn't always agree with President Trump, but he was sure right on in that statement. In fact, he supported our bill.

Unsurprisingly, Big Pharma went to the courts to stop this legislation. They hate the idea of being open, honest, and transparent with the American people about the price of their drugs because they are afraid it is going to cut into their profits.

Senator GRASSLEY has been a great partner, and I want to ask him why he believes it is important to bring a dose of sunshine to these airways.

Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Well, you just heard Senator DURBIN say that this bill has passed the Senate once. It is still not law. We are back here again, and I hope my fellow Senators will see that Senator DURBIN and I don't give up on this very important issue of trying to bring a dose of sunshine to the airwaves.

Lowering the cost of prescription drugs is a top priority of mine and most of the Senators here. Without prescription medication, millions of Americans would not survive. As a nation, we are incredibly blessed to live in a country where investment and innovation unlock cures and treatments.

But the escalation in price of prescription drugs, partly caused by this advertisement that goes on, are a consuming concern for millions of Americans, including Iowans who bring up this subject regularly at my county meetings.

I have come to the floor of the Senate to address the sticker shock that greets consumers when they pick up their medicine at the pharmacy or open their medical bills after a hospital visit.

In recent years, I have worked in a bipartisan manner to pass the CREATES Act, another bill called the Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act, and another one, the Right Rebate Act into law. Each of these bills lowered prescription drug prices for patients and taxpayers by stopping anticompetitive practices, putting sunlight on medications for consumers at the pharmacy counter, and to keep drug companies in check.

I was chairman of the Finance Committee when we hauled Big Pharma in for public hearings. As chairman, I also partnered with the senior Senator from Oregon on a groundbreaking 2-year investigation of insulin pricing. That investigation focuses not only on insulin manufacturers but also powerful pharmacy benefit managers—PBMs.

I have worked to hold PBMs accountable by putting sunlight on their practices and working to ban their anticompetitive behavior that increases the cost to patients, rural pharmacies, and the taxpayers.

In this Congress, I have gotten passed the Prescription Pricing for the People Act out of the Judiciary Committee and with bipartisan support. I hope the Senate doesn't miss the opportunity to hold the Federal Trade Commission accountable by requiring the 6(b) study of drug middlemen to be produced within 1 year instead of the typical 3 to 5 years that it takes the FTC to do something.

I have also worked with the junior Senator from Washington State to pass the PBM Transparency Act out of the Commerce Committee with bipartisan support. The FTC can play an important role in holding PBMs accountable in spread pricing and clawbacks across all health insurance.

I have also contributed to and supported two Finance Committee markups this year that included six of my PBM accountability and transparency provisions. I am supporting the PBM provisions that have come out of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to deal with this problem in the commercial insurance market.

I hope the full Senate doesn't ignore the aggressive actions the four committees have taken this Congress to hold PBMs accountable. We must enact these bold committee-passed bills into law. If we are timid, we will be right back here a few years from now still fixing the problem.

On top of PBM reforms and accountability, we need price transparency; so that brings me back to where Senator DURBIN and I are right now. With that background, I now go to the purpose of this unanimous consent request and the Durbin-Grassley bill to bring important price information to prescription drug consumers. When patients complain about the high price of drugs, it is usually because they got their bill or found out how much it costs when they were at the pharmacy counter. They didn't have the ability to know the price before they bought it. Knowing what something costs before buying is common sense. So working with the Senator from Illinois to require the disclosure of medication list prices and advertisements makes common sense. President Trump pursued this through regulations, and the Senate even passed this measure—as Senator DURBIN has already said—a few years ago.

Each year, the pharmaceutical industry spends $6 billion in direct-to-consumer drug advertising to fill the airways with ads, resulting in the average American seeing nine direct-to-consumer ads each day. Studies show that these activities steer patients to more expensive drugs even when a lower cost generic is available.

The Government Accountability Office has found that prescription drugs advertised directly to consumers account for about 58 percent of Medicare spending on drugs. We ought to require the disclosure of this list price so that patients can make informed choices when inundated with drug commercials.

Consumers and taxpayers would benefit from a dose of sunshine. By passing the Drug-Price Transparency for Consumers Act, we could begin the process of reforming the incentives in our prescription supply chain that reward high-cost drugs and their manufacturers, along with powerful middlemen.

If you watch these commercials on television, you see a lot of information very quietly stated by the drug companies such as the side effects possible from using some of these drugs. You get all the information about what these drugs will accomplish, but you don't know what they cost. And that information ought to be available to the consumer.

I thank Senator DURBIN for giving me this opportunity to express my view on this piece of legislation.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1250

Mr. DURBIN. I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY. He is a proud Republican conservative. I am on the other side of the spectrum. I am a Democrat, proud of my progressive background.

The two of us agree on this because it is common sense. If the drug companies are going to spend a fortune, billions of dollars—more than they spend on research for new drugs—advertising these drugs, we have a right to ask: What does it cost? Is that such a tough question to answer? Not if you are proud of your product. Not if you are proud of the price you are charging.

But if you don't want the American public to know, you conceal the price and you send Senators to the floor to object.

Now, both political parties spend an awful lot of money on political opinion surveys: What are Americans thinking? Do you know what shows up as a No. 1 concern year after year after year? The high cost of prescription drugs. That isn't getting any better.

If you ask insurance companies: Why does the cost of health insurance keep going up? The No. 1 driver: the high cost of prescription drugs.

If you ask: What are we going to do about Medicare's runaway costs? You have to do something about the high cost of prescription drugs.

We are addressing that issue directly, but there are only four U.S. Senators on the floor of this Senate for this occasion, because we are not going to go to the measure and actually debate and consider it. It is going to be pushed aside for a procedural reason, and it will go back to an empty floor and an empty Chamber waiting for the next rollcall on a nomination.

The American people have lost faith in this institution because we are afraid to tackle the real issues they

care about. This is one of those issues. It is a bipartisan matter, even approved by former President Trump, and I am sitting here talking about it. It is an indication to me that this an idea whose time has come.

So, Mr. President, now at the appropriate time, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1250; that the Durbin amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Americans deserve a transparent, affordable, and accessible prescription drug market. I agree with the concerns that each of my colleagues have raised here tonight. The current system fails to meet these needs, and I appreciate the intentions of my colleagues in attempting to shed light on the opaque pricing system that we now face. The problem is that the solution proposed in Senate bill 1250 is the wrong solution.

If you listened carefully to the debate of my colleagues, their main objection was that the prescription drug companies are advertising and promoting and creating markets for their products. Their solution is to have them tell you what the price is, and what they are asking in their legislation is that the prescription drug manufacturers be required to state their list price.

But we all know that the list price is not actually the correct price, and it will actually create confusion even further by forcing these pricing numbers to be put out into the marketplace through commercial advertising in a way that will then, I believe, undercut the major reforms that we are now undertaking in the Finance Committee to get the opaque system eliminated, to shed transparency onto the system, and help all consumers—including the United States Government—to understand what the real price is.

Senator GRASSLEY referenced three or four of his bills that we are working on in legislation right now in the Finance Committee that make major reforms to achieve this very price transparency that I am talking about. We had a markup on that legislation just recently, and it passed 26 to 0 in the Finance Committee. It is ready to come to the floor. It will deal with many of these things that have already been discussed here, but it will not create a mandate that the wrong price be advertised on TV.

Far too often, heavily concentrated health plans and PBMs force consumers to pay on that list price for prescription drugs, exposing seniors and working families to catastrophic costs. This bill, if enacted, would mandate the inclusion of these inflated figures in virtually all medication ads, reinforcing the notion of the list price as the best pricing opportunity for consumers.

Respectfully, I see these requirements as moving our current system in the wrong direction by affirming deceptive price points that should never be the basis for a patient's cost or decisions.

A drug's list price includes none of the discounts, none of the rebates or other price concessions found in the net price—the real price that is paid between the insurers and the PBMs and often then dealt with in pharmacies that are integrated with the insurance companies and the PBMs.

A recent study showed that this gap between the list and the net price continues to inflate every year. In 2022, for instance, sticker prices for branded drugs, like those you have seen on charts here, grew by 3.7 percent; whereas, the net prices—the real price—which was not able to be figured out by the consumer accounting for rebates and discounts, remained unchanged.

For medicines like insulin, the gap between the list and the net price can exceed 80 percent.

Rather than broadcast and validate list prices, Congress should ensure that patients can share in the savings that are reflected in net price points, enabling both increased transparency and reduced out-of-pocket costs at the pharmacy counter. The better act—the one I just referred to that is coming out of the Finance Committee with a 26 to 0 vote—would take numerous steps toward achieving this goal with sizable cost-sharing reductions for seniors and no premium hikes. This proposal before us today, by contrast, would risk rubberstamping the centrality of sticker prices that no consumer should need to pay under a rational healthcare system.

I share the concerns of scores of patient advocates and clinicians who agree with the need for more transparent pricing but disagree with the approach taken by this bill. As many of these groups have pointed out, list price disclosures can trigger confusion for consumers and deter healthy, proactive doctor-patient discussions.

In fact, I would think that the drug manufacturers would love to have their list price—the one they want to start out asking for—be the one that is marketed.

For Americans with solid prescription drug coverage, list prices provide no direct insight into what a patient will actually pay for a given drug. For the population more broadly and for policymakers, the mandates in this legislation do nothing to unearth critical information on the price concessions routinely withheld from consumers.

Additionally, the bill's free speech concerns warrant further discussion and scrutiny, and its transformation of CMS into an advertising regulator raises legal questions of mission creep and Agency scope. I stand ready to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reduce patient costs and to move toward more transparency in the marketplace. That said, for numerous reasons, I cannot support this legislation and must object to its passage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Idaho is my friend. We have worked together and served together, and I count him as my friend.

I would just say that arguing that the list price is deceptive suggests that there is some third party, some Agency—perhaps in Government—that is creating this list price which we are asking to be on the ads that the pharmaceutical companies put on television.

Do you know who creates the list price, Mr. President? The pharmaceutical companies themselves. We go directly to them. Give us the list price. You saw what happens over the span of a few years: The list price can double.

Who is creating that doubling in the price? The pharmaceutical companies themselves. And, now, to argue that the price that they agree on, that they advertise, is one that is somehow deceptive to consumers just doesn't square.

Have you ever heard of AARP, the American Association of Retired Persons? Most of us respect them because we have worked with them over the years. They speak for seniors. They have endorsed this bill. They don't think it is confusing or deceiving to tell consumers how much these drugs actually cost.

Let's get down to reality. Whether it is from healthcare providers or pharmaceutical companies, many times the starting price is not the end price. But you never know where that is going to end up. It depends on the insurance company, for example, as to how much they are going to reimburse or whether there are any copays involved in it. So the one price we can stick with is the price created by the pharmaceutical companies themselves.

Is it so confusing to consumers that you can't state a number? They get it. They know what the cost is. What they don't get and what they may not understand is all of that mumbling that goes on at the end of the ads: Don't take this drug if you are allergic to this drug. Incidentally, this drug may kill you.

You listen to all that stuff, and you say: How in the world can they jam in all of that information in just a few seconds?

Listing the price of a drug on TV is very simple, very straight, and very honest and transparent. Pharmaceutical companies should want to join in that effort.

I thank Senator GRASSLEY for coming to the floor to join in this effort today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

ISRAEL

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, a month and a half ago, Hamas terrorists committed a horrific act of barbarism. More than 1,200 innocent Israelis and 33 Americans were murdered in cold-blooded acts of evil. It was the deadliest massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust and the deadliest foreign attack on Americans since 9/11.

The Middle East is no stranger to violence, but the October 7 attack was particularly heinous: systematically hunting down and slaughtering young people at a concert; kidnapping elderly women out of their homes; beheading babies and burning them in ovens. The line between good and evil is as clear as it has ever been.

For the remaining innocent hostages currently being illegally held in Gaza, the terrorists and the terror continue. While we are grateful for the release of some hostages over the weekend, our hearts remain with those still being held. This includes several Americans, including Keith Siegel, a native of my home State of North Carolina.

So let me be as clear as I can: Hamas's continued holding of these innocent hostages is a violation of the law, and it represents a complete disrespect for the value of human life. Every single one of them must be released, and all levels of our government must remain united in working to get them home.

In this clash between good and evil, the question that the United States should be asking is, Who can we count on to be on our side, and who stands on the side of the terrorists?

This brings us to the state of Qatar. This is a nation that hosts Hamas's so-called political office, including Hamas leaders. From the safety of Doha, these terrorists gleefully watched and celebrated the attacks on October 7.

Now, it is important to remember that Qatar is a major non-NATO ally of the United States, and it hosts U.S. military forces at Al Udeid Air Base—a strategically important location for our operations in the Middle East. Our two nations are friends, but sometimes friends must be honest with one another.

You see, Qatar claims that they only host Hamas at the request of the U.S. Government and in coordination with Israel. There is some truth to this. Since October 7, Biden administration officials, such as CIA Director Burns, have beaten a path toward Doha, hoping that the Qatari Government's hosting of Hamas's senior leadership would provide a pathway toward ending the hostage crisis that Hamas initiated.

I certainly agree that the U.S. Government, including both the administration and Congress, should be doing everything it can to bring the hostages home, including working through allies and partners, and, to be sure, Qatar's mediation with Hamas's leaders has helped free some hostages, but at what cost and to what end?

In exchange for the release of innocent women and children who were kidnapped by Hamas, Israel was forced to exchange three Palestinian prisoners for every one innocent Israeli victim. Many, if not all, of these prisoners were arrested, charged, and sentenced for stabbings, attempted car bombings, and other heinous crimes as part of the campaign of terror. Some have already returned to the fight, donning the infamous Hamas headband and calling for the slaughter of more Jewish people.

Every day that goes by without a resolution to the hostage crisis exposes Qatar's decision to host Hamas as both foolish and flawed.

Earlier this month, I met with the Qatari Ambassador in my office. I told him in no uncertain terms that his government must pressure Hamas leaders living in Doha to immediately and unconditionally release all hostages.

In the nearly 2 months after Hamas's horrific October 7 massacre, however, we need to recognize that Qatar's current approach, while yielding limited successes, is attempting to do something unacceptable, and that is to legitimize Hamas.

Simply put, there is no future for Gaza or the Palestinians that includes Hamas. In the past 2 months, we have watched Hamas leaders use Qatar's hospitality to buy time—prolonging the war and the hostage crisis from the comfort of their luxury accommodations. While Palestinians suffer in Gaza because of the war that Hamas started, we have seen Hamas leaders push their genocidal agenda from Doha, including in multiple meetings with Iran's Foreign Minister and even in a visit to Moscow. If Qatar's leadership believes that any of this is consistent with what Washington has asked of them, it is not.

So my message to the Qatari Government is very simple: Stop this now. You are hosting a brutal terrorist organization with American blood on its hands and who is holding American hostages. Your media organizations, starting with Al Jazeera, are regularly pushing out Hamas's propaganda that only further inflames tensions in the Middle East. Your leadership continues to speak out of both sides of its mouth—on one hand, committing to negotiate a resolution to the hostage crisis while, on the other, blaming Israel and absolving Hamas at every turn.

We need to tell our friends in Doha loudly and clearly: Qatar is accepting a significant liability with its pro-Hamas policy.

So we must end this myth that this policy is something that Washington wants and urge the Qatari Government to end this policy immediately.

This is personal for Americans, and I have met with the families of hostages right here in Washington. I have heard their stories. I look at their photos every day on my desk. Every day that these families have to live with the pain and uncertainty is unacceptable. We must stand united and say: Not one more day.

We must also start thinking about the day after because there will come a day when Israel will halt its military operations in Gaza because they will have achieved their stated goal of destroying Hamas. The remaining question will then be what to do with the Hamas leaders in Doha. My view is that they should be extradited to the United States so that these terrorists can face justice in a U.S. court of law for killing and kidnapping American citizens.

I would hope that our friends in Qatar will not only be partners for peace and stability but will also be partners in ensuring that Hamas and its leaders are brought to justice for the despicable acts of terror they have committed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDENOMICS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the failures of Bidenomics and to talk about the devastating impact Bidenomics has had on American families.

Certainly, people in Wyoming are worried about the high cost of groceries. I hear it every time I am at the grocery store. People wince every time they fill up the gas tank. People have turned to either raiding their savings accounts or taking on increasing debt just to stay up to the current cost of living.

President Biden has a message for all of these people who are wincing as they fill up, who are worried about the cost of groceries, and who are raiding their savings accounts. Joe Biden's message to them is just this. He says: Don't believe your lying eyes. That is what he believes.

Tomorrow, the President will be in Colorado, and he is going to say some things that the American people just will not believe.

He will say inflation is getting better. He will say Bidenomics is working. He will say that anyone who believes anything other than that is just a victim of misinformation. Well, that is not what the families of America are feeling. Americans know that they are subjected day in and day out to incredibly high prices, and they know that Joe Biden is the President of high prices.

Before Thanksgiving, we got new inflation data, and prices went up again. Prices are now over 17 percent higher today than they were the day Joe Biden took office. In real terms, families are paying over $900 each and every month more now for their cost of living than they were for the same things the day Joe Biden came into office. Americans are feeling it everywhere but specifically in the cost of gas, the cost of groceries, and the cost of everyday goods.

As prices continue to go up, people are falling further and further behind when it comes to trying to pay their bills.

Let's look at personal savings accounts. Do people have more money or less in their bank accounts now than they did before? Well, the answer is clearly they have less. Bidenomics is forcing three out of every five Americans to live paycheck to paycheck.

Let's look at personal debt. Credit card debt now exceeds $1 trillion. This is a record high in the history of the United States.

Let's look at interest rates. Americans are maxing out their credit cards just to get by, and they are having to do it at higher interest rates just to pay their bills, so their debt number continues to go up.

Under Bidenomics, Americans barely have enough money to pay their bills, let alone save for the future.

President Biden equates Bidenomics with the American dream. So what do people think about the American dream? Well, for most families right now, that American dream is further and further out of reach than it has ever been before.

According to a recent poll by NBC News, only one in five Americans today feels confident that their children's lives will be better than their lives were. That is an alltime low, and this is talking about the future and the loss of hope for a better future.

President of the United States Joe Biden is disturbingly out of touch. According to NBC News, President Biden is baffled—baffled—that the American people are unhappy with the state of the economy. It is not baffling; it is the definition of ''Bidenomics.'' Americans are unhappy with the economy because they don't like paying 20 percent more for food, $1 more for a gallon of gas, or 8 percent mortgage rates. So why is the President of the United States so disconnected from the feelings of everyday Americans?

Well, hard-working Americans deserve better leadership than what they have gotten out of this White House for the last 3 years. On issue after issue after issue, President Biden's actions have made matters worse. He has continued and increased wasteful Washington spending. The Democrats are as guilty as he is. He keeps attacking our affordable, available, reliable American energy, and my home State of Wyoming is America's energy breadbasket. He has pursued the costliest regulatory burden in American history. The regulations coming out of this administration are penalizing and punishing and are costing the American people a lot.

Let there be no confusion that the policies of Joe Biden and the Democrats are why families have suffered the worst inflation in 40 years. Democrats have done nothing to correct course or steer the economy in the right direction. Instead of working to cure inflation, Senate Democrats tell Americans to endure it. They are pushing policies that increase spending and choke off American energy—policies that keep driving prices and costs higher.

Two weeks ago, President Biden met with the Chinese President, Xi. It was their first face-to-face meeting this year, 2023. Tensions with China continue to rise. Yet President Biden seems more eager to appease President Xi than to address China's serious threat to America's economy and safety. None of this lowers the cost of living. None of this makes our country stronger.

Republicans have solutions to get the country back on track. Our solutions will lower the cost of living, will increase wages, will reduce Washington redtape, will unleash American energy, and will end our Nation's dependence on China.

In this Congress alone, Republicans have put forward legislative solutions—workable, meaningful solutions—to restore a strong economy. We have introduced bills to reverse these political mandates and eliminate these punishing regulations. We have introduced bills to end America's dependence on China, reduce dependence for manufacturing, reduce dependence for medicines, and to promote our own manufacturing. We have introduced bills to increase America's production of oil, gas, coal, and critical minerals. That would immediately lower the cost of energy and groceries for families all across America.

Under Joe Biden and the Democrats, America is heading in the wrong direction, and by overwhelming numbers, the American people will tell you that.

Republicans have solutions to make a difference—to lower prices, to unleash American energy, to secure the southern border, and, in time, to get America back on track. The time to act is now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

ISRAEL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, so far—so far—the United States is standing behind Israel, as it should, in Israel's fight against Hamas—so far.

Don't go wobbly on us, President Biden. Don't go wobbly on Israel.

But some people in Washington seem confused as to why America backs Israel. I am seeing a lot of hand-wringing from folks who like to pretend that there is some kind of—they use this word a lot: ''nuance''—that there is some kind of nuance we need to apply to the Hamas terrorist attacks of October 7 before we can condemn Hamas and hold its supporters accountable. President Obama has even suggested that somehow we are all complicit in the bloodshed.

Some people promoting this idea of nuance, frankly, believe that Israel got what it deserves. Now, they don't say that, but that is what they believe. They believe that Israel got what it deserved. These folks who believe that also apparently believe in diversity, equity, inclusion, and the right to kill Jews.

Thankfully, that is not most Americans. That is a lot of people here in Washington, DC.

In Louisiana, however, my State, we understand that the debased people who slaughtered hundreds of young people at a peace concert are the bad guys. In Louisiana, we understand that the odious men who raped women, raped and sodomized women next to the bodies of their dead friends, don't deserve to be on this planet. We in Louisiana understand that the degenerates—the degenerates—who forced kidnapped Holocaust survivors to pose for photos—to pose for photos, for God's sake—next to their terrorist captors are just wrong.

Nothing—nothing—that the Israeli Government has ever done or could do warranted throwing grenades at children hiding in a bomb shelter. Why are some people reluctant to admit that?

You don't need to read a treatise on the Middle East to know that only monsters—monsters with black hearts—would put a baby in an oven and flip on the switch, as one first responder reported. That is not nuance; that is evil.

The evil we saw unfold when Hamas butchered Israeli civilians is indefensible. It is indefensible. Those terrorists brutalized thousands of people, including dozens of our American friends and neighbors. Hearing the stories from the survivors and from the first responders—it is nauseating. It is not nuance; it is evil.

Yet the Hamas terrorists took joy, they yelped for joy, as they massacred civilians. One terrorist called his mom—called his mother—to brag that he had ''killed 10 Jews with my own hands.'' Who would brag about something like that? Another Hamas official celebrated the violence and vowed to continue to wage attacks like this ''again and again and again'' until Israel no longer exists.

No family in Israel will be able to sleep soundly at night until these terrorists are wiped off the face of the Earth.

Israel has both the right and it has the responsibility to defend itself. I am proud that the United States of America is supporting Israel.

Don't go wobbly on us, President Biden. Stand your ground. Don't go wobbly.

I am proud that the United States is supporting Israel. The world will be a safer place for Israelis and Americans alike when Hamas ceases to exist.

Hamas leaders told anyone who would listen—anyone who would listen—they told us exactly what they intended to do and wanted to do and will continue to do. They told anyone who would listen that their goal is to kill as many Jewish people as possible, and that is still their goal.

This wasn't a protest against Israel's Government; it was a massacre of Jewish people—the largest since the Holocaust.

It is not surprising, then, that some who oppose intervention in Gaza have turned to attacking Jewish Americans.

In New York City, those people cornered Jewish students in a library, forcing a librarian to offer to hide the students in an attic. At Cornell University, they threatened to shoot up the kosher dining hall. At my State's Tulane University, activists broke a student's nose because he opposed their anti-Israel demonstration.

These protests didn't occur in New York City or Cornell or Tulane by accident; they targeted these areas because they are home to many Americans who happen to be Jewish. That is just a fact. New York is home to the largest Jewish population outside of Israel. Tulane, in my State, which was the first university in the South to welcome Jewish students, has a student body today that is roughly 40 percent Jewish. It was no accident.

When confused activists twist themselves in knots trying to justify the torture and the rape and the killing of Jews in the Middle East, they are feeding the fires of anti-Semitism here at home as well. Unfortunately, we have seen that over the past few weeks.

Let's not forget—it is Hamas who is using civilians as human shields. Hamas is the group also hoarding fuel and food as Palestinian civilians starve. Hamas is the group that dug up water pipes to turn them into rocket launchers.

The truth is that the Palestine people, the people of Gaza, and the Israeli people all suffer because of Hamas, and any suggestion that Israel is culpable for this suffering plays into the hands of the terrorists.

In Louisiana, we can see through the pseudo-intellectual hand-wringing of Israel's critics. The truth is that Hamas brutalized Israeli citizens and then ran home to hide behind their women and children, using those women and children as human shields. They are the lowest kind of pond scum, the lowest kind of sadists imaginable.

Over the past week, Hamas has released some hostages as part of a temporary cease-fire. I am happy for that, and the American people are happy for that. I and they hope that every hostage will be reunited with their family soon. We cannot forget, however—we should not forget, however—that Hamas vowed to continue attacking and kidnapping Israeli citizens again and again and again, and the only way to stop this cycle is to eliminate Hamas.

I was out of the country, in another country, when Hamas attacked Israel, and I did not know what position President Biden would take. I didn't. He said: I am standing with Israel. I was so relieved.

I know President Biden is under a lot of pressure from the loon wing of his party to abandon Israel, to demand a permanent cease-fire, to let Hamas go unpunished. But Hamas doesn't want a permanent cease-fire. Hamas had a permanent cease-fire on October 6, the day before they attacked Israeli civilians, and Hamas forfeited that cease-fire unilaterally.

Here is what Hamas wants: Hamas wants to terrorize Israel until all of the Jewish people are dead. Hamas wants to terrorize Israel until all of the Jewish people are dead. Hamas wants to kill Jews. Hamas wants to kill Jews and drink their blood out of a boot.

That is not nuance, President Obama; that is evil.

President Biden needs to show the world—and, frankly, some members of his own party—that the United States of America and its good people will continue to stand with Israel until Hamas is in ruins, until Hamas is dead and we drink their blood out of a boot, until Hamas's genocidal agenda is abandoned.

The world will be safer on that day, and it will certainly be safer because Hamas is not in it. By supporting Israel's efforts, Americans are helping to ensure that an attack like October 7 never happens again, and I think most fairminded Americans understand that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL GLEN D. VANHERCK

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have had an opportunity over the years to work with some extraordinary leaders in our military, but one of the exceptional leaders whom I have recently come to know and work with is Gen. Glen D. VanHerck. He is the commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command—we know it as NORAD—and the U.S. Northern Command, or USNORTHCOM.

General VanHerck is preparing to retire after more than 36 years of service to our Nation. As I mentioned, he is an individual whom I have come to know over the recent years, and I am proud to have been able to work with him in parts of my career. But I want to ensure that his distinguished service, which includes successful commands at every level—as director of the Joint Staff and a long list of U.S. Air Force assignments, flying the F–15, the F–35, and the B–2—is all reflected in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

General VanHerck has led by example and served selflessly throughout his career. He has always, always thought of the men and women under his command. He has thought of their families. He has thought of our future and the world that we all hope to leave for our grandchildren.

I know that General VanHerck and his wife Marilyn are looking forward to his upcoming retirement, but I would hope that he will continue to serve in a different way, utilizing his extraordinary expertise and knowledge.

From August 2020 to November 2023, General VanHerck oversaw the most robust and dynamic transformation in the history of NORAD and USNORTHCOM. This transformation enabled the commands to support the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada while ensuring the defense of both homelands. His direction singlehandedly resulted in decisive national and international military operations that operationalized the commands and shifted from a reactive regional focus to a more proactive and globally integrated campaigning effort.

General VanHerck has also been instrumental in leading a wide range of homeland defense operations, including defense efforts against Russian long-range aviation, North Korean intercontinental ballistic missiles, and Russian and Chinese out-of-area maritime operations. He established a clear strategic vision, focus, and priorities, inspiring consistent operational and organizational excellence throughout pandemic response operations; Operation Allies Welcome, which supported over 84,000 Afghan refugees; and the first kinetic engagements of hostile objects over North America in the whole history of NORAD and USNORTHCOM.

General VanHerck also led a collaborative effort to focus on homeland defense, the top priority of the national defense strategy, by adopting a modernized and integrated deterrence approach toward strategic competitors. Prioritizing domain awareness, information dominance, decision superiority, and global integration empowered NORAD and USNORTHCOM to successfully campaign day to day in competition and will improve the commands' ability to deter in crisis and defeat, if necessary, in conflict.

General VanHerck's strategic foresight and collaboration with members of the highest level of government, both here in the United States as well as in Canada, guided the commands to look beyond traditional approaches and customary missions and to examine evolving adversary actions, capabilities, and intent.

Recognizing an urgent need to advance NORAD and USNORTHCOM's capabilities to outpace peer competitors and rogue nations, General VanHerck operationalized the commands, reaffirming their unyielding commitment to the highest priority mission of homeland defense.

In response to our adversaries' efforts to operate and train in and through the Arctic region, NORAD executed the northernmost deployment of fighter and supporting aircraft from forward operating locations in Northern Canada to Pituffik Space Base in Greenland, formerly known as Thule.

For its part, USNORTHCOM oversaw Arctic Edge—this is the largest exercise in Alaska—in 2020, deploying a joint and combined force of 800 to advance communications, domain awareness, infrastructure, and sustainable

presence in coordinated air, land, maritime, and cyber domain field training.

Additionally, for the first time ever, USNORTHCOM led a large-scale, multicombatant-command, homeland defense exercise from the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group while the strike group was under USNORTHCOM's operational command. This allowed four combatant commands and NORAD to conduct homeland defense operations, exercise joint integration, conduct multinational operations, and strengthen interoperability in command and control.

Throughout, General VanHerck clearly articulated warfighter requirements, including the need for ready, trained, and well-equipped forces that are capable of operating wherever they are needed. That, in turn, has led to significant advances in Arctic capabilities for the joint force, including infrastructure upgrades at northern bases, improvements to the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, and facilities to support deployment of ground-based air defense systems at Eielson Air Force Base.

These forward-looking efforts have also led to testing cold-weather technologies, developing deployable extreme-cold-weather expeditionary capabilities, evaluating satellite and terrestrial Arctic communication solutions aboard an icebreaker, and significantly increasing communications coverage in the region.

Mr. President, as one who has focused on the Arctic for decades now, I can attest that General VanHerck gets the Arctic. He knows and understands the value and the significance of the Arctic. He gets it.

Across decades and assignments, General VanHerck continuously demonstrated a clear strategic vision for defending the homeland, and his focus and priorities consistently yielded operational success and organizational excellence. His leadership and passion have defended the people of the United States and Canada, and, for that, we are grateful.

So to General VanHerck, I thank you for your long and your distinguished career in the service of our Nation, and on the occasion of your well-deserved retirement, I wish you and your family nothing but the very best and congratulate you for a job well done.

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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business with Senators be permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MARY ELLEN STONE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mary Ellen Stone on her retirement, after 44 years of service leading the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, KCSARC. Over that time, she has laid essential foundations, establishing and strengthening the organization into what has become a respected, comprehensive nonprofit provider of supportive services for survivors of sexual assault and their families. Her passion, tenacity, and leadership have shaped KCSARC into the strong, vibrant nonprofit it is today.

Mary Ellen began at KCSARC in 1979, serving about 100 clients with a staff of 3 and a budget of $50,000. As she retires in 2023, the nonprofit serves 5,000 survivors and their families with a staff of more than 70 and an annual budget of $8.2 million. Over four decades, Mary Ellen has been a bold, visionary advocate for sexual assault survivors throughout King County and the State of Washington. Mary Ellen was influential in establishing the State's first accreditation process for sexual assault providers, professionalizing service delivery and ensuring core services are available to survivors in every county of the State.

Under Mary Ellen's leadership, KCSARC published one of the first educational pieces in the Nation for parents to talk with their children about sexual assault called ''He Told Me Not to Tell.'' It was a milestone for community awareness about child sexual abuse. Today, this publication remains a foundational educational tool, and its importance and relevance remain to this day as half of KCSARC's clients are children and teens under 18 years old. Mary Ellen's vision and tenacity allowed KCSARC to respond to specific unmet needs in the community, including to sexual assault survivors who are experiencing homelessness, children and youth survivors, and Latino survivors.

Mary Ellen has shared her time and expertise in so many ways to better inform systems and communities about the needs of victims, including serving on the Seattle Archdiocese Review Board, Mental Illness Drug Dependence Oversight Board, Seattle Chief of Police Search committees, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Sex Offender Management Committee, Women's Funding Alliance, and Municipal League Seattle-King County.

It has been a great privilege to work with Mary Ellen—a true trailblazer—over the last four decades. And it is my honor to thank her for her lifetime of dedicated service to people in King County, the State of Washington, and the entire country. I wish her the very best during her well-earned retirement.

HONORING CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 STEPHEN R. DWYER

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, today, I want to honor CW3 Stephen R. Dwyer, who lost his life during an MH–60 Blackhawk crash in the Mediterranean Sea earlier this month.

Steve graduated in 2004 from Enterprise High School in Alabama. He then followed in his parents' footsteps, both Army veterans, and attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He became a field artillery commissioned officer, but his true passion was flying. So Steve returned to Fort Rucker for flight school, becoming a helicopter pilot. During his time in the military, Steve fulfilled multiple missions around the world, including two deployments to the Middle East.

He is remembered as an exceptional pilot, devoted husband, and loving father. His supervisor at West Point Mark Ray said, ''Steve Dwyer was an incredible man, son, brother, teammate, and friend. He was a dedicated Special Operations warrior, who went above and beyond to serve our nation in the most difficult missions at hand. He was born into a family of servant leaders and died 'For your freedom and mine'—an act that our nation was created through and defended by today. He will be truly missed by all that knew him. 'Night Stalkers Don't Quit!' ''

Steve leaves behind his wife Allie, three boys, parents, and countless other family and friends. We are deeply grateful for his heroic sacrifice to our country.

TRIBUTE TO GRAY MAXWELL

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to share news with the Senate. Dennis Gray Maxwell—Gray to all of us—my floor director and most senior legislative adviser since I arrived in the Senate almost 17 years ago, is retiring at the end of December. For many of us, Senators and staff alike, this is heartbreaking news, as we will miss Gray's good counsel, impeccable speechwriting skills, remarkable knowledge of Senate history, and award-winning home brew. He always has a relevant story, whatever the circumstance. And, of course, Gray was the one who got us to finally put the Senate Democratic Conference rules in writing, so it is no wonder that he knows them inside and out better than any Senator or parliamentarian.

Gray loves the Senate. He loves it for all it was meant to be, as drafted by the Founding Fathers, and all that it should be in modern times—a respected

entity dedicated to upholding the values and ideals that drive this great Nation forward. Year after year, Gray has dedicated himself to finding ways to preserve the Senate's role as the world's greatest deliberative body, which has not always been easy. It pains him to see the rules abused or when 10 years of work to pass a significant law, like the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, is undone in 10 minutes. But he does cherish the days when we finally clear a record vote-a-rama or come together in a landmark bipartisan vote.

Gray has worked for so many Senators over the years that his love of this institution should not surprise anyone. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, John Heinz, Jim Jeffords, Bill Cohen, Moynihan again, Dianne Feinstein, Carl Levin, Frank Lautenberg and, since 2007, he has been part of Team Cardin. This impressive list, nearly 40 years in the making, is why I jumped at the opportunity to hire Gray.

A registered Independent his whole life, Gray lives the words of John F. Kennedy: ''Men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics.''

I hired Gray because, on January 3, 2007, despite being a State delegate, including speaker, for a total of 20 years, and a Member of the House of Representatives for 20 years, I had zero direct experience in the U.S. Senate. Gray Maxwell had more than two decades of legislative service in the Senate with some of the most consequential Senators to walk these halls. I wanted to learn from him. I had brought over some core staff from my House office, but I knew that if I had Gray on my team, he would help me quickly translate my previous legislative experience into this new arena. Today, I love being a Senator, and I credit Gray for sharing his fever for the institution and showing me what great things we could accomplish.

Gray's path to public service perhaps was unexpected. The summer after he graduated Stanford University, he came to Washington, DC, to work at a branch of his father's law firm before starting law school. His life would change though, when his roommate, who worked for Senator Moynihan, told Gray there was an opening as a legislative correspondent, or LC. Gray loved everything about the job and the position. He was promoted quickly within the office and even met his future wife, Eileen, during this time. Eileen, a fifth-generation Washingtonian, came from a long line of public servants and had joined the Foreign Service. Some may not know this, but Gray passed both the written and oral Foreign Service exams in an effort to join his wife for her new posting in Bolivia. In the end, they decided to stay in Washington, and Gray's long career in the Senate would take off.

I have been told that there were quite a few conversations with Gray's dad to explain that he would not be returning home to Connecticut or going to New York to become a lawyer. But life would be okay. His dad came around eventually. He would become one of Gray's greatest cheerleaders and immensely proud of everything his son would accomplish—despite not being a lawyer.

During the late 80s, Gray worked for Senator John Heinz and served as legislative director of the Northeast-Midwest Institute, of which Heinz was a cofounder. Gray was serving as the Senator's legislative director at the time of his tragic plane crash in 1991. He went on to work for Senator Jim Jeffords as his legislative director and then worked for another Republican who made a career working across the aisle, Senator Bill Cohen. He later would rejoin Senator Moynihan's staff as legislative director.

Gray and Senator Moynihan had a close, almost father-son relationship. This is obvious to anyone who has heard Gray tell a story from his Moynihan days. Every tale, even something that might seem embarrassing, like slipping on the floor while walking with the Senator through the Senate, is coated with a sense of care and respect for the man and lawmaker. I know it was a difficult task for Gray when he had to call the then-recently retired Senator on September 11, 2001, to tell him that New York and our Nation was being attacked.

Gray has been a witness to history during his nearly 40 years in the Senate, and he has done his part to make history, as well. As a lifelong public servant, Gray has become one of the most vociferous champions for public service unions and Federal workers, generally. He meticulously combs through data annually from the Office of Personnel Management and other official sources to create the most accurate snapshots of Federal workers in every State and the District of Columbia. Among other uses, these charts have been invaluable each time one of my colleagues dares to attack Federal workers or attempts to use veterans and civil servants as pawns in yet another partisan game or government shutdown. Gray relishes every opportunity to lift up stories about Federal workers, serves as a watchdog for attacks on well-earned benefits, and consistently advocates for the rights of all Federal employees and retirees.

During the Trump years, Gray led the charge to pass S. 24, the Government Employee Fair Treatment Act, which guarantees back pay to Federal workers furloughed during a government shutdown. Thanks to Gray's doggedness, if and when we have another shutdown of the Federal Government, no longer will hundreds of thousands of Federal workers have to wait and see if Congress will provide relief to those workers caught in the crossfire.

Another project Gray helped carry over the finish line was the National Memorial to Fallen Journalists. Based on his work and coordination with stakeholders, days before the 1-year anniversary of the fatal ''Capital Gazette'' shooting in Annapolis—the most deadly newsroom shooting in American history—Gray helped finalize legislation I introduced with Senator Rob Portman. Our bill authorized a privately funded memorial within the District of Columbia to honor journalists, photographers, broadcasters, and media workers killed in the line of duty. In later stages, he would identify the ultimate location of the memorial, across the street from the Voice of America and, coincidently, across the street from the National Museum of the American Indian, where Gray's wife Eileen would work until her retirement in December 2022.

Far too many pieces of legislation that have become law have Gray Maxwell's fingerprints on them for me to name every one. But let me talk briefly about one recent bill that goes to the heart of Gray's integrity and strong belief that Congress should be a leader in protecting civil rights and values. Back in 2020, Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN and I introduced legislation in the Senate that would remove from the U.S. Capitol a statue of fellow Marylander and Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney. Taney was the author of the infamous Dred Scott decision that ruled that African-Americans were not U.S. citizens and that Congress could not prohibit slavery. In addition to removing the Taney bust, our bill authorized the placement of a new bust of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American to serve on the Nation's highest Court, and also a Marylander. The bill was reintroduced this Congress and approved unanimously by the Senate in 2022. Following House passage, President Joe Biden signed the measure into law, and the massive Taney bust was removed in February of this year. If not for Gray's legislative acumen and pure persistence, the bust of a man who actively helped prolong slavery would still greet visitors to the Old Supreme Court Chamber.

I am thankful that Gray shared his knowledge of the Senate with me. I also am grateful that he shares this bounty with every new staffer and intern that walks into our office. Capitol Hill can be a magnet, attracting young people. If we want them to stay, we need more people like Gray to share their experiences and adventures. He is teaching the next generation about how they fit into the history, and the future, of our legislative branch of government. He also is constantly learning, with an understanding that these young people bring with them new perspectives and different ways of solving age-old problems.

I would ask unanimous consent that, after my remarks, the full text of Robert F. Kennedy's ''Ripple of Hope'' address, which was delivered June 6, 1966, at the University of Capetown, South Africa, be entered into the record. Gray

gives a copy of this speech to every new intern in our office and takes time from his hectic schedule to discuss it with each group. Anecdotes and surveys from interns year after year mention this discussion and how it stays with them long after their semester is complete. RFK's words echo throughout our work.

He said: ''It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.''

Gray is proof positive that one person can make a difference.

Finally, I would like to thank Gray for being there for me and for the Senate even when everyone else was home or working elsewhere. Maybe they were asleep because the Senate was voting at 2 a.m. Maybe they were teleworking because of the pandemic. Yes, as media reports have recounted, Gray was one of the few people who worked in his Senate office throughout the COVID–19 pandemic. He actually insisted that he come in so that his wife could be comfortable teleworking from their apartment. Truth be told, traffic was easier, and there were very few people around at that time, so it was seemingly a safe thing to do. We still took precautions. Even if he and I were in the office at the same time, he stayed in his office, and I stayed in mine, and we talked by phone. We wore facemasks and used antibacterial wipes on every door or item we touched.

In another extreme case, Gray was one of only two staffers who were in our Hart office on January 6, 2021. He and our chief of staff, Chris Lynch, sheltered in place together all day while the Capitol was being overrun. Gray charged through the Trump years and the pandemic, but the days and months after January 6 definitely took their toll. I can understand why he and Eileen began to spend more and more time out in rural Rappahannock County, Virginia, where they rented a cottage during the pandemic. They now have a beautiful home on 6 acres of land and are surrounded by wheat and cornfields and dairy farms. I would try to entice them to Maryland, but they have been visiting this area for 40 years, ever since Gray bought Eileen her very first riding lesson as a birthday gift. Even from Virginia, he will forever be a part of Team Maryland and the Cardin family.

I wish Gray all the best in his retirement. He is a good man with a good heart, who has done phenomenal things for the Senate and our Nation. He will be missed, especially by this Senator.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From University of Capetown, South Africa, June 6, 1966]

DAY OF AFFIRMATION ADDRESS, UNIVERSITY OF CAPETOWN, CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

(By Robert F. Kennedy)

MR. CHANCELLOR, MR. VICE CHANCELLOR, PROFESSOR ROBERTSON, MR. DIAMOND, MR. DANIEL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I come here this evening because of my deep interest and affection for a land settled by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century, then taken over by the British, and at last independent; a land in which the native inhabitants were at first subdued, but relations with whom remain a problem to this day; a land which defined itself on a hostile frontier; a land which has tamed rich natural resources through the energetic application of modern technology; a land which was once the importer of slaves, and now must struggle to wipe out the last traces of that former bondage. I refer, of course, to the United States of America.

But I am glad to come here, and my wife and I and all of our party are glad to come here to South Africa, and we are glad to come here to Capetown. I am already greatly enjoying my visit here. I am making an effort to meet and exchange views with people of all walks of life, and all segments of South African opinion—including those who represent the views of the government. Today I am glad to meet with the National Union of South African Students. For a decade, NUSAS has stood and worked for the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—principles which embody the collective hopes of men of good will around the globe.

Your work, at home and in international student affairs, has brought great credit to yourselves and your country. I know the National Student Association in the United States feels a particularly close relationship with this organization. And I wish to thank especially Mr. Ian Robertson, who first extended this invitation on behalf of NUSAS, I wish to thank him for his kindness to me in inviting me. I am very sorry that he can not be with us here this evening. I was happy to have had the opportunity to meet and speak with him earlier this evening, and I presented him with a copy of Profiles in Courage, which was a book written by President John Kennedy and was signed to him by President Kennedy's widow, Mrs. John Kennedy. This is a Day of Affirmation—a celebration of liberty. We stand here in the name of freedom.

At the heart of that western freedom and democracy is the belief that the individual man, the child of God, is the touchstone of value, and all society, all groups, and states, exist for that person's benefit. Therefore the enlargement of liberty for individual human beings must be the supreme goal and the abiding practice of any western society.

The first element of this individual liberty is the freedom of speech; the right to express and communicate ideas, to set oneself apart from the dumb beasts of field and forest; the right to recall governments to their duties and obligations; above all, the right to affirm one's membership and allegiance to the body politic—to society—to the men with whom we share our land, our heritage and our children's future.

Hand in hand with freedom of speech goes the power to be heard—to share in the decisions of government which shape men's lives. Everything that makes man's lives worthwhile—family, work, education, a place to rear one's children and a place to rest one's head—all this depends on the decisions of government; all can be swept away by a government which does not heed the demands of its people, and I mean all of its people. Therefore, the essential humanity of man can be protected and preserved only where the government must answer—not just to the wealthy; not just to those of a particular religion, not just to those of a particular race; but to all of the people.

And even government by the consent of the governed, as in our own Constitution, must be limited in its power to act against its people: so that there may be no interference with the right to worship, but also no interference with the security of the home; no arbitrary imposition of pains or penalties on an ordinary citizen by officials high or low; no restriction on the freedom of men to seek education or to seek work or opportunity of any kind, so that each man may become all that he is capable of becoming.

These are the sacred rights of western society. These were the essential differences between us and Nazi Germany as they were between Athens and Persia.

They are the essences of our differences with communism today. I am unalterably opposed to communism because it exalts the state over the individual and over the family, and because its system contains a lack of freedom of speech, of protest, of religion, and of the press, which is characteristic of a totalitarian regime. The way of opposition to communism, however, is not to imitate its dictatorship, but to enlarge individual human freedom. There are those in every land who would label as ''communist'' every threat to their privilege. But may I say to you, as I have seen on my travels in all sections of the world, reform is not communism. And the denial of freedom, in whatever name, only strengthens the very communism it claims to oppose.

Many nations have set forth their own definitions and declarations of these principles. And there have often been wide and tragic gaps between promise and performance, ideal and reality. Yet the great ideals have constantly recalled us to our own duties. And—with painful slowness—we in the United States have extended and enlarged the meaning and the practice of freedom to all of our people.

For two centuries, my own country has struggled to overcome the self-imposed handicap of prejudice and discrimination based on nationality, on social class or race—discrimination profoundly repugnant to the theory and to the command of our Constitution. Even as my father grew up in Boston, Massachusetts, signs told him that ''No Irish Need Apply''. Two generations later, President Kennedy became the first Irish Catholic, and the first Catholic, to head the nation; but how many men of ability had, before 1961, been denied the opportunity to contribute to the nation's progress because they were Catholic, or because they were of Irish extraction? How many sons of Italian or Jewish or Polish parents slumbered in the slums—untaught, unlearned, their potential lost forever to our nation and to the human race? Even today, what price will we pay before we have assured full opportunity to millions of Negro Americans?

In the last five years we have done more to assure equality to our Negro citizens and to help the deprived, both white and black, than in the hundred years before that time. But much, much more remains to be done.

For there are millions of Negroes untrained for the simplest of jobs, and thousands every day denied their full and equal rights under the law; and the violence of the disinherited, the insulted and the injured, looms over the streets of Harlem and of Watts and Southside Chicago.

But a Negro American trains as an astronaut, one of mankind's first explorers into outer space; another is the chief barrister of the United States government, and dozens

sit on the benches of our court; and another, Dr. Martin Luther King, is the second man of African descent to win the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent efforts for social justice between all of the races.

We have passed laws prohibiting discrimination in education, in employment, in housing; but these laws alone cannot overcome the heritage of centuries—of broken families and stunted children, and poverty and degradation and pain.

So the road toward equality of freedom is not easy, and great cost and danger march alongside all of us. We are committed to peaceful and non-violent change and that is important for all to understand—though change is unsettling. Still, even in the turbulence of protest and struggle is greater hope for the future, as men learn to claim and achieve for themselves the rights formerly petitioned from others.

And most important of all, all the panoply of government power has been committed to the goal of equality before the law—as we are now committing ourselves to achievement of equal opportunity in fact.

We must recognize the full human equality of all of our people—before God, before the law, and in the councils of government. We must do this, not because it is economically advantageous—although it is; not because the laws of God command it—although they do; not because people in other lands wish it so. We must do it for the single and fundamental reason that it is the right thing to do.

We recognize that there are problems and obstacles before the fulfillment of these ideals in the United States as we recognize that other nations, in Latin America and in Asia and in Africa have their own political, economic, and social problems, their unique barriers to the elimination of injustices.

In some, there is concern that change will submerge the rights of a minority, particularly where that minority is of a different race than that of the majority. We in the United States believe in the protection of minorities; we recognize the contributions that they can make and the leadership they can provide; and we do not believe that any people—whether majority or minority, or individual human beings—are ''expendable'' in the cause of theory or policy. We recognize also that justice between men and nations is imperfect, and that humanity sometimes progresses very slowly indeed.

All do not develop in the same manner and at the same pace. Nations, like men, often march to the beat of different drummers, and the precise solutions of the United States can neither be dictated nor transplanted to others, and that is not our intention. What is important however is that all nations must march toward increasing freedom; toward justice for all; toward a society strong and flexible enough to meet the demands of all of its people, whatever their race, and the demands of a world of immense and dizzying change that face us all.

In a few hours, the plane that brought me to this country crossed over oceans and countries which have been a crucible of human history. In minutes we traced migrations of men over thousands of years; seconds, the briefest glimpse, and we passed battlefields on which millions of men once struggled and died. We could see no national boundaries, no vast gulfs or high walls dividing people from people; only nature and the works of man—homes and factories and farms—everywhere reflecting man's common effort to enrich his life. Everywhere new technology and communications bring men and nations closer together, the concerns of one inevitably become the concerns of all. And our new closeness is stripping away the false masks, the illusion of differences which is at the root of injustice and hate and war. Only earthbound man still clings to the dark and poisoning superstition that his world is bounded by the nearest hill, his universe ends at river's shore, his common humanity is enclosed in the tight circle of those who share his town or his views and the color of his skin.

It is your job, the task of the young people in this world to strip the last remnants of that ancient, cruel belief from the civilization of man.

Each nation has different obstacles and different goals, shaped by the vagaries of history and of experience. Yet as I talk to young people around the world I am impressed not by the diversity but by the closeness of their goals, their desires, and their concerns and their hope for the future. There is discrimination in New York, the racial inequality of apartheid in South Africa, and serfdom in the mountains of Peru. People starve to death in the streets of India; a former Prime Minister is summarily executed in the Congo; intellectuals go to jail in Russia; and thousands are slaughtered in Indonesia; wealth is lavished on armaments everywhere in the world. These are different evils; but they are the common works of man. They reflect the imperfections of human justice, the inadequacy of human compassion, the defectiveness of our sensibility toward the sufferings of our fellows; they mark the limit of our ability to use knowledge for the well-being of our fellow human beings throughout the world. And therefore they call upon common qualities of conscience and indignation, a shared determination to wipe away the unnecessary sufferings of our fellow human beings at home and around the world.

It is these qualities which make of our youth today the only true international community. More than this I think that we could agree on what kind of a world we want to build. It would be a world of independent nations, moving toward international community, each of which protected and respected the basic human freedoms. It would be a world which demanded of each government that it accept its responsibility to insure social justice. It would be a world of constantly accelerating economic progress—not material welfare as an end in of itself, but as a means to liberate the capacity of every human being to pursue his talents and to pursue his hopes. It would, in short, be a world that we would all be proud to have built.

Just to the North of here are lands of challenge and of opportunity—rich in natural resources, land and minerals and people. Yet they are also lands confronted by the greatest odds—overwhelming ignorance, internal tensions and strife, and great obstacles of climate and geography. Many of these nations, as colonies, were oppressed and were exploited. Yet they have not estranged themselves from the broad traditions of the West; they are hoping and they are gambling their progress and their stability on the chance that we will meet our responsibilities to them, to help them overcome their poverty.

In the world we would like to build, South Africa could play an outstanding role, and a role of leadership in that effort. This country is without question a preeminent repository of the wealth and the knowledge and the skill of the continent. Here are the greater part of Africa's research scientists and steel production, most of its reservoirs of coal and of electric power. Many South Africans have made major contributions to African technical development and world science; the names of some are known wherever men seek to eliminate the ravages of tropical disease and of pestilence. In your faculties and councils, here in this very audience, are hundreds and thousands of men and women who could transform the lives of millions for all time to come.

But the help and leadership of South Africa or of the United States cannot be accepted if we—within our own countries or in our relationships with others—deny individual integrity, human dignity, and the common humanity of man. If we would lead outside our own borders; if we would help those who need our assistance; if we would meet our responsibilities to mankind; we must first, all of us, demolish the borders which history has erected between men within our own nations—barriers of race and religion, social class and ignorance.

Our answer is the world's hope; it is to rely on youth. The cruelties and the obstacles of this swiftly changing planet will not yield to obsolete dogmas and outworn slogans. It cannot be moved by those who cling to a present which is already dying, who prefer the illusion of security to the excitement and danger which comes with even the most peaceful progress. This world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the life of ease—a man like the Chancellor of this University. It is a revolutionary world that we all live in; and thus, as I have said in Latin America and Asia and in Europe and in my own country, the United States, it is the young people who must take the lead. Thus you, and your young compatriots everywhere have had thrust upon you a greater burden of responsibility than any generation that has ever lived.

''There is,'' said an Italian philosopher, ''nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.'' Yet this is the measure of the task of your generation and the road is strewn with many dangers.

First is the danger of futility; the belief there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills—against misery, against ignorance, or injustice and violence. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man. A young monk began the Protestant reformation, a young general extended an empire from Macedonia to the borders of the earth, and a young woman reclaimed the territory of France. It was a young Italian explorer who discovered the New World, and 32 year old Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed that all men are created equal. ''Give me a place to stand,'' said Archimedes, ''and I will move the world.'' These men moved the world, and so can we all. Few will have the greatness to bend history; but each of us can work to change a small portion of the events, and in the total of all these acts will be written the history of this generation. Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers are making a difference in the isolated villages and the city slums of dozens of countries. Thousands of unknown men and women in Europe resisted the occupation of the Nazis and many died, but all added to the ultimate strength and freedom of their countries. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage such as these that the belief that human history is thus shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

''If Athens shall appear great to you,'' said Pericles, ''consider then that her glories

were purchased by valiant men, and by men who learned their duty.'' That is the source of all greatness in all societies, and it is the key to progress in our own time.

The second danger is that of expediency; of those who say that hopes and beliefs must bend before immediate necessities. Of course if we must act effectively we must deal with the world as it is. We must get things done. But if there was one thing that President Kennedy stood for that touched the most profound feeling of young people across the world, it was the belief that idealism, high aspiration and deep convictions are not incompatible with the most practical and efficient of programs—that there is no basic inconsistency between ideals and realistic possibilities—no separation between the deepest desires of heart and of mind and the rational application of human effort to human problems. It is not realistic or hard-headed to solve problems and take action unguided by ultimate moral aims and values, although we all know some who claim that it is so. In my judgement, it is thoughtless folly. For it ignores the realities of human faith and of passion and of belief; forces ultimately more powerful than all the calculations of our economists or of our generals. Of course to adhere to standards, to idealism, to vision in the face of immediate dangers takes great courage and takes self-confidence. But we also know that only those who dare to fail greatly, can ever achieve greatly.

It is this new idealism which is also, I believe, the common heritage of a generation which has learned that while efficiency can lead to the camps at Auschwitz, or the streets of Budapest, only the ideals of humanity and love can climb the hills of the Acropolis.

A third danger is timidity. Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change. Aristotle tells us ''At the Olympic games it is not the finest or the strongest men who are crowned, but those who enter the lists . . . so too in the life of the honorable and the good it is they who act rightly who win the prize.'' I believe that in this generation those with the courage to enter the conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the world.

For the fortunate amongst us, the fourth danger is comfort; the temptation to follow the easy and familiar path of personal ambition and financial success so grandly spread before those who have the privilege of an education. But that is not the road history has marked out for us. There is a Chinese curse which says ''May he live in interesting times.'' Like it or not, we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty; but they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind. And everyone here will ultimately be judged—will ultimately judge himself—on the effort he has contributed to building a new world society and the extent to which his ideals and goals have shaped that effort.

So we part, I to my country and you to remain. We are—if a man of forty can claim the privilege—fellow members of the world's largest younger generation. Each of us have our own work to do. I know at times you must feel very alone with your problems and with your difficulties. But I want to say how impressed I am with what you stand for and for the effort you are making; and I say this not just for myself, but men and women all over the world. And I hope you will often take heart from the knowledge that you are joined with your fellow young people in every land, they struggling with their problems and you with yours, but all joined in a common purpose; that, like the young people of my own country and of every country that I have visited, you are all in many ways more closely united to the brothers of your time than to the older generation in any of these nations; you are determined to build a better future. President Kennedy was speaking to the young people of America, but beyond them to young people everywhere, when he said ''The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.''

And, he added, ''With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth and lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.''

I thank you.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN SWARTOUT

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to commend a great public servant, John Swartout, for his dedicated service to the citizens of Colorado. After more than three decades of tireless service in the public policy arena, I congratulate John on the occasion of his retirement.

John worked as an adviser to Colorado Governors Bill Owens and JOHN HICKENLOOPER and U.S. Senator Wayne Allard on environmental, natural resource, energy, and public lands policy. John was instrumental in Federal land negotiations involving the Roan Plateau settlement, the closing of Rocky Flats, and the designation of Browns Canyon National Monument, James Peak Wilderness, Great Sand Dunes National Park, and the Spanish Peaks Wilderness Area. He also served as the head of policy for the State of Colorado on habitat protection efforts for the greater sage grouse and the Gunnison sage grouse. In these efforts, he showed an uncanny ability to balance habitat conservation goals with the private property rights of landowners.

John grounded his work in integrity, trust, humor, and an innate ability to form coalitions and partnerships among even the most diverse groups. John himself would probably tell you his greatest accomplishment was helping people find common ground that then allowed them to work toward collaborative policy solutions that benefited their community and region. The fact that he worked for governors from both parties demonstrates his ability to work in a strong bipartisan manner to deliver results for Colorado.

In addition to his roles working for elected officials, John also led multiple Agencies and nonprofits. He served as executive director of Great Outdoors Colorado—GOCO—helping to guide millions of dollars of investments in public recreational amenities like trails, playgrounds, parks, fishing ponds, and campgrounds. As the executive director of the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts, he helped preserve and protect thousands of acres of open space, wildlife habitat, and working agricultural lands.

John most recently served as executive director of Colorado Counties, Inc.—CCI—a nonprofit organization that provides advocacy and education for county governments around the State. Under John's leadership, CCI negotiated an opioid settlement with Colorado's Attorney General and various pharmaceutical companies that provided millions of dollars for local addiction counseling and treatment. He also successfully steered CCI through the COVID–19 pandemic. CCI was integral in assisting county commissioners provide frontline health services and invest millions of dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act and CARES Act in community programs, business retention, and infrastructure improvements.

John served as the campaign manager for my opponent in my first race for the U.S. Senate. In Colorado, we believe in working together despite different political beliefs, and I came to know and respect John for his ability to work in a pragmatic fashion with everyone. John became a dependable ally and friend as we worked together to advance the interests of Colorado.

Throughout his career, John embodied the notion put forward by Wallace Stegner, that the American West is still ''the native home of hope.'' Our great State is better for his vision, his compassion, and his service, and I wish him well in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JOSHUA K. LEONARD

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize CMSgt Joshua K. Leonard for his dedicated service to the U.S. Air Force and the Senate as a legislative defense fellow. Josh has served as a vital part of my team since January 2023. He has been a trusted adviser on issues relating to the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security.

Josh enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in June 2005. His continued service is a reminder of the dedication and sacrifice of every servicemember who protects our Nation and defends our freedoms. His effort and passion distinguished him as a valuable member of my legislative team. I am proud to have someone like Josh on my staff, who understands the significance of maintaining America's air superiority and caring for our servicemembers and their families.

During his tenure in my office, he led the charge in introducing the Gerald's Law Act. This critical initiative would expand the Department of Veterans Affairs burial benefits eligibility to terminally ill veterans who pass away at a non-VA facility while receiving hospice care. As he is soon to be promoted to the rank of chief master sergeant, Josh's character and consistent display of knowledge, leadership, and devotion deserve to be recognized and rewarded. I am confident he will continue to serve our country honorably.

I am incredibly grateful for his support on behalf of the people of Arkansas. Both in the Nation's Capital and while visiting the Natural State, he spoke with and listened to the concerns of Arkansas's veterans and their families. While stationed at the Little Rock Air Force Base, Josh worked tirelessly to ensure the concerns of our veterans and military community were heard and their issues were resolved. We have been very fortunate to have Josh serve Arkansans as a legislative defense fellow. I also want to thank his wife Mrs. Shauntai Leonard and his beloved children Josiah, Lincy, and Kayla for their support during his time in uniform. Growing up in a military family, I understand that service in the Armed Forces is a family affair and impossible without their sacrifice and unconditional support.

Josh, thank you for your continued service to the U.S. Air Force and all your heartfelt, committed work as a member of my staff. Having you on my team has been a privilege, and you will always be welcomed here. I know that you will remain an asset to our military and veterans in addition to any other endeavors you pursue; I wish you and your family the best and congratulate you on this well-deserved promotion.

TRIBUTE TO BILL LAW

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the exemplary career of Goshen County Fire Warden Bill Law. Bill is retiring after six decades of service to Torrington, Goshen County, and the State of Wyoming.

Wyoming adopted its official ethics code, known proudly as the Code of the West, in 2010. One of the principle tenets is ''talk less and say more.'' Bill Law, a humble and devoted public servant, fully embodies this value in everything he does. He invested time, experience, and effort in each of his careers, to the benefit of others. Bill demonstrated his capacity for leadership while serving a greater cause at a young age. While in high school, he enlisted in the Wyoming National Guard. Following his graduation in 1955, he proudly enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a radio technician. He served 3 years and was honorably discharged in 1958.

Following his military service, Bill found other ways to invest in his community. He moved to Torrington, WY, in 1962 after serving 4 years as the Yoder Fire Chief. This was the first of a long line of roles in fire management.

During this time, Bill met and married the love of his life, Betty Korhonen Law. Bill and Betty raised two children, Alicia and Trevor. This year, Bill and Betty are celebrating their 60th anniversary. Theirs is a remarkable partnership that has endured all of life's challenges.

Bill began as a firefighter with the Torrington Volunteer Fire Department in 1962. Though he enjoyed other successful careers, he remained a committed TVFD member. He often put his life on hold to respond to emergencies in surrounding communities. His dedication to fire safety is unmatched. From 1969 to 1988, Bill worked for Torrington radio legend Kerm Kath, owner and operator of the local KGOS and KERM radio stations. He worked in sales and became the station manager following Kerm's death in 1982. In 1991, Bill became the State provider relations representative for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming. He worked to secure agreements with hospitals, clinics, and medical offices around the State. I was pleased to work with him during my time as an orthopedic surgeon in Casper and as a member of the Wyoming State Senate. Bill retired from Blue Cross in 2004 after a rewarding 16-year career. Shortly after retirement, the Goshen County Commission appointed Bill as the county fire warden. From 2004 to 2012, he served dual roles as the fire warden and the City of Torrington's emergency management coordinator. Bill organized the county's fire suppression and prevention efforts, including communicating with the county's 11 fire districts and 9 fire departments.

A natural leader, Bill served two terms on the Torrington City Council, from 2012 to 2020. His civic engagement also includes serving as a board member for both Eastern Wyoming College and the county chamber of commerce. Bill is a devoted member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, where he held numerous leadership positions. Bill is a remarkable advocate for rural fire districts and firefighters. He spent many years lobbying on behalf of local and State organizations and agencies. In January 2023, the Wyoming Legislature recognized Bill's years of advocacy. Given an opportunity to comment, Bill quipped, ''I look at when I first put the uniform on; the first 40 (years) seemed to drag—I got to tell you, the last 20 (years) go in a hurry.''

After an outstanding career in public service, I hope Bill will enjoy a well-earned retirement with his family. In addition to Betty, his legacy is celebrated by his son Trevor Law of Laramie, his daughter Alicia and Jeff Ayres of Lehi, UT, his granddaughter Emily Ayres, and great-grandchildren Mia Ayres and Drixton Ayres.

Honest and humble, Bill is a man of great integrity. He dedicated his life to serving others, making his community and state better in the process. Though his experience and wisdom will be missed, I know he will continue serving as a mentor, advocate, and trusted adviser. Bill's nephew Chuck Kenyon, Torrington's current emergency management coordinator, said of Bill, ''He is the foundation that makes everything work.''

Bobbi joins me in extending our congratulations to Bill for his outstanding legacy of service.

TRIBUTE TO ANI KINCAID

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Ani for her hard work as an intern in my office in Casper, WY. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Ani is a native of Lander. She is a freshman at Casper College, where she studies political science. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Ani for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RICH HILLMAN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Arkansas Farm Bureau president, Mr. Rich Hillman, and the integral role he has had in serving the State of Arkansas and her agricultural pursuits and to celebrate his years of fervent dedication and leadership as his tenure at the helm of the organization comes to a close.

For the past 4 years, Rich has served faithfully as the Arkansas Farm Bureau State president, preceded by 11 years as vice president, and prior involvement on the Arkansas Farm Bureau board of directors dating back to 2001. His influence on the industry is further proven through his service in a number of leadership positions on the national and State levels and especially in his local community.

For more than 20 years, farm families and rural communities across the Natural State have welcomed Rich's leadership with gratitude and depended on him to be a true advocate of their needs. They have relied on him to ensure that policies developed in Washington will benefit farmers and ranchers and the communities that surround them.

Rich's leadership has been marked by wisdom gained through experience. To lead by example is a trait worthy of admiration and one that Rich has undoubtably exemplified. He is a proud sixth-generation farmer in Lonoke County, where he and his wife Tina have grown rice, soybeans, corn, and most importantly, a capable and passionate seventh-generation of agriculturalists in their children Collin and Caroline; their grandchildren; and generations to come.

It is because of people like Rich that I remain hopeful for the future of agriculture. His pragmatic advice has long been paramount in informing our work on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition,

and Forestry Committee and been instrumental in crafting important legislation to support Arkansas agriculture.

I cherish the friendship and counsel I have found in Rich and wish to thank him again for his unwavering dedication to Arkansas's agricultural producers. Though he is stepping down from his role as Arkansas Farm Bureau State president, I know that he will continue to be a fierce advocate for the needs of the industry.

I wish Rich, Tina, and the Hillman family the best as they enter into this new chapter of their lives.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL KAREN A. BERRY

● Mr. COONS. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise, along with Senator TOM CARPER of Delaware and Representative LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER of Delaware, to honor BG Karen A. Berry, a Delawarean who has provided exemplary service to the National Guard.

With more than three decades of distinguished military career service dedicated to the National Guard, BG Karen Berry has represented Delaware in a variety of leadership capacities, including company command of the HHC 280th Signal Battalion and Officer Candidate School, 193rd Regional Institute, and the 261st Tactical Theater Signal Brigade. She completed a yearlong deployment serving as the deputy commander of the 335th Signal Command in Afghanistan, acting as the senior communications officer and providing essential guidance for the communications network theater. Moreover, in 2019, she transferred to the Connecticut National Guard, serving in two key leadership positions: assistant to the Adjutant General Army and the Director of the Joint Staff. There, she oversaw the training and deployments of the Connecticut Army National Guard and ensured mission readiness and support to State and Partnership Programs between Connecticut and its partner Uruguay, a role critical to the success of countless overseas missions.

Brigadier General Berry has built on her extensive experience to lead with practical knowledge. Her educational background includes a bachelor of science in agricultural engineering and technology from the University of Delaware, a master's degree in education from Salisbury University, and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. Her promotions and list of major awards over the years are extensive and include National Defense Service Medals, Army Commendation Medals, and Delaware National Guard Medals for Military Merit, just to name a few.

Brigadier General Berry is also the first female Army guardsman to hold a brigade command in the Delaware Army National Guard, as well as the first female in the Delaware Army National Guard promoted to the general office rank of brigadier general. Brigadier General Berry has opened the door for countless others to follow, serving as an example of strong leadership, phenomenal work ethic, and service before self.

Brigadier General Berry has provided reasoned, invaluable, and experienced counsel while serving as chair of my Military Service Academy Board since my arrival in the Senate. A hallmark of Brigadier General Berry's leadership has been her high regard for the servicemembers she leads and their families. Brigadier General Berry has also been instrumental in forging enduring relationships with local community members and organizations. These bonds will serve the Delaware National Guard and Delaware communities well for years to come.

The values of hard work and serving others are second nature to the Berry family. Karen, her husband MG Michael Berry, and the entire family are known throughout the State of Delaware for their generosity and support of education and local community initiatives, sowing seeds of success for the future. We are truly grateful for all they have done to inspire the next generation of military leaders in Delaware and beyond.

We wholeheartedly congratulate BG Karen Berry on over three decades of service in the National Guard. Your strong dedication and leadership serve as a phenomenal example for many others. We wish you and your family the very best. Thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO CONNOR NICOL

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Connor Nicol of Hampton as November's Granite Stater of the Month. For the last 3 years, 15-year-old Connor has helped to ensure that servicemembers who died overseas are remembered. Connor creates dog tags for people to carry, or place somewhere prominent, so that servicemembers' names and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Connor was inspired to create the military identification tags, commonly called ''dog tags,'' while watching a movie about World War II, and he was struck by how young the servicemembers were. Knowing that many servicemembers never came home, he wanted to make sure that those who died overseas are always remembered. Using information from the National Archives, Connor has now made dog tags for 40,000 servicemembers who died in the Korean war, and he has recently expanded the project to create tags for those who died serving in the Vietnam war.

The tags have been distributed across the country, including to veterans service organizations, church groups, Scout Troops, and schools. Connor works to ensure that the tag goes to someone who actively wants it and is dedicated to honoring the name of the servicemember. In addition to keeping the name and memory of the fallen servicemember alive, the tag also serves to remind the person carrying it of the sacrifice these men and women made in service to our country.

Connor's goal is to create and distribute dog tags for those who died in additional overseas conflicts, including World War II, the Vietnam war, and the Global War on Terror. If you would like to request a tag, you can do so through his website, www.wewillremember.us. Connor's dedication to respecting and commemorating military service is a strong reflection of the Granite State spirit of patriotism. In New Hampshire, we honor those who keep our country safe, secure, and free. I thank Connor for his work to make sure that those who died in service to our country will never be forgotten.●

TRIBUTE TO JADA VARGAS

● Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the recipient of the 1 millionth Child Development Associate—CDA—credential. Jada Vargas is an Arizonan who is dedicated to serving her community as an early childhood educator, and I am very pleased to recognize her achievement.

Jada lives in Whiteriver, AZ, and is a member of White Mountain Apache Tribe. She also serves on the White Mountain Apache Youth Council. A recent high school graduate, Jada said she realized she wanted to become an early childhood educator after a career and technical education course that allowed her to work in a childcare center at her high school. Now, she is headed to college to study education—and, with her CDA, already has a leg up.

Early exposure to the early childhood landscape was clearly critical for Jada as she thought about her next steps after high school. And it couldn't have come at a more needed time. The childcare industry, which already standing on unsteady legs, took a heavy hit from the COVID–19 pandemic. We asked early childhood educators to be heroes as so many worked to keep their doors open so parents could do essential work. Early in my time in the Senate, I voted to pass the American Rescue Plan, which provided $39 billion in support for childcare.

I hear from Arizonans that this funding was transformative, that childcare assistance was critical to keeping their doors open and lights on to serve families. Today, the funding provided through childcare stabilization grants has expired, yet challenges remain in finding and retaining early childhood educators. The market is still broken. Too many children remain stuck on waiting lists without the essential early education that we know makes a long-term difference.

Research tells us that if a student can't read well by the time they are in the third grade, they are more likely to drop out of high school. That has an impact on our productivity, our economy, and on our military. Early childhood educators like Jada are often the

ones who are helping children develop the skills to become readers, preparing them for the years of education that lay ahead.

This is a worthwhile investment. High-quality childcare is imperative to strong communities, and I am committed to working with my colleagues to provide long-term stability and support to this industry. Part of that is finding ways to encourage more folks to dedicate their lives to the next generation—and as a CDA holder, Jada is part of that solution. She wants to return home once she finishes her education to, as she puts it, be a light to the children in her community. We are grateful to her for her hard work and dedication to the children and families she will serve as a CDA holder, and I hope to see many more Arizonans follow in her path.●

THE PUBLIC SERVICE REVIEW

● Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, a great privilege of my job as a U.S. Senator is having the opportunity to meet young people who are eager to serve. Talented young leaders like those featured in the Summer 2023 edition of ''Public Service Review'' inspire me, and I am hopeful their stories will inspire others. This edition features insightful reflections from aspiring public servants with diverse backgrounds and interests who are passionate about serving their communities, their country, and the world.

The 10 authors featured in the Summer 2023 edition are Jamya Davis of Xavier University of Louisiana, Lydia Sigman of George Mason University, Rohini Achal of the University of Washington, Christopher Robinson of Mississippi State University, Mateus Voltolini of the University of Southern Maine, Samina Patel of Georgia Institute of Technology, Tatyana Mayo of Howard University, Julia Comino of American University, Brina Ratangee of Vanderbilt University, and Tony Ruan of Yale University, whom I had the pleasure of having in my office as an intern and speaking with for his article.

The ''Public Service Review'' is produced by the Stennis Center for Public Service, and the Summer 2023 edition is available at www.stennis.gov. I encourage all to read it.●

RECOGNIZING COUNCIL MOUNTAIN COFFEE & LAUNDROMAT

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat is a staple in the Council community. Owned and operated by Jacob and Samantha Sturlin since 2021, the coffee shop and laundromat are popular among locals for daily cups of coffee and visitors passing through town. The Sturlins moved to Council and bought Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat in pursuit of a more rural lifestyle and an opportunity to get involved in the community. Council Mountain Coffee features an eclectic menu of coffees, teas, Italian sodas, pastries, seasonal specials, and all are served by the friendliest staff.

The Sturlins' passion for the community shines through in their sponsorship of the local rodeo, vacation Bible school, and the annual Fourth of July fireworks show. They encourage even the youngest community members to get involved, allowing Council Elementary School students to decorate coffee sleeves to brighten customers' morning joe.

Congratulations to Jacob and Samantha Sturlin and the employees at Council Mountain Coffee & Laundromat. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING 2ND SOUTH MARKET

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor 2nd South Market as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

Idaho's first food hall was born in 2019, when owners Dave and Lisa Buddecke purchased the historic 1926 Krengel Machine Company building. Paying homage to its location in Twin Falls' historic warehouse district, 2nd South Market hosts six locally owned food vendors and full bar, which together employ more than 50 people. The food hall features 14,700 square feet of outdoor space, known as the Yard, which provides additional seating, live music, cornhole, firepits, and space for private events. 2nd South Market is a space where the Magic Valley can gather, work, socialize, and eat—a place where the Magic Valley can build community.

The Buddeckes embraced the history of the former blacksmith, boilermaker, welding, hardware, and most recently, thrift store building, to create a vibrant epicenter for the Magic Valley. During the restoration of the building, original wood and metal paneling, doors, windows, signage, and old whiskey bottles dating back to Prohibition were recovered. A wall at the entrance of the food hall highlights many of these materials and shares the land and building's unique story since 1907.

Congratulations to Dave and Lisa Buddecke and the vendors at 2nd South Market. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING SEVEN RIDGES AG SERVICE LLC

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Seven Ridges Ag Service LLC as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

Tad and Kayce Brown, of Kendrick, opened Seven Ridges Ag Services in 2019. After working as a service technician for a John Deere dealer for more than 11 years, Tad decided to explore his own off-road equipment repair service for the local agricultural, construction, and forestry industries. Seven Ridges originally operated out of a single truck and garage. Each year of operation, demand grew. The Browns continue to find new facilities to accommodate their customers' demand. Most recently, Tad and Kayce joined Jimmie and Cindy Breckenridge to purchase a local parts and repair shop—Kendrick Ag & Supply—where Seven Ridges Ag Services can grow and expand.

Aside from Seven Ridges' service repairs, Tad and Kayce actively support Kendrick's youth through the JK Baseball Association and the Kendrick FFA. The Browns proudly support the annual Juliaetta Blackberry Festival Car Show and the University of Idaho Vandal Cheer Team.

Congratulations to Tad and Kayce Brown at Seven Ridges Ag Service LLC. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING ROYAL THEATERS

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our state. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, which encourages Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Royal Theaters as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

With two locations in Idaho Falls and one in Blackfoot, Royal Theaters is beloved by southeast Idaho's moviegoers. Kent and Ingrid Lott purchased the Centre Theater, originally a 1913 Vaudeville Theater, in 1993. Once a single-screen theater, the Lotts turned the balcony into a second theater 3 years after its opening. Royal Theaters' second Idaho Falls location boasts four screens, while the Lotts' Blackfoot location houses seven.

The Lotts' passion for the movie business is evident in their renovation projects throughout the years. In 2013, Royal Theaters upgraded the 35mm film projectors to digital projectors. In their latest project, the Lotts remodeled both Idaho Falls locations with stadium seating and VIP seats. For more than 30 years, Royal Theaters has offered a special moviegoing experience for southeast Idaho.

Congratulations to the Lott family and the employees at Royal Theaters. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.•

RECOGNIZING VICKERS WESTERN STORE

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our state. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor Vickers Western Store as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

Vickers Western Store has outfitted southeast Idaho cowboys and cowgirls since 1976. Bill Vickers, an Idaho State University alum, opened the western wear store in Pocatello, which offers a vast inventory of apparel, accessories, home decor, a pawn shop, and boot repair operation. Vickers' 22 employees offer the highest quality customer service, enticing customers to come back time and time again. In 2001, Vickers' booming success encouraged Bill to expand and open a second store in Idaho Falls.

Bill Vickers operated Vickers Western Store until he passed away in 2013. Bill enjoyed rodeo, winning All-Around Champion at the Idaho State High School Rodeo Finals, and announcing rodeos throughout the West. Bill was later inducted into the Idaho Cowboy Hall of Fame. In memory of Bill, the Vickers family founded the Billy D. Vickers Memorial Endowment for Idaho State University students passionate about rodeo. Even after Bill's passing, Vickers continues to provide the high-quality, phenomenal customer service he championed and founded the store on. Bill's memory lives on through his family and his store. The Vickers family continues to operate the store in southeast Idaho.

Congratulations to the Vickers family and all of the employees at Vickers Western Store. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great state proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.•

RECOGNIZING WHITE CROSS PHARMACY AND COMPOUNDING

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho small businesses are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our communities, but rising costs and inflation have brought increased challenges to Main Street establishments across our State. This holiday season, I am proud to relaunch Support Local Gems All Season Long, a holiday revival of the statewide Support Local Gems initiative, to encourage Idahoans to do their holiday shopping at the small businesses that make the Gem State special. As a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to honor White Cross Pharmacy and Compounding as one of Idaho's Local Gems.

In 1922, White Cross Pharmacy opened its first location in Priest River. In its 101-year history, only five owners have ever operated the store, which shows their strong commitment to helping keep our communities happy, healthy, and well-informed. Since 1922, the pharmacy has grown to serve Sandpoint, Oldtown, and Spirit Lake. Today, Gary de Blaquiere, Rich de Blaquiere, and Shannon McGlashan own and operate the pharmacy, which truly stands out by providing student work positions under hard-working pharmacy staff, who diligently serve the community.

Due to its rural Idaho location, White Cross Pharmacy, like many rural pharmacies, plays a vital role in providing healthcare for residents, including the elderly. Rural pharmacies are often the only healthcare facility for miles around. In these towns, the pharmacy employees treat customers like family, and in turn, customers trust pharmacists with critical healthcare services. This is the niche filled by White Cross Pharmacy in Oldtown, Priest River, Spirit Lake, and Sandpoint.

White Cross Pharmacy offers patient services ranging from treatment protocols for minor and self-limiting ailments to advice on over-the-counter remedies to guidance on prescription medication. But the pharmacy is not stopping there because it is looking to add new services to better serve the community. It works to help those in need by donating money to assist those who cannot afford their medications and actively participating in community events and donating to local food banks.

Congratulations to de Blaquiere Enterprises, Inc., and all of the employees at White Cross Pharmacy. You are an outstanding example of what it means to be one of Idaho's Local Gems. You make our great State proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.•

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–2833. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Congressional Mandate: Part B Payment Amounts for Two Drugs Included Noncovered Self-Administered Versions in 2022''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2834. A communication from the President of the United States to the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, transmitting, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, a report relative to United States forces conducted discrete strikes against facilities in Iraq used by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and IRGC-affiliated groups; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2835. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Sweden in the amount of $50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22–045); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2836. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Sweden in the amount of $50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22–059); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2837. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, 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–2838. A communication from the Chairman of the United States International Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2839. A communication from the Chairman of the Board, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the requirements of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2840. A communication from the Associate Director for Economic Policy, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Issuance of Revised OMB Circular No. A–94, 'Guidelines and Discount Rates for Benefit-Cost Analysis of Federal Programs' '' (Docket No. OMB–2023–0011) received during in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2841. A communication from the Administrator of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Issuance of Revised OMB Circular No. A–4, 'Regulatory Analysis'' (Docket No. OMB–2022–0014) received during in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 15, 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2842. A communication from the President and CEO, Inter-American Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's Annual Management Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2843. A communication from the Director, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2844. A communication from the Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2845. A communication from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2846. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive and Administrative Officer, Federal Labor Relations Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of April 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023 received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2847. A communication from the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Performance and Accountability report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2848. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2849. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, a legislative proposal relative to amending the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015 to no longer restrict the use of Disabled Veteran Leave to a 12-month period following the point in time at which leave eligibility is first established; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2850. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2023; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment:

S. 90. A bill to require the disclosure of a camera or recording capability in certain internet-connected devices (Rept. No. 118–114).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. WYDEN for the Committee on Finance.

*Martin O'Malley, of Maryland, to be Commissioner of Social Security for the remainder of the term expiring January 19, 2025.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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 Mrs. BRITT (for herself, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. VANCE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BUDD, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 3349. A bill to prohibit the Federal Insurance Office of the Department of the Treasury and other financial regulators from collecting data directly from an insurance company; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FETTERMAN:

S. 3350. A bill to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to ensure consideration of affordable housing in the reconnecting communities pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WICKER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MORAN, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 3351. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to extend certain expiring authorities, to restore certain expired authorities, and to institute reforms to protect the civil liberties of United States persons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 3352. A bill to provide for outreach to build awareness among former members of the Armed Forces of the process established pursuant to section 527 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 for the review of discharge characterizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3353. A bill to accelerate the identification of solutions to the challenges of the Joint Force by assigning to specific components of the Department of Defense certain responsibilities for the delivery of essential integrated joint warfighting capabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. Res. 476. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a National Move Over Law Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. HYDE–SMITH (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. Res. 477. A resolution commending the University of Mississippi for 175 years of service to the State of Mississippi and the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. Res. 478. A resolution designating November 2023 as ''National Hospice and Palliative Care Month''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 26

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 26, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made to reporting of third party network transactions by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

S. 91

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 91, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

S. 234

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S.

234, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 497

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to exclude a basic allowance for housing from income for purposes of eligibility for the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

S. 1030

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1030, a bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

S. 1105

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1105, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to codify the Trump administration rule on reporting requirements of exempt organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 1252

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1252, a bill to support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct civilization and identity, and for other purposes.

S. 1267

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1267, a bill to amend the Fair Housing Act to prohibit discrimination based on source of income, veteran status, or military status.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend the Farm Credit Act of 1971 to support the commercial fishing industry.

S. 2158

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for disciplinary procedures for supervisors and managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and to modify the procedures of personnel actions against employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 2230

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2230, a bill to prohibit the Securities and Exchange Commission from requiring that personally identifiable information be collected under consolidated audit trail reporting requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 2258

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2258, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to permit supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to be used to purchase additional types of food items.

S. 2330

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2330, a bill to authorize the Small Business Administration to provide business loans to finance business software or cloud computing services, and for other purposes.

S. 2397

At the request of Mr. SCHMITT, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2397, a bill to amend section 495 of the Public Health Service Act to require inspections of foreign laboratories conducting biomedical and behavioral research to ensure compliance with applicable animal welfare requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 2861

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors 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. 3013

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3013, a bill to permanently authorize the exemption of aliens working as fish processors from the numerical limitation on H–2B nonimmigrant visas.

S. 3047

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3047, a bill to award payments to employees of Air America who provided support to the United States from 1950 to 1976, and for other purposes.

S. 3193

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3193, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow for the use of telehealth in substance use disorder treatment, and for other purposes.

S. 3228

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3228, a bill to prohibit certain members and former members of the Armed Forces from accepting employment with government entities of the People's Republic of China or the Russian Federation.

S. 3237

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3237, a bill to amend the Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2022 to ensure claimants are adequately informed regarding filing a Federal cause of action.

S. 3276

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3276, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow certain alien veterans to be paroled into the United States to receive health care furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 3278

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3278, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to identify each alien who is serving, or has served, in the Armed Forces of the United States on the application of any such alien for an immigration benefit or the placement of any such alien in an immigration enforcement proceeding, and for other purposes.

S. 3280

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3280, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a veterans visa program to permit veterans who have been removed from the United States to return as immigrants, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 2

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 2, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to limiting the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve.

S.J. RES. 49

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor 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.J. RES. 50

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from

North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 50, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Cybersecurity Risk Management, Strategy, Governance, and Incident Disclosure.

S. RES. 385

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 385, a resolution calling for the immediate release of Evan Gershkovich, a United States citizen and journalist, who was wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation in March 2023.

S. RES. 463

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 463, a resolution recognizing Operation Green Light for Veterans for supporting veterans and raising awareness about important county resources available to help veterans transition to civilian life.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 476—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A NATIONAL MOVE OVER LAW DAY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 476

Whereas the Senate wishes to recognize traffic incident management responders (as described in the Traffic Incident Management Handbook of the Federal Highway Administration), which include law enforcement officers, fire and rescue personnel, emergency medical services personnel, tow truck operators, and transportation workers;

Whereas many traffic incident management responders are seriously injured or lose their lives while performing their duties each year as a result of being struck by speeding, impaired, or distracted motorists and motorists who are not aware of move over laws;

Whereas, in 2022, 50 traffic incident management responders were killed in the United States due to roadside collisions;

Whereas the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of the Department of Transportation host the Crash Responder Safety Week annually in November as part of a national effort to—

(1) protect traffic incident management responders who are at the scene of highway crashes; and

(2) remind the public of their responsibility to slow down, move over, and stay alert when driving near roadside incidents involving traffic incident management responders;

Whereas each State has a move over law, which has correlated directly with a safer environment along the roadsides of the United States for traffic incident management responders and stranded travelers;

Whereas move over laws generally require motorists to move at least 1 lane over when there is an emergency or rescue activity taking place on the shoulder or side of the roadway, or, if unable to do so safely, to slow down and pass the scene with caution;

Whereas the Government Accountability Office report entitled ''Emergency Responder Safety: States and DOT Are Implementing Actions to Reduce Roadside Crashes'' (GAO–21–166) noted that State officials cite raising public awareness as the most prevalent challenge to move over laws; and

Whereas providing traffic incident management responders with an enhanced opportunity to inform the motoring public about move over laws is critical to the public safety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of a National Move Over Law Day; and

(2) urges national, State, and regional incident management organizations—

(A) to spread awareness and promote the existence of, and adherence to, State move over laws; and

(B) to educate the public further on the dangers and loss of life that occur if State move over laws are not faithfully observed.

SENATE RESOLUTION 477—COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI FOR 175 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. WICKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 477

Whereas the University of Mississippi began its first session on November 6, 1848, with a 4-member faculty offering a liberal arts curriculum to 80 students;

Whereas the University of Mississippi established one of the first State-supported law schools in the United States in 1854, and it was the first university in Mississippi to establish a school of engineering in 1900;

Whereas, in 1882, the University of Mississippi became one of the first universities in the South to admit women and, in 1885, was the first university in Mississippi to hire a female faculty member;

Whereas, in 1903, the University of Mississippi began providing medical education on the Oxford campus;

Whereas the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi—

(1) was established by the Mississippi Legislature in 1950;

(2) became the first and only academic medical center in Mississippi when it opened in 1955; and

(3) was the site of the first lung and heart transplants into a human in the world, in 1963 and 1964, respectively;

Whereas, in 1962, the University of Mississippi broke a racial barrier by admitting its first African-American student, James Meredith, who remains a source of inspiration today;

Whereas, from its first class of 80 students, the University of Mississippi has grown to host more than 23,000 students participating in 120 programs of study across 7 campuses, including a medical center;

Whereas thousands of students of all races, creeds, backgrounds, and beliefs receive world-class education at the University of Mississippi;

Whereas the University of Mississippi advances academic excellence through the activity of the faculty and staff in departments and more than 75 academic, research, and community service centers;

Whereas, in 2016, the University of Mississippi received a classification of ''R1: Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity'' in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, an honor bestowed on the top doctoral research universities in the United States;

Whereas the University of Mississippi has produced 55 Fulbright Scholars, 27 Rhodes Scholars, 44 Boren Scholars, 18 Truman Scholars, 24 Goldwater Scholars, 8 Portz Scholars, and 11 National Science Foundation Graduate Fellows;

Whereas the University of Mississippi has played a significant role in producing future public service leaders;

Whereas, in 2008, the University of Mississippi hosted the first presidential debate between Senators John McCain and Barack Obama, which was the first presidential debate held in Mississippi;

Whereas, for 14 years, the University of Mississippi has been recognized as a ''Great College to Work For'', according to the Chronicle of Higher Education, in addition to earning honors in all 10 categories of recognition;

Whereas the University of Mississippi is dedicated to supporting the academic success of student-athletes while striving for on-field success;

Whereas the Ole Miss Rebels are composed of 18 men's and women's intercollegiate athletic varsity teams that represent the University of Mississippi;

Whereas the University of Mississippi, a charter member of the Southeastern Conference, claims 5 collegiate team national championships, and Ole Miss Rebel student-athletes have captured 25 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 individual titles; and

Whereas the University of Mississippi has produced notable alumni in the fields of government, public policy, research, medicine, business, education, literature, the arts, journalism, athletics, and more: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the University of Mississippi for its 175 years of service to the State of Mississippi and the United States;

(2) recognizes the University of Mississippi for its academic, research, cultural, and athletic excellence; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Chancellor of the University of Mississippi, Dr. Glenn F. Boyce;

(B) the Vice Chancellor for Intercollegiate Athletics of the University of Mississippi, Mr. Keith Carter; and

(C) the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Dr. LouAnn Woodward.

SENATE RESOLUTION 478—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 2023 AS ''NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH''

Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Mr. BARRASSO, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 478

Whereas palliative care and hospice services—

(1) can empower individuals to live as fully as possible, surrounded and supported by family and loved ones, despite serious illnesses or injuries; and

(2) are critical parts of the continuum of supports and services that individuals with serious illness and their families need;

Whereas ensuring access to palliative care and hospice for all individuals in the United States who are in need, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, is important;

Whereas palliative care and hospice aims to bring patients and family caregivers high-quality care delivered by an interdisciplinary team of skilled health care professionals, including—

(1) physicians;

(2) nurses;

(3) social workers;

(4) therapists;

(5) counselors;

(6) health aides;

(7) spiritual care providers; and

(8) other health care professionals;

Whereas there is a need to increase training opportunities for health care professionals to receive interdisciplinary team-based training in palliative care and hospice;

Whereas hospice focuses on quality of life through pain management and symptom control, caregiver assistance, and emotional and spiritual support, with the goal of allowing patients to live fully until the end of life, surrounded and supported by loved ones, friends, and caregivers;

Whereas trained palliative care and hospice professionals, during a time of trauma and loss, can provide grief and bereavement support services to individuals with a serious illness or injury, the family members of those individuals, and others;

Whereas palliative care is a patient and family-centered approach to care that—

(1) provides relief from symptoms and stress;

(2) can be complementary to curative treatments; and

(3) improves the quality of life of patients and their families;

Whereas, in 2021, more than 1,700,000 individuals in the United States living with a serious illness or injury, and the families of those individuals, received care and support from more than 5,350 hospice providers in communities across the United States;

Whereas volunteers continue to play a vital role in supporting hospice care and operations; and

Whereas palliative care and hospice providers encourage all patients to learn more about their options for care and to share their preferences with family, loved ones, and health care professionals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates November 2023 as ''National Hospice and Palliative Care Month''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States—

(A) to increase their understanding and awareness of—

(i) care for hospice patients with a serious illness or injury;

(ii) the benefits of integrating palliative care early into the treatment plans for patients with a serious illness or injury; and

(iii) the importance of grief support for caregivers and loved ones during hospice care and after death;

(B) to recognize the care and dedication of—

(i) millions of family caregivers; and

(ii) tens of thousands of palliative care and hospice staff and volunteers; and

(C) to observe ''National Hospice and Palliative Care Month'' with appropriate activities and programs.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have two 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 FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 476, S. Res. 477, and S. Res. 478.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, were printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2023

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, November 29; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, 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 Smith nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during yesterday's session ripen at 11:30 a.m.; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Smith nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:30 p.m. and that if cloture is invoked on the Semper nomination, all time be considered expired at 5:45 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday's session, the motions 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. DURBIN. Mr. 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 5:46 p.m., stands adjourned until Wednesday, November 29, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 28, 2023:

THE JUDICIARY

MARGARET M. GARNETT, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

JEFFREY M. BRYAN, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

AUDREY BULLER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Audrey Buller of Arvada, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Audrey traveled to Zambia to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Audrey for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Audrey's many accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING ALISON FOREMAN'S SERVICE TO THE CITY OF YPSILANTI

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alison Foreman, President and CEO of the Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels (YMOW) program, as she closes out 10 years in Ypsilanti, MI and prepares to take her expertise to Mobile Wheels of Toledo. Her lifelong dedication to serving those in need is worthy of commendation.

Alison began non-profit work shortly after graduating from Eastern Michigan University, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Juvenile Justice coupled with a Masters's in Public Administration. She joined YMOW in 2013 as the program's first full-time Executive Director, getting involved at a time when the organization was struggling to make ends meet. As one of her initial tasks, Alison was challenged to raise $25,000 during her first year. She delivered above and beyond what was asked of her, and the program flourished as a result. In recognition for her steadfast efforts, Alison was named President and CEO in 2021. As she celebrates her 10th anniversary with YMOW, the group now operates on a $1.8 million annual budget and has expanded to offer a full suite of services that benefit over 400 local seniors and homebound adults each year. Her team credits her with reviving an organization struggling to make ends meet, adding that she has worked tirelessly to realize YMOW's vision of ''a community where every senior feels nourished, valued, and supported.'' In caring for some of Ypsilanti's most vulnerable citizens, Alison has done a tremendous job at strengthening and nourishing her community.

In addition to her laudable efforts at YMOW, Alison has made many other significant contributions to our Ypsilanti home. Over the years, she has dedicated herself to various local non-profits as both a volunteer and an employee, most notably the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and the Book Industry Charitable Foundation. Alison has been an active member in a plethora of local organizations, serving on the boards of the Ypsilanti Area Community Fund, the Washtenaw Leaders Advisory, SOS Community Services, and her alma mater's MPA Advisory Group, among others. She is also a founding member of the Say Yes to Seniors Initiative, part of the Ypsilanti Kiwanis Club, and a Washtenaw County grant reviewer. Alison's devotion to alleviating Ypsilanti's great diversity of needs is inspirational, and I am proud to have such a selfless individual leading our local community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating Alison Foreman for her decade of dedication to serving the Ypsilanti area as she wraps up her tenure at the helm of the Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels program. Alison has worked tirelessly to benefit her local community and has made significant contributions to improving the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors. We thank her for her tremendous work and wish her all the best as she embarks upon her next endeavor.

RECOGNIZING KERRIE HURD, DIRECTOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Kerrie Hurd for her many years of public service and congratulate her on her retirement as the Director of the Small Business Administration (SBA) in Seattle District Office. Kerrie's strong leadership, relentless work ethic, and steadfast commitment to the SBA's mission embodies the highest ideals of public service.

During the pandemic when SBA COVID Relief programs disbursed funding to small businesses across the country, Kerrie worked to ensure no business was left behind. She advocated for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) policy changes so Washington's Tribal Fishers and other tribal-owned businesses could also benefit from the program. In addition, she drove efforts to identify and find local small businesses that were eligible for the SBA 8(a) program, helping small businesses grow with federal contracts. This included the strenuous process of reviewing industry association memberships and partnering with the state government. Her capabilities and dedication are also evident in her unprecedented accomplishment of organizing over $1.2 billion in SBA lending and willingness to work overtime to help small businesses be successful.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank and commend Kerrie Hurd for her service to the community. She is a great example of a public servant for us all.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MARJORIE ''MARGE'' STANTON RYAN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to recognize this year's Spirit of Mercy Honoree at Mount Mercy Academy, Marjorie ''Marge'' Stanton Ryan. For over a century, Mount Mercy Academy has been a beacon of light and an indispensable institution within our community. With a unique focus on academic excellence, women's leadership, and a commitment to building a just society, it is only proper to commend all of those who have contributed to this much-deserved reputation.

Marge Ryan is one of South Buffalo's most dedicated activists, and her passion for bettering this neighborhood is nothing short of commendable. After graduating from South Park High School in 1959, Marge worked as a stenographer with RJ Walsh/Equitabte Insurance before marrying Tom Ryan in 1959 and raising six children. Marge took on an active role in the parents' guilds at Mount Mercy Academy and Bishop Timon-St. Jude High School while her children were in school. Marge was a founding member of South Buffalo Alive, a nonprofit organization that dedicates its time and energy to improving the quality of life in South Buffalo and beautifying the neighborhood. She has worked with the Olmsted Conservancy Board and has a long history of working with elected leaders in the community to get things done including, the Mayors in the City of Buffalo, Buffalo City Council Members, the Parks Department, and the Department of Public Works, as well as working closely with county, state and federal representatives on important projects in our community. Marge is consistent and attentive, and you can tell almost immediately which gardens Marge makes her own by their beauty, simplicity, and by the way they are kept—tidy. Marge still actively helps to maintain:

Mount Mercy Academy, Trocaire College, the Firemen's Memorial, Morgan/Heacock Park, the traffic circle gardens on McKinley Parkway, and the brick paths in Cazenovia Park and pocket park gardens around Abbott and South Park. Of course, her passion of gardening has been a constant through all her years, and it has led to the beautification of countless areas and parks in South Buffalo. Her friendship with Sister Marie Bernard was the foundation of her involvement and gardening at the Mt. Mercy Convent and Trocaire College. As a friend of Marge, I can say with confidence that our community is a better, more attractive place to live because of her unrelenting efforts.

The award recipients and honorees tonight for Mount Mercy Academy's 22nd Annual Dinner have exceeded the already rigorous standard for the members within this community. Mount Mercy's values and commitment to service are steeped in decades of tradition, and Marjorie Stanton Ryan continues to live these values in all she does. Marge shares this legacy with her husband, Tom, as well as her children, Mary Lynn ('79), Karen ('80), Maggie ('83), Kevin, David, Tom, Jr., and their grandchildren.

CITLALLI CUMPLIDO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Citlalli Cumplido of Denver, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Citlalli traveled to the Czech Republic to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Citlalli for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Citlalli's many accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF JESSICA TURNER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to recognize this year's Athletic Excellence Honoree at Mount Mercy Academy, Jessica Turner. For over a century, Mount Mercy Academy has been a beacon of light and an indispensable institution within our community. With a unique focus on academic excellence, women's leadership, and a commitment to building a just society, it is only proper to commend the alumni who have contributed to this much-deserved reputation.

As a leader on and off the court, Jessica has been exemplary in her commitment to service. While playing Division I basketball at Niagara University, she served as Vice President of the Student Athletic Advisory Committee and was selected as an Arthur Ashe, Jr. Sports Scholar. The skills Jessica gained as a student-athlete were directly transferable to her role in the business world. She has consistently advanced as an employee at New Era Cap Company and was a critical force in the creation of New Era's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council (DEI). Jessica was the first person to hold the title of Director of DEI. Outside of work, she spends her time as a mentor with the Jackie Robinson Foundation Scholars and volunteers with the Festival of Trees, FeedMore WNY, the Special Olympics, Willie Hutch Jones Education and Sports programs, and the Juvenile Arthritis Foundation. Jessica's love of basketball was formed by her father, and it has shaped the person that is deserving of this award. Though athletics can be seen as an all-encompassing time commitment, Jessica has used her passion of sports as fuel to better the lives of others.

The award recipients and honorees tonight for Mount Mercy Academy's 22nd Annual Dinner have exceeded the already rigorous standard for the members within this community. Mount Mercy's values and commitment to service are steeped in decades of tradition, and Jessica Turner continues to live these values in her career, relationships, and most importantly, as a mother to Maya and Kellan.

HONORING THE ST. PAUL AME CHURCH'S 126TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in Delray Beach, Florida, on its 126th anniversary. This significant milestone is a testament to the enduring spirit of faith and community that has thrived within its walls since its inception.

St. Paul AME Church. originally named Mt. Tabor, held its first service on November 19, 1897, in what was then called Linton. St. Paul was the second church established in the area that would become Delray Beach in 1964. Prior to relocating in 1902, St. Paul shared a building with the first church in Delray, Mt. Olive Baptist. The fact that it has weathered the test of time, evolving and adapting over the years, speaks to the resilience and commitment of its congregation.

Reverend James C. Watson, Jr. and First Lady Viola Watson are committed community leaders and their dedication to St. Paul AME Church is a steadfast commitment to fostering spiritual growth and community engagement.

As we celebrate the 126th anniversary, we must recognize that St. Paul AME Church is part of a broader legacy. The African Methodist Episcopal church founded in America in 1787, has a rich history of promoting both spiritual enrichment and social justice. St. Paul AME Church stands as a local embodiment of this legacy, contributing to the cultural and spiritual tapestry of Delray Beach.

Pastor James and First Lady Viola Watson's commitment to St. Paul AME Church and their service to our community is remarkable. I congratulate them on 126 years of service and wish them continued success.

HONORING DR. DAVID TAYLOE

HON. GREGORY F. MURPHY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an incredible pediatrician, Dr. David Tayloe of Goldsboro, North Carolina, who has spent his lifetime advocating for children's health and well-being.

At the beginning of his career, Dr. Tayloe already had an aptitude for recognizing the needs of his community. In 1977, when Dr. Tayloe was a solo pediatrician, he helped establish a level II Neonatal Unit at Wayne Memorial Hospital to help bring care to sick newborns. He has spearheaded systemic changes in our school systems to help low-income and at-risk children receive healthcare resources and special literacy tutoring.

Due to Dr. Tayloe's father being held legally responsible in a child vaccine injury lawsuit involving a developmentally disabled child who received a state-mandated vaccine, he was determined to find a solution to the vaccine liability crisis. His legislative advocacy proved successful. In 1986, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation to provide liability protection for physicians when giving state-required vaccines to minors. As all can see, Dr. Tayloe is most talented at wearing two hats as an advocate and a pediatrician.

Dr. Tayloe's good deeds extend far beyond Wayne County and the State of North Carolina. While serving in multiple leadership roles at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), including President, Dr. Tayloe made trips to the Middle East to help translate AAP materials into Arabic and to ensure more pediatricians around the globe could have access to AAP documents through low-cost international membership.

Dr. Tayloe has received numerous awards for his achievements. While this is only a sliver of Dr. Tayloe's long list of accomplishments and sacrifices to his community, I am grateful for the opportunity to extend Congress's sincerest appreciation and recognition to him. Dr. Tayloe is undoubtedly the epitome of servant leadership and has greatly contributed to fostering a healthier society in his community, State, and around the world. Please join me in honoring this outstanding American.

RECOGNIZING MINNESOTA FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT DAN GLESSING

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dan Glessing, who was recently reelected as President of the Minnesota Farm Bureau.

Dan is a leader in the agriculture community. Since he was first elected in November 2021, Dan has been a steadfast advocate for Minnesota farmers and ranchers and has a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities they face. Dan also serves as a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors, where he has brought national attention to Minnesota agriculture.

Under Dan's leadership, the Minnesota Farm Bureau has grown in both strength and influence. He has built key partnerships between Minnesota's farmers, the Farm Bureau, and others including leaders in our nation's capital, to ensure that our state's producers have the resources they need to succeed. His input is invaluable, especially as we craft this year's farm bill.

As a dairy and crop farmer in Wright County and a lifelong member of the Minnesota Farm Bureau, Dan and the Glessing family have been strong voices in support of our local producers and the future of agriculture in Minnesota. While Dan leads the farmers of today, his wife, Seena, is working to educate the next generation of agriculture producers as a teacher in the Howard Lake, Waverly, Winstead school district. After having the opportunity to visit the Glessing farm and meet Dan and Seena, I can confidently say that the Minnesota agriculture community is in excellent hands under their leadership.

We are grateful for Dan's service to the Minnesota Farm Bureau and to agriculture producers across the state. I am confident that he will continue to be a strong voice for our farmers and ranchers for years to come.

COURTNEY DAUWALTER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Courtney Dauwalter, a remarkable ultrarunner and Leadville resident who continues to redefine the boundaries of endurance in the world of ultradistance racing.

In July 2023, Ms. Dauwalter achieved the remarkable feat of being the first female finisher at the grueling Hardrock 100-mile foot race, only a few weeks after she emerged victorious at the Western States 100 in California. She also won the Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc, a race renowned for its extreme difficulty and terrain. With this victory, she made history, becoming the first person ever to win all three of these races in a single year and the second person ever to achieve this incredible trifecta in their lifetime.

Ms. Dauwalter's unparalleled accomplishments serve as an inspiration to all, demonstrating that with grit and dedication, one can achieve the seemingly impossible. We wish Ms. Dauwalter the best of luck as she continues her running career and inspires fellow athletes and fans in Colorado and around the world.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PATRICIA KEANE MARREN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to recognize this year's Sister Sally Walz Memorial Award at Mount Mercy Academy, Patricia Keane Marren. For over a century, Mount Mercy Academy has been a beacon of light and an indispensable institution within our community. With a unique focus on academic excellence, women's leadership, and a commitment to building a just society, it is only proper to commend the alumni who have contributed to this much-deserved reputation.

The recipient of this award requires "an expansive heart," and Pattie Keane certainly fits the bill. She began her career as a programmer at Marine Midland Bank (now HSBC Bank), and after attaining a master's degree in business administration, became Vice President at HSBC in 1997. Pattie worked for over two decades and led several company-wide initiatives and philanthropic efforts. As community leader and avid volunteer, she consistently puts the needs of others before her own. She assisted in fundraising events and organizational activities of O'Sullivan School of Irish Dance, Cazenovia Hockey Association, Canisius High School, and naturally, at Mount Mercy Academy. There she served as Treasurer and Board Member of the Alumnae Association co-chair (with her husband, Dan) of the McAuley Gala, and an active member of the Board of Trustees. And even in the face of considerable medical challenges, Pattie continues to find new ways to advocate for others. In fact, as a patient at Roswell Park Cancer Institute, she was responsible for improvements to safety practices for patients and visitors with disabilities. Pattie has always embodied selflessness and compassion, and it has been to the benefit of all those who know her.

The award recipients and honorees tonight for Mount Mercy Academy's 22nd Annual Dinner have exceeded the already rigorous standard for the members within this community. Mount Mercy's values and commitment to service are steeped in decades of tradition, and Patricia Keane Marren has always embodied these values in her career, relationships, and most importantly, with her husband, Dan, and children Katherine ('11) and Thomas.

RECOGNIZING THE INAUGURAL NATIONAL CERTIFIED DIETARY MANAGERS AND CERTIFIED FOOD PROTECTION PROFESSIONALS DAY OF THE YEAR

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Inaugural National Certified Dietary Managers (CDM), Certified Food Protection Professionals (CFPP) Day of the Year. This day is meant to honor the contributions these professionals have made in the food service management profession and the lives they have impacted through their service in America's healthcare industry.

I would also like to recognize the Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals for their efforts to designate November 28, 2023, as the inaugural National CDM, CFPP Day of the Year. Over 90 percent of the ANFP's more than 14,000 members work in healthcare and a majority of those are in long-term care facilities. As a geriatric nurse practitioner, I have seen firsthand the way in which CDMs and CFPPs positively affect health outcomes for members of our greatest generation.

These professionals play an essential role in America's healthcare industry and as such are responsible for managing nutrition and food service operations. They are trained and qualified to administer menus, food purchasing and preparation, and to apply nutrition principles, among many other things. The CDM, CFPP credential is also the basis for the ANFP Youth Apprenticeship Program, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor last year.

I am proud to honor their significant impacts to healthcare and celebrate the inaugural National Certified Dietary Managers, Certified Food Protection Professionals Day of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO ADY BARKAN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable individual whose advocacy for universal healthcare helped advance the cause for millions of Americans, even as he struggled with his own health. Ady Barkan, a former intern in my office, passed away due to complications of ALS, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire generations to come.

I first met Ady while walking precincts together when he was still in high school. Even then, he was passionately dedicated to improving the lives of people around him and deeply immersed in a wide variety of policy issues. His unwavering commitment to his country—and the need to stand up for all working families—as well as his fervent advocacy for healthcare reform left an indelible mark on all of us who had the privilege of working alongside him. But more than anything else, I was struck by his dazzling intellect. Ady was brilliant.

Ady's journey was a testament to his resilience and unwavering determination. In 2016, when he was diagnosed with ALS, a devastating neurodegenerative disease that often leads to paralysis and death within a few short years, Ady could have easily chosen to retreat from public life. But instead, he and his family chose to dedicate the remainder of his life to changing the American health care system for the better.

Despite the loss of his voice, Ady Barkan's voice only grew stronger and reached more people. His ability to blend his personal story with calls to action was truly remarkable. He testified before Congress, interviewed presidential candidates, and spoke at the Democratic National Convention, all while battling this debilitating disease. Ady's impact on our nation's health care discourse was immeasurable, and his courage in the face of adversity was unparalleled.

Ady Barkan was instrumental in stopping Republican efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act, a critical achievement for health care in America that extended access to tens of millions who otherwise couldn't afford it. Ady's persistence and leadership in these fights were critical, and his contribution, profound. Ady Barkan was not only a health care activist but also a loving husband and father. And he was also a good friend.

I would like to convey my deepest sympathies to Ady's wife, Rachael, his children, and his entire family during this difficult time. May Ady's memory continue to be a source of strength and motivation for all of us who strive to make a difference in the world. Ady will be dearly missed, but his legacy will live on as an inspiration to us all.

CONGRATULATING NICOLE GALKOVICH ON BECOMING A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. GUY RESCHENTHALER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Nicole Galkovich, who will take the Oath of Allegiance and become a citizen of the United States of America on November 28, 2023.

Nicole moved from her hometown of Ashdod, Israel, to the United States in 2017, when she was 19 years old. She began her journey with her father, leaving behind her mother and grandmother in Israel. After settling in Houston, Texas, she sought out new educational opportunities to integrate with her new American community. As a testament to her hard work and academic achievement, Nicole earned an associate degree at San Jacinto College.

In 2022, Nicole moved to Washington County and found a community that welcomed her with open arms and a job that provided fulfillment and happiness. She now works as a warranty clerk at a local car dealership, where her dedication, work ethic, and perseverance brighten the lives of those around her.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District, I congratulate Ms. Galkovich on becoming a United States citizen. I am confident that her contributions to the Washington County community will continue to enrich the lives of her friends and neighbors. As she embarks on this new journey, I wish her continued happiness and success.

JAYLYNN ARMIJO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jaylynn Armijo of Lakewood, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Jaylynn traveled to South Korea to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Jaylynn for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Jaylynn's many accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF TINA SCARPELLO WEBSTER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to recognize this year's Mercy Devotion Honoree at Mount Mercy Academy, Tina Scarpello Webster. For over a century, Mount Mercy Academy has been a beacon of light and an indispensable institution within our community. With a unique focus on academic excellence, women's leadership, and a commitment to building a just society, it is only proper to commend the alumni who have contributed to this much-deserved reputation.

As a staff member at Mount Mercy, Tina has been afforded the rare opportunity to make a tangible impact on the hearts and minds of countless students. Upon graduating from Erie Community College, Tina's brief time working in North Carolina made her recognize her passion and love of our community in Buffalo. Upon her return, Tina eventually found her way to working at the school that she, and her sisters Cheryl ('82) and Joelle ('84), love so dearly: Mount Mercy Academy. She assumed the roles of Recruitment Manager, Director of Admissions and Communications, newsletter creator, class moderator, club facilitator, and social media coordinator, among a myriad of roles. Tina has been the cheerleading coach for even longer, this skill has shaped her work on behalf of her alma mater. There is no shortage of ways that Tina has bettered the Mount Mercy community, and she shares this enthusiasm in Buffalo, as well. She has volunteered with the South Buffalo Football Association for twenty-five years, assisted in the creation of the Brian Bauer Memorial Golf Tournament, and coaches Buffalo Envy, another local cheerleading team. Tina has been an inspiring mentor to young women in Western New York, and her hard work at Mount Mercy makes her an excellent role model.

The award recipients and honorees tonight for Mount Mercy Academy's 22nd Annual Dinner have exceeded the already rigorous standard for the members within this community. Mount Mercy's values and commitment to service are steeped in decades of tradition, and Tina Scarpello Webster continues to live these values in her career and relationships.

HONORING MRS. PATTI CARROLL FOR HER EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE

HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Patti Carroll for her extraordinary service and dedication to the people of Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District.

Patti has been a part of my congressional office since the beginning—and will soon depart after five years of service.

Prior to joining my office, she served ten years on Fairview's City Planning Commission, four years as a City Commissioner, and four years as the city's Mayor. In her years as Mayor, Patti set high goals for the City of Fairview—she exceeded them. Thanks to her leadership, Fairview has seen impressive growth. Additionally, she worked tirelessly with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to improve the city's roads—a direct benefit to her constituents.

Patti's passion to serve and her dedication to Tennessee values drove her entire career. Patti is a fierce defender of liberty, a fighter for limited government, and an advocate for fiscal responsibility. Upon joining my office, Patti continued this level of excellence in her new role. Among my duties representing Tennessee, being an advocate for Tennesseans within the federal government is of the highest priority. To this end, I cannot overemphasize my gratitude for Patti. My constituents have benefitted from her composure and grace countless times. It didn't matter if it was an evening, weekend, or required a long drive across the district, Patti was always willing to help.

Patti is known for her dedication, always ready to solve any problem in front of her. Not only is she dearly loved by the Williamson County community and beyond, but she has also been a vital part of my staff. In the long hours and heavy days, she was a friend to all.

When she walks into a room, she is like a magnet—everyone is drawn to her vivacity and kindness. As much as I wish I could spend all of my time in Tennessee, I simply cannot be in two places at once. But that is why it has been such a blessing to have someone I trust implicitly represent me at important events in Williamson County and beyond. Her work to streamline the application process for new ownership of the Historic Downtown Franklin Post Office was particularly rewarding. Five Points is both a historic landmark and provides a crucial service to the community of over 85,000 residents. Thanks to her hard work, the Post office now has a new operator and is ready to serve the Franklin community.

I often leaned on Patti and her husband, Kevin, for advice. Together, they are a powerhouse. Their accumulated wisdom, knowledge, and experience make them an invaluable resource. Their combined public service and dedication to the State of Tennessee allowed me and my office to provide the best service to Tennesseans possible. I often encouraged my team to create ''raving fans'' of constituents through our service to the 7th District. Patti did that. Over and over again, she went above and beyond for Tennesseans. She exemplifies servant leadership in every way.

At the core of Patti's service to our great state is a strong dedication to her faith and the Biblical injunction to love one another. And Patti has done just that. Her love for God and her neighbor is one of the first things I ever noticed about Patti, and it's what has made her an incredible friend and colleague. Her passion for helping others hasn't been limited to work. She is active in her community, her church, and is a dedicated wife, mother, and grandmother. Her three children and grandson are the light of her life.

Because of her service, Tennessee is a better place—I say that without hesitation. My thanks to her for these contributions cannot be overstated. I know she will spread the same joy and excellence in every chapter of her life. On behalf of the United States Congress, Team Green, and a grateful constituency, I thank Patti Carroll for her distinguished service to Tennesseans.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF GEORGE WILLIAM OWINGS III

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of an outstanding Marine, Marylander, and American: my friend. George William Owings III. I had the privilege of working with him when he served in the Maryland House of Delegates and during his tenure as the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs. On October 31, he passed away at the age of 78. His passing was a great loss for our state and country.

Although born in Florida, George was Marylander to his core, growing up in Calvert County and attending Calvert High School and the University of Maryland, College Park. From a young age, he showed tremendous commitment to his community and his country. In 1964, George left UMD to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. Serving multiple tours in Vietnam, George attained the rank of Sergeant and received numerous commendations, including the Presidential Citation, Navy Unit Commendation with Bronze Star Device, Navy-Marine Corps Medal, and Vietnam Service Medal with Silver Star Device.

George continued to serve when he returned to Maryland. After finding success in banking, he started a career in Maryland politics. Governor William Donald Schaefer appointed him to serve in the House of Delegates in 1988. He won reelection multiple times and remained in the House of Delegates for sixteen years—ten of which he served as House Majority Whip.

Recognizing George's character, skill as a legislator, and experiences as a veteran, Governor Robert Ehrlich appointed him to serve as Secretary of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in 2004. Later, in 2007, Governor Martin O'Malley asked George to stay on as acting Secretary for the department, which he did for six months. Eight years later, Governor Larry Hogan asked him to serve in the role once again. That Democratic and Republican governors alike believed George was best suited to serve the needs of his fellow veterans is a testament to his strong reputation and record of getting things done.

George was a crucial advocate for veterans, military families, and all Marylanders. I join them in mourning his loss. My prayers are with his son George, grandsons Patrick and Emerson, life-partner Katherine Marie Boyd, and the rest of the family and friends he cherished above all else. I hope they can take some comfort in knowing that George's positive impact on our state and our people will forever endure.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in praying for George and all those who mourn him.

OUTSTANDING TX–08 CITIZEN

HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an outstanding constituent and honorable veteran from Willis, Texas, Mr. Kyle Puls. It is my privilege to stand before you and pay tribute to Mr. Puls, as he has shown the ultimate act of compassion and unwavering selflessness to his family and his community.

Mr. Puls grew up in the Montgomery County, TX in the small town of Willis. He served our country for more than three years in the United States Navy. Due to an unfortunate motorcycle accident, Kyle was honorably discharged.

In 2022, Kyle's cousin, Travis Glenn Puls, who was diagnosed with diabetes at age 12, contracted COVID, sending his kidneys into critical condition. Driven to take action that would help his cousin, Kyle underwent testing, hoping to be a match for a kidney transplant to Travis. Unfortunately, he was not a match.

Instead of giving up, Kyle found other ways to take action. He got involved in the Kidney Swap Program, which enabled him to donate his kidney to Brittany Flowers, who also resides in TX–08. Similarly, Brittany had a donor who was not her match, so her kidney went to another person in need, ensuring that Travis would receive a kidney. Because of Kyle's sacrifice, three people were ultimately saved during this series of procedures that took place in January of this year in Houston, TX.

I am incredibly proud to have constituents like Mr. Kyle Puls in my district. On behalf of the people of the Eighth Congressional District of Texas, I wish Kyle and his family all the best and I thank him for his service to our country and his continued service to our community. He is the definition of a veteran who keeps on giving.

JUSTIN E. THOMAS

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr Speaker, I rise today to recognize Justine Thomas of Westminster, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Justine traveled to Cyprus to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Justine for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Justine's many accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF TROCAIRE COLLEGE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Trocaire College of Buffalo, New York, as this institution celebrates the 65th anniversary of its founding. Founded in 1958 by the Sisters of Mercy, Trocaire College is a private, career-oriented institution which strives to advance and perpetuate the worthy mission, values and charisma of that order.

As women of faith who commit their lives to God and their resources to serve, advocate and pray for those in need around the world, the Sisters of Mercy strive to advance a just world for people who are poor, sick and uneducated, and Trocaire College is a manifestation of that imperative.

With its roots in nursing and other healthcare professions, Trocaire has expanded its offerings to meet the dynamic

needs of students seeking to advance their careers in order to secure a better future for themselves and their families and contribute to the well-being of their communities.

I congratulate my friend Dr. Bassam Deeb, the president of Trocaire College, as well as the trustees, faculty, staff, students and supporters of the College as they announce that they have met and exceeded the goal set for their Funding the Future for WNY campaign, which is making a Trocaire College education more affordable for more students.

Again, I recognize this important institution and its work to improve the lives of the students it serves, and ultimately, the communities which they will serve.

HONORING DIANE BOYLE

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, Jr.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Diane M. Boyle for her 28 years of outstanding Federal service as a civilian attorney for the Department of the Navy (DON) Office of the General Counsel (OGC).

Since she began her distinguished career with DON OGC in 1995, Ms. Boyle has served in several positions, including serving in multiple acquisition attorney positions at the Naval Air Systems Command, and service as Counsel, Navy Region Naval District Washington; Deputy Counsel, Commander Navy Installations Command; and Deputy Assistant General Counsel, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Notably, she became a member of the Senior Executive Service in February 2014 when the General Counsel selected her as Counsel for the Office of Naval Research. Later, in December 2019, the General Counsel selected her to serve as the Deputy General Counsel, OGC's ''managing partner.'' During her tenure as Deputy General Counsel, she has impressively managed the personnel, budget, training and oversight of a legal community comprised of more than 1,100 attorneys and professional staff operating in over 145 offices worldwide.

Throughout her career, Ms. Boyle has distinguished herself as an extraordinary attorney who has made invaluable contributions to the DON on a variety of complex matters of significant impact to the national defense mission. From advising on the V–22 Osprey acquisition program, to overseeing legal matters in the Navy Trademark and Licensing Program Office, to steering the DON and OGC through the COVID–19 pandemic, Ms. Boyle has worked tirelessly to provide proactive, accurate, and innovative legal advice on a multitude of legally complicated issues across a broad spectrum of matters. Additionally, Ms. Boyle has brought innovative business acumen to the operations of the DON OGC, ensuring it functions efficiently and effectively. Her character and sustained work ethic has consistently enabled the DON OGC to meet its mission of supporting Sailors, Marines, and civilians executing the defense mission worldwide.

The daughter of a decorated Navy Flag Officer, Ms. Boyle has continued that legacy of service and has been recognized for her own outstanding contributions. Among her achievements, she has received the DON Meritorious, Superior, and Distinguished Civilian Service Awards, and many other performance-related accolades. A dedicated civil servant, she is worthy of additional recognition before her fellow citizens as she completes her Federal career.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Ms. Diane M. Boyle as she retires from Federal service.

AUBREY MILLER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Aubrey Miller of Arvada, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Aubrey traveled to South Korea to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Aubrey for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Aubrey's many accomplishments.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. AGONAFER SHIFERAW

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and lasting contributions of Mr. Agonafer Shiferaw, a critical leader and steward of progress in the Bay Area community. Mr. Shiferaw leaves behind an indelible legacy of love, leadership, and service to his community and family.

Born in Ethiopia in 1952, Mr. Shiferaw's passion for knowledge led him to California, where he studied economics at San Francisco State University. After he earned his bachelor's degree, he remained in San Francisco where he opened Rasselas Restaurant and Jazz Club, an Ethiopian restaurant located in the Fillmore neighborhood in 1986.

For nearly 30 years, Rasselas was a gathering place for friends, family, and loved ones to come together in celebration. It was a cultural hub within the Bay Area, uniting the community and offering residents and visitors alike a space where they could join in shared appreciation of jazz music.

In addition to his crucial work as the founder of Rasselas, Mr. Shiferaw also demonstrated his sincere love for his community through his compassionate leadership and altruistic advocacy. He was committed to empowering and uplifting the Black community in the Bay Area and was truly passionate about serving others and giving a voice to the voiceless. His critical contributions made him a beacon of light within his community and undeniably improved the lives of those around him.

Mr. Shiferaw will be remembered not only for his decades of service to the Bay Area, but also for his genuine kindness and compassion. He impacted the lives of so many in his community and was known both for his leadership and the unfailing love he had for his family. His passion for service, valiant advocacy, and perseverance have left a legacy on the people of the Bay Area.

Mr. Shiferaw's enduring spirit will live on in his loving wife, daughter, nieces, nephews, and extended family. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Shiferaw's loved ones. I know that they, along with the people of the Bay Area, join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

KATHERINA MOOK

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Katherina Mook of Golden, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Katherina traveled to South Korea to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Katherina for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Katherina's many accomplishments.

HONORING AUGUST ''AUGIE'' COSENTINO FOR HIS SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY AND COMMUNITY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I want to honor 94-year-old Korean War

veteran August V. Cosentino for his community accomplishments and life-long dedication to America's values.

In 1951, young August Cosentino enlisted in the United States Air Force and was assigned to attend radio and radar school at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, for one year of intensive training. Following his training, he was assigned to a forward operations outpost on the 38th parallel of the Korean peninsula, where he aided in directing advanced bombing missions in North Korea.

After the Korean War, August Cosentino married the love of his life, Martha, and together they raised three children: Cindy, Ralph, and David, before Martha passed away on their 59th anniversary in 2012. To support his family through a growing America, August worked in the sales business before forming his own company—August Cosentino Enterprises, where they supplied the automotive industry with custom made parts.

The Buffalo community played a large part in Mr. Cosentino's life. August served as the president of Kenmore Rotary, where he tirelessly exemplified their motto of "Service Above Self." As a talented musician, August can play the piano, accordion, and stand-up bass. He has played in several military bands since 1951 and is well known in the Western New York music community. Mr. Cosentino still plays stand-up bass weekly in the choir at the Newman Center mass.

I am excited to thank the guest of honor, veteran August V. Cosentino, for his service. Mr. Cosentino served our country 70 years ago and our grateful community since then, and I hope for many more bright years to come.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL MITROKA'S 100TH BIRTHDAY AND SERVICE TO OUR NATION

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Michael Mitroka, a longtime resident of Southgate, MI and veteran of the Second World War, on the occasion of his 100th birthday. His service to our country is worthy of commendation.

Born on November 20, 1923, Michael enlisted in the Army as a Private in May of 1943. Over the next two and a half years of service he would traverse the Pacific, seeing combat in places like New Guinea and the Philippines. The Japanese conquest of the Philippines just a couple of years earlier was one of the worst military defeats in U.S. military history, and the retaking of the islands, though sure to be a long and hard affair, was a point of pride for General MacArthur and the Army. By the time Michael left the Army as a Sergeant in December of 1945, he had earned the Philippine Liberation Ribbon, a good conduct medal, a purple heart, and two bronze stars, awarded for "heroic or meritorious service in a combat zone."

Michael carried on his service after the war by working in his local school district. He retired in 1985 as the Supervisor of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation after 35 years with the Southgate School District. Michael married his wife, Rosemary, just a few weeks before his discharge from the Army in 1945. Though Rosemary passed away in 1994, her legacy carries on in their two sons, Paul and Michael Jr., three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Still an active member of his current and former community, Michael is a member of St. Aloysius-Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Royaltown, IL, the American Legion Post 975 in Dowell, IL, and the Knights of Columbus Council Post 3965 in Southgate, MI.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating the 100th birthday of Michael Mitroka. A veteran who served our country with honor and bravery during our darkest hours eighty years ago, he spent the last eight decades continuing that service within his local community and uplifting those around him. As we celebrate the milestone of a centennial, Michael should know that he is appreciated and valued by his family, friends, community, and nation. We thank him for his service, and wish him a 101st year filled with laughter, love, and many blessings. I thank Michael.

HONORING GEORGINA "GINA" CARDONA

HON. RITCHIE TORRES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, Georgina Cardona, affectionately known as Gina, was a woman of extraordinary kindness and caring, and left this world at the young age of 95. Her constant commitment to community and family formed the pillars for who she was in life. Gina moved into our community in the winter of 1952 from The Island of Puerto Rico with her husband Eliseo and only son Aureo. The three lived in a rooming house owned by the Rivera family, this is where she came to love the South Bronx and all those who lived there with her, including her beloved "Bronx Bombers".

After settling in, Gina continued her dedication to service of others by graduating with honors from the Helena Fuld School of Nursing. She started her career at Hunts Point Hospital as a surgical nurse, then worked at the Hospital for Joint Diseases until her retirement 40 years later. During her years in healthcare, she was instrumental in groundbreaking medical procedures and became a highly respected leader in the industry.

While tirelessly working to improve the health of her fellow community members, she also fought for the Bronx we see today. Her political activism was integral in rebuilding the South Bronx. Gina always found the time and energy to campaign, mobilize, and organize her fellow community members to make lasting, positive changes for the South Bronx. Her passion for service and change was instilled in her family, especially her son and granddaughter who continue her legacy of love and community. She was as proud of her civic engagement as I am inspired by it.

A beacon of strength, Gina was the Matriarch of her beloved family. Like many in her generation, she sent much of her hard-earned money to help her mother and sisters in Puerto Rico. Ultimately, she helped to settle them in the South Bronx. Gina continued to bring her family together by helping to move her aunt and younger cousins to Brooklyn. Gina's commitment to her family is exemplified by these acts of selflessness.

While the Bronx became Gina's new home she never forgot where she came from. She would go back to Puerto Rico annually to see her aunt, uncle, and cousins. She would celebrate Puerto Rican heritage month with her brother and his family every year in Connecticut. She also made sure to teach her family in New York to appreciate and learn their history and culture. She did this through language, tradition, food. music, and celebrations. She embraced and loved her family with her entire heart. She will be sorely missed.

I want to recognize her truly amazing impact on our community and anyone who knew her. Gina was a healer through and through. From saving lives as a nurse to helping rebuild her community to taking care of her family, she always worked to heal those around her. In the words of Gina's only Granddaughter Ralina, she left behind a legacy of family and love, not in words but in her deeds.

RECOGNIZING MARY ELLEN STONE, 44 YEARS WITH THE KING COUNTY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESOURCE CENTER

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mary Ellen Stone for her many years of service for the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) and congratulate her on her retirement as the Executive Director.

Mary Ellen has served as a steadfast advocate for survivors of sexual assault over the past 44 years throughout King County and Washington State. She has been a visionary leader in changing the landscape of sexual assault services including prevention, education, and victim advocacy. She was influential in establishing the state's first accreditation process for sexual assault providers, professionalizing service delivery and ensuring core services to be accessible; and publishing "He Told Me Not to Tell," one of the first educational pieces in the nation for parents to talk with their children about sexual assault. As a result, KCSARC is nationally recognized for its effective and innovative services.

Mary Ellen has shared her time and expertise in many ways to better inform systems and communities about the needs of victims. This includes serving on the Seattle Archdiocese Review Board, Mental Illness Drug Dependence Oversight Board, Seattle Chief of Police Search committees, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Sex Offender Management Committee, Women's Funding Alliance, and Municipal League Seattle-King County. My staff and I have had the privilege of working with Mary Ellen on multiple occasions. Through her productive relationships with several elected officials, Mary Ellen has helped the KCSARC gain exposure at both the state and federal level. Her passion, tenacity and leadership have shaped KCSARC into the strong, vibrant nonprofit it is today.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank Mary Ellen Stone for her tireless work and contributions to the community, and I wish her a happy retirement.

KESLEY WHITE

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kesley White of Leadville, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Kesley traveled to Nepal to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Kesley for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Kesley's many accomplishments.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF WWII USMC VETERAN WILLIAM PAUL GOSCH

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor World War II Marine Corps veteran William P. Gosch as he celebrates his 100th birthday which is December 8th.

William P. Gosch was born in North Tonawanda, New York, on December 8th, 1923. While attending North Tonawanda High School, he showed academic prowess, earning a football scholarship to attend Niagara University. After graduating from high school in the Fall of 1941, William chose to forgo his scholarship and joined the Marine Corps. For two years, he served as a rifleman and military policeman in the infamous ''Carlson's Raiders'' in the Eastern Pacific Theatre of World War II.

William Gosch was an exemplary soldier. His unit was awarded a presidential citation for their heroism in capturing the Okinawa Prefecture, Japan. During his time as a Marine, he participated in action in Bougainville, Emirau Island, the St. Matthias Islands, Guam, and Okinawa. Following the Allied victory in World War II, William Gosch worked as a general manager in the Richardson Boat Company before spending time working in the costume jewelry business in Honolulu. After returning to Buffalo and settling down, his opportunity to dedicate more to the Buffalo community came in 2020 when he was instated as the temporary replacement for the 2nd Ward Alderwoman. Following this, William received the rare opportunity to collaborate with YouTube documentarian Rishi Sharma, where he promoted awareness of the remaining World War II veterans to an audience of over one million people.

Today, I want to congratulate William on his 100th birthday and express my deep gratitude to William Paul Gosch for his service to our country and the Buffalo community. As William said in 2020, ''Buffalo is the greatest city in the world.'' it is a great city because of dedicated individuals such as William Paul Gosch.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF CASEY HATCHER

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Butte County resident, Casey Corin Hatcher, who passed away in the early morning of November 5, 2023, at the young age of 43. She was surrounded by her sister, mother, and two lifelong friends.

Casey was born on February 26, 1980, in Auburn, California to her parents Michelle and Tom Hatcher. When she arrived, she was welcomed by her big sister Kelci Hatcher who became her lifelong treasure. She was inquisitive and had a head for planning, directing and problem-solving early in her development. She moved to Chico to attend college in 1999, graduating, from California State University (CSU), Chico with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in marketing.

Casey began her professional career with a management consulting firm focused on assisting small businesses. She assisted over 60 in total during her tenure. The hands-on work with these businesses provided her with a solid foundation for continuing her work in economic development.

In 2011, Casey joined Butte County Administration as a member of its economic and community development unit, where she began her enduring advocacy for the Butte County community that she served with dedication for the remainder of her life.

Casey worked on a variety of community development projects early in her career with the County including implementation of disaster recovery assistance for homeowners affected by the 2008 wildfires in Butte County. Due to her stellar work, she was promoted to Economic Development Manager in 2016. She returned to CSU, Chico and received her Master's Degree in Public Administration in 2017.

Casey served in the County's Emergency Operation Center during many activations including the Oroville Dam Spillway Incident, the Wall, Ponderosa, and La Porte/Cherokee fires in 2017, the Camp Fire, the 2020 North Complex Fire, and the 2021 Dixie Fire. She worked countless hours supporting the response and recovery to these tragedies in Butte County. She never wavered, faltered. or tired of her dedication to serving the people of Butte County.

Ultimately. she was promoted to Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and assigned to ''lead'' disaster recovery organizing County staff, advocating with state and federal agencies, and helping rebuild the community for which she cared so deeply.

Additionally, in October 2021, Casey was asked to testify before a congressional committee on disaster recovery where she was provided a national platform to advocate for disaster recovery. The systems Casey put into place are used today as a model by communities experiencing catastrophic disasters, including most recently by the State of Hawaii in their response to the Lahaina Wildfire in Maui.

Casey was a rock; she was a role model; she was a moral compass. She was encouraging, challenging, motivating, but supportive. Her family, friends, colleagues, and beloved community will cherish her for the rest of the days of their lives.

RECOGNIZING ANDY FLICK FOR TWO YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest gratitude for the outstanding service and unwavering dedication of Andy Flick, who served as the Executive Director of the New Democrat Coalition. During my time as Chair of the New Dems, his tireless efforts were instrumental in advancing our shared vision for pragmatic and innovative solutions to the challenges facing our nation. From the intricacies of policy research to the dynamic coordination required in the Coalition's daily operations, his contributions have truly made a lasting impact.

Andy's commitment to fostering bipartisan collaboration and ability to navigate the complex landscape of Capitol Hill have not gone unnoticed, and now he serves as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Vice President. His strategic insights and meticulous attention to detail were invaluable assets to our team. As we continue to strive for a more effective and efficient government, I want to take this moment to recognize and thank Andy for his exemplary service.

The New Democrat Coalition and I are profoundly grateful for Andy's hard work, and I am confident that his future endeavors will reflect the same level of excellence he brought to our team. I wish Andy the best of luck in all his future endeavors and thank him for his outstanding service.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MEGHAN CROTTY QUINN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to recognize this year's

Catherine McAuley Distinguished Alumnae Honoree at Mount Mercy Academy, Meghan Crotty Quinn. For over a century, Mount Mercy Academy has been a beacon of light and an indispensable institution within our community. With a unique focus on academic excellence, women's leadership, and a commitment to building a just society, it is only proper to commend the alumni who have contributed to this much-deserved reputation.

A proud South Buffalo resident, Meghan and her husband Kevin Quinn are the proud parents of Kiera (Mount Mercy Academy, Class of 2027), son Rory and daughter Colleen. Meghan is the daughter of Anita Durkin Crotty (Mount Mercy Academy Class of 1963) and Patrick Crotty. Meghan is a business and community leader. She graduated from John Carroll University in 2007 and earned the title of Certified Public Accountant shortly thereafter. Meghan's rise in the banking industry has been rapid; after a stint with M&T Bank, she now serves as a Senior Vice President in the Commercial Banking division at HSBC Bank. She has twice been recognized by her peers as a top 100 performer in United States commercial banking and is a recipient of the Irish Echo's 40 Under 40 Award in 2021. Meanwhile, her professional success has been coupled with a steadfast commitment of paying it forward. Meghan is the Treasurer of South Buffalo Roots, a rising community organization responsible for organizing the very successful South Buffalo Porchfest, Music in the Park series and South Buffalo Irish Festival. This dedicated group of volunteers in turn supports an array of neighborhood organizations using a creative model of giving back to other charitable organizations including, the South Buffalo Community Table, Buffalo Irish Center, Buffalo Refuse, local sports and school organizations, 11-Day Powerplay, Kids Escaping Drugs, and Feed the Front Line. Citizens like Meghan—those who are consumed with doing right by their neighbors are what makes Buffalo so special. Her commitment to professional excellence and bettering the Western New York community make for an incredible endorsement of Mount Mercy Academy and its principles.

The award recipients and honorees tonight for Mount Mercy Academy's 22nd Annual Dinner have exceeded the already rigorous standard for the members within this community. Mount Mercy's values and commitment to service are steeped in decades of tradition, and Meghan Crotty Quinn continues to live these values in her career and relationships.

LUIS MOLINA-BARRAZA

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Luis Molina-Barraza of Westminster, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Luis traveled to Morocco to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Luis for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Luis' many accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS AN EMPOWERMENT ZONE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today. I introduce a bill that would designate certain areas of the District of Columbia as empowerment zones. This bill would effectively reauthorize many of the unique federal tax incentives for business investment in D.C. that expired in 2011. D.C.'s downtown, which has been the economic engine of the city, has been particularly hard hit by the increase in remote and hybrid work since the COVID–19 pandemic. making this bill especially important.

In 1993, Congress created the national empowerment zone program to encourage investment in low-income communities and delegated to federal agencies the authority to designate communities as empowerment zones. D.C. was not among those so designated. However. in 1997. working primarily with Republicans in Congress, I created federal tax incentives for investment in D.C. by businesses and individuals. The business incentives were similar to, but more generous than, those available under the national empowerment zone program. I got the D.C. incentives reauthorized regularly until 2011, when Congress refused to extend the D.C. incentives. At the same time, Congress extended the national empowerment zone program, and the program was last extended through 2025. Under my bill, low-income neighborhoods in D.C. would be treated as empowerment zones as long as the national empowerment zone program remains in effect.

Congress has recognized that the benefits of tax incentives for investment in economically distressed communities outweigh the costs, as it has continuously extended the national empowerment zone program. The tax incentives for D.C. were the only tax incentives for a big city that were not extended, even though they were initially created by Republicans, with the help of several Democrats.

The expiration of the tax incentives for D.C. was tragically timed, as the low-income parts of D.C., which needed the incentives most, were ready for revitalization. As we work to revitalize downtown D.C. and Wards 5, 7 and 8, the need for these incentives for D.C. is of paramount importance. The tax incentives for D.C. were effective and their costs were de minimis.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CELEBRATING DR. HANK HINE FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARTS

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Dr. Hank Hine, his remarkable achievements and the well-deserved recognition from Spain's King, Felipe VI of the Order of Isabel la Católica. As the Executive Director of The Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg. Florida, Dr. Hine has not only enriched our community and cultural landscape, but also has forged international connections that highlight the artistic and cultural treasures we hold dear.

Dr. Hine's lifelong commitment to the arts and his exceptional stewardship of The Dalí Museum have left an indelible mark on the cultural life of our community. The Dalí Museum holds the largest collection of Salvador Dalí's artworks outside of Dalí's home country of Spain. Under his visionary leadership, the museum has become a beacon of creativity and inspiration, welcoming visitors from all corners of the globe to experience the masterpieces of Dalí and other renowned artists.

The recent honor bestowed upon Dr. Hine, the Order of Isabel la Católica, is a testament to his dedication and tireless efforts in fostering cultural exchange and promoting the legacy of Salvador Dalí, one of the most celebrated artists of all times. This recognition is one of the highest civilian honors Spain bestows, and it reflects the deep respect and admiration with which he is regarded not only in our local community but also on the international stage. Dr. Hine expressed his gratitude to the entire community in his acceptance address, recognizing all those who welcomed The Dalí to St. Petersburg—the founders, staff, trustees, and volunteers whose embrace of the power of art propelled all the Museum's achievements.

Dr. Hine's work transcends borders, enriching our understanding of art, culture and the human experience. His tireless commitment to fostering collaboration and understanding among different cultures and nations deserves our highest praise and gratitude.

As we congratulate Dr. Hine on this prestigious recognition, we also express our gratitude for his continued contributions to the vibrant cultural tapestry of our community. His passion and leadership at The Dalí Museum have made Tampa Bay a cultural hub and a destination for art enthusiasts worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and applauding Dr. Hank Hine for his outstanding achievements and for bringing the world of art and culture closet to our hearts and our community. Dr. Hine's unwavering commitment to the arts has enhanced the lives of my community and his work will be celebrated by many generations. May his work continue to inspire and enrich us all.

MARIE HANDY

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marie Handy of Lakewood, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Marie traveled to Japan to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Marie for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize Marie's many accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING MICHAEL BUDNEY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize Mike Budney, Manager of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, on receiving a 2023 Presidential Rank Award (PRA).

The PRA is one of the highest awards bestowed upon career senior executives by the President of the United States for making extraordinary and lasting achievements for their respective agencies.

During his service at the Savannah River Site, Mike has overseen completion of the tank waste treatment system with the startup of the Salt Waste Processing Facility, spearheaded the Accelerated Basin De-inventory project, saving taxpayers billions of dollars, and broken ground on the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative, a facility that will bring government, industry, and academia together to develop and share advanced manufacturing technologies.

Leading a workforce of over 12,000 government and contractor personnel to successfully accomplish these critical tasks demonstrates his commitment and service to this nation. This is in addition to his 29 years of service in the U.S. Navy, including commanding officer of the USS *Emory S. Land* and the USS *Pennsylvania.*

I am grateful to Mike for his service in helping to keep America strong and safe. Congratulations on receiving the Presidential Rank Award, an inspiration for what we can achieve as public servants.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5619–S5642

Measures Introduced: Five bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 3349–3353, and S. Res. 476–478. **Page S5639**

Measures Reported:

S. 90, to require the disclosure of a camera or recording capability in certain internet-connected devices, with an amendment. (S. Rept. No. 118–114) **Page S5639**

Measures Passed:

National Move Over Law Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 476, supporting the goals and ideals of a National Move Over Law Day. **Page S5641**

University of Mississippi 175 Years of Service: Senate agreed to S. Res. 477, commending the University of Mississippi for 175 years of service to the State of Mississippi and the United States. **Page S5641**

National Hospice and Palliative Care Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 478, designating November 2023 as ''National Hospice and Palliative Care Month''. **Page S5641**

Rodriguez Nomination: By 44 yeas to 51 nays (Vote No. EX. 318), Senate rejected the motion to close further debate on the nomination of Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor. **Pages S5623–24**

Senator Schumer entered a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the nomination. **Page S5624**

Smith Nomination—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii. **Page S5624**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, November 29, 2023; that the motions to invoke cloture filed during the session of Monday, November 27, 2023 ripen at 11:30 a.m.; that if cloture is invoked on the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, all time be considered expired at 2:30 p.m.; and that if cloture is invoked on the nomination of Jamel Semper, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, all time be considered expired at 5:45 p.m. **Page S5642**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 49 yeas to 46 nays (Vote No. EX. 315), Jeffrey M. Bryan, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota. **Page S5622**

By 49 yeas to 46 nays (Vote No. EX. 317), Margaret M. Garnett, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York. **Page S5623**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 49 yeas to 46 nays (Vote No. EX. 316), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S5623**

Executive Communications: **Pages S5638–39**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S5639**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5637–41**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S5641–42**

Additional Statements: **Pages S5635–38**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S5642**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—318) **Pages S5622–24**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10:01 a.m. and adjourned at 5:46 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, November 29, 2023. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5642.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Martin O'Malley, of Maryland, to be Commissioner of Social Security.

GUN VIOLENCE

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the gun violence epidemic, after receiving testimony from Steven H. Cook, Associate Deputy Attorney General (Retired), Department of Justice, Knoxville, Tennessee; Amy E. Swearer, The Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C.; Megan L. Ranney, Yale School of Public Health, New Haven, Connecticut; and Vaughn Bryant, Metropolitan Peace Initiatives, and Franklin Cosey-Gay, University of Chicago Medicine Urban Health Initiative Violence Recovery Program, both of Chicago, Illinois.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 11 public bills, H.R. 6481–6491 and 5 resolutions; H. Con. Res. 79 and H. Res. 892–895, were introduced. **Pages H5936–37**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5937–38**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.J. Res. 66, disapproving the rule submitted by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B)" (H. Rept. 118–279); and

H. Res. 891, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5283) to prohibit the use of Federal funds to provide housing to specified aliens on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5961) to freeze certain Iranian funds involved in the 2023 hostage deal between the United States and Iran, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of the 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)" (H. Rept. 118–280). **Page H5936**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Miller-Meeks to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5907**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:14 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H5908**

Privileged Resolution—Intent to Offer: Representative Robert Garcia (CA) announced his intent to offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 114) in the matter of George Santos. **Page H5909**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:05 p.m. and reconvened at 4 p.m. **Page H5909**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Providing Opportunities to Show Transparency via Information Technology Act of 2023: H.R. 4668, amended, to amend the Small Business Act to require the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman to publish guidance documents for certain rules; **Pages H5913–14**

Small Business Contracting Transparency Act of 2023: H.R. 4670, amended, to amend the Small Business Act to require reporting on additional information with respect to small business concerns owned and controlled by women, qualified HUBZone small business concerns, and small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans; **Pages H5914–17**

Prohibiting individuals convicted of defrauding the Government from receiving any assistance from the Small Business Administration: H.R. 5427, to prohibit individuals convicted of defrauding the Government from receiving any assistance from the Small Business Administration; **Pages H5917–19**

Successful Entrepreneurship for Reservists and Veterans Act: H.R. 4480, amended, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to report on the veterans interagency task force, to require the Comptroller General of the United States to report on access to credit for small business concerns owned and controlled by covered individuals; **Pages H5919–21**

Calling on Hamas to immediately release hostages taken during October 2023 attack on Israel: H. Res. 793, calling on Hamas to immediately release hostages taken during October 2023 attack on Israel, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 414 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 676; **Pages H5921–23**

Reaffirming the State of Israel's right to exist: H. Res. 888, reaffirming the State of Israel's right to exist, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 412 yeas to 1 nay with one answering "present", Roll No. 677; and **Pages H5923–27, 5929–30**

Expressing support for the diplomatic relations required to encourage the Government of Mexico to fulfill its water deliveries on an annual basis to the United States under the treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding the utilization of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande: H. Res. 683, expressing support for the diplomatic relations required to encourage the Government of Mexico to fulfill its water deliveries on an annual basis to the United States under the treaty between the United States and Mexico regarding the utilization of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande. **Pages H5926–27**

Oath of Office—Second Congressional District of Utah: Representative-elect Celeste Maloy presented herself in the well of the House and was administered the Oath of Office by the Speaker. Earlier, the Clerk of the House transmitted a copy of a letter received from Mr. Ryan Cowley, Director of Elections, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, State of Utah, indicating that, according to the unofficial results for the Special Election held November 21, 2023, the Honorable Celeste Maloy was elected for Representative to Congress for the Second Congressional District of Utah. **Page H5929**

Whole Number of the House: The Speaker announced to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentlewoman from Utah, the whole number of the House is 435. **Page H5929**

Privileged Resolution—Intent to Offer: Representative Guest announced his intent to offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 878) providing for the expulsion of Representative George Santos from the United States House of Representatives. **Pages H5930–31**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measure under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Requiring the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit a quarterly report on fraud relating to certain COVID–19 loans: H.R. 4666, amended, to require the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to submit a quarterly report on fraud relating to certain COVID–19 loans; and **Pages H5909–11**

Returning Erroneous COVID Loans Addressing Illegal and Misappropriated Taxpayer Funds Act: H.R. 4667, amended, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue guidance and rules for lenders and the Small Business Administration on handling amounts of Paycheck Protection Loans returned by borrowers. **Pages H5911–13**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H5907.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5928–30.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 p.m. and adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Committee Meetings

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES FROM FAILURE TO SECURE THE BORDER ACT OF 2023; NO FUNDS FOR IRANIAN TERRORISM ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO SMALL BUSINESS LENDING UNDER THE EQUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITY

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 5283, the "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023"; H.R. 5961, the "No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act"; and 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. The Committee granted, by a record vote of 9–4, a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 5283, the "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023", H.R. 5961, the "No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act", and 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). The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 5283, the "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023", under a structured rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–15 shall be considered as adopted, and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in part A of the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution. Each amendment shall be considered

only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. All points of order against the amendments printed in part A of the report are waived. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 5961, the ''No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act'', under a structured rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or their respective designees. The rule provides that an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–14, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted, and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The resolution waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in part C of the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution. Each amendment shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. All points of order against the amendments printed in part C of the report are waived. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of 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), under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services or their respective designees. Finally, the rule provides one motion to commit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Williams of Texas, and Representatives Waters and Edwards.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2023

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, focusing on stakeholder feedback on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project partnership agreements, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to receive a closed briefing on the US-PRC relationship after APEC, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the security of Federal facilities, 10 a.m., SD–562.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Jacquelyn D. Austin, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Jacqueline Becerra, Melissa Damian, and David Seymour Leibowitz, each to be a United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, Julie Simone Sneed, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida, and Kirk Edward Sherriff, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of California, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Examining the Need for a Fiscal Commission Reviewing H.R. 710, H.R. 5779, and S. 3262'', 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and Workforce, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing entitled ''Bad for Business: DOL's Proposed Overtime Rule'', 10:15 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Materials, hearing entitled ''America Leads the Way: Our History as the Global Leader at Reducing Emissions'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Understanding How AI is Changing Health Care'', 10:30 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Semi-Annual Report of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 6349, to prohibit or require notification with respect to certain activities of United States persons involving countries of concern, and for other purposes; H.R. 533, to amend the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 to modify certain provisions of that Act; H.R. 2766, to support the

human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes; H.R. 5375, to require a strategy for bolstering engagement and cooperation between the United States, Australia, India, and Japan and to seek to establish a Quad Intra-Parliamentary Working Group to facilitate closer cooperation on shared interests and values; H.R. 1103, to require the President to remove the extension of certain privileges, exemptions, and immunities to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices if Hong Kong no longer enjoys a high degree of autonomy from the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; and H.R. 5532, to provide for the imposition of sanctions with respect to North Korea's support for Russia's illegal war in Ukraine, 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The High North: How U.S. Arctic Strategy Impacts Homeland Security'', 10 a.m., 310 Cannon.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing on H.R. 6285, the ''Alaska's Right to Produce Act of 2023'', 10:15 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Federal Workforce, hearing entitled ''Oversight of Federal Agencies' Post-Pandemic Telework Policies: Part II'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation, hearing entitled ''Safeguarding the Federal Software Supply Chain'', 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, continue markup on H.R. 6213, the ''National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act''; and H.R. 6131, the ''Commercial Space Act of 2023'', 1:30 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, hearing entitled ''Getting on the Right Track: Navigating the Future of Intercity Passenger Rail in America'', 11 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, markup on H.R. 1753, the ''Jax Act''; H.R. 3790, the ''Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2023''; H.R. 4016, the ''Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act''; H.R. 4190, the ''Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act''; H.R. 4306, the ''Michael Lecik Military Firefighters Protection Act''; H.R. 5559, ''Protecting Veterans Claim Options Act''; H.R. 5891, ''Veteran Appeals Decision Clarity Act''; H.R. 5870, ''Veteran Appeals Transparency Act of 2023''; H.R. 5890, the ''Review Every Veterans Claim Act of 2023''; and H.R. 5938, the ''Veterans Exam Expansion Act of 2023'', 10:30 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, hearing entitled ''Examining the VA Appeals Process: Ensuring High Quality Decision-Making for Veterans' Claims on Appeal'', 11 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Work and Welfare; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint hearing entitled ''Strengthening the Child Support Enforcement Program for States and Tribes'', 2 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meeting

Conference: meeting of conferees on H.R. 2670, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, November 29

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon at 11:30 a.m.

If cloture is invoked on the nomination of Micah W.J. Smith, Senate will vote on confirmation thereon at 2:30 p.m. Following disposition of the nomination, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Jamel Semper, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

If cloture is invoked on the nomination of Jamel Semper, Senate will vote on confirmation thereon at 5:45 p.m. Following disposition of the nomination, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Shanlyn A.S. Park, of Hawaii, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, November 29

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Begin consideration of H.R. 5283—Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023 (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Beyer, Donald S., Va., E1130
Castor, Kathy, Fla., E1133
DelBene, Suzan K., Wash., E1132
Dingell, Debbie, Mich., E1125, E1131
Emmer, Tom, Minn., E1127
Frankel, Lois, Fla., E1126
Garamendi, John, Calif., E1130
Green, Mark E., Tenn., E1128
Higgins, Brian, N.Y., E1125, E1126, E1127, E1128, E1129, E1130, E1132, E1132
Hoyer, Steny H., Md., E1129
Kiggans, Jenniver A., Va., E1127
LaMalfa, Doug, Calif., E1132
Luttrell, Morgan, Tex., E1129
Murphy, Gregory F., N.C., E1126
Norton, Eleanor Holmes, The District of Columbia, E1133
Pettersen, Brittany, Colo., E1125, E1126, E1127, E1128, E1129, E1130, E1130, E1132, E1133, E1134
Reschenthaler, Guy, Pa., E1128
Schiff, Adam B., Calif., E1127
Smith, Adam, Wash., E1125, E1131
Torres, Ritchie, N.Y., E1131
Wilson, Joe, S.C., E1134

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