

an impressive season of 28 wins and 4 losses. With each victory during the season, the team remained humble and grounded. In every game, these young men and the coaching staff pursued excellence and were driven by hard work, determination, and teamwork.

Throughout the season, Coach Willie Moore encouraged the team by quoting Whitney Young, Jr.:

It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared.

The Hornets finished the 2013–2014 season undefeated in their region and lost only four games overall. To earn their place in the championship title game, Dallas County beat other high school teams during the tournament, including Madison County, Dora, Bibb County, and Beauregard.

□ 1045

On March 1, 2014, the Dallas County Hornets came to the 4A State Championship prepared for the opportunity they had earned. The championship game against J.O. Johnson High School from Huntsville, Alabama, was a nail-biter from start to finish. The Hornets never gave up, even when they were behind. At halftime, the Hornets were down by 11 points, but in the third quarter, the Hornets made a thrilling comeback.

Senior William Lee made a 3-pointer at the regulation buzzer to force the game into overtime. The 6'9" standout and UAB signee William Lee continued to show dominance during the overtime by making three crucial free throws with 5.4 seconds to play. The Hornets won a 51–48 victory, taking the Class 4A High School Boys State Championship. William Lee scored 22 points, made 13 rebounds and seven blocks.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know that this decisive victory is the result of a tremendous effort on the part of all the players and the coaching staff at Dallas County High School. Spurred on by an enthusiastic student body and encouraging faculty and families, this team proved that outstanding achievements are possible even in rural Black Belt Alabama. I couldn't be prouder of this amazing accomplishment.

The State high school basketball championship victory is truly a reflection of the hard work and steadfast determination of the entire team and coaching staff. Members of the team include Jayden Buford, Scott Cole, Raheem Phillips, Kendell Motley, Jerrod Moorer, Henry Baker, Timothy Baker, Travon Muse, Javaris Muse, B.J. Leshore, William Lee, Ladarius Furlow, and Lowell Furlow.

I would like to also acknowledge and pay tribute to the head coach, Willie Moore, and assistant coaches, Cliff Nix, Charles Thompson, Kenny Allen, Justin Moore, and Hugh Martin for their outstanding work.

On behalf of the Seventh Congressional District, the State of Alabama,

and this Nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the accomplishments of the Dallas County High School basketball team for their victory in Alabama's Class 4A State Basketball Championship. We honor and pay tribute to this team, the coaches and the school for this distinguished honor, and we appreciate their contributions to the school spirit and the community pride that we have in them.

Congratulations, and go Hornets.

#### RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS AROUND THE WORLD

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House on Ash Wednesday to talk about a problem that should be heavy on the hearts of everyone in this body and around the Nation, and that is the persecution of Christians around the world.

Millions of Christians will start their Lenten period of fasting and penitence today, and over the next several weeks will act out their faith leading up to Holy Week, when we remember the death and crucifixion of Jesus, and then the feast of Easter, his resurrection.

Sadly, in too many parts of the world, Christians will not be allowed to openly profess their faith and act out the things that for centuries Christians have been able to do.

This chart on my left, which was prepared by the Pew Research Center, shows that around the world there is religious persecution, but it is particularly bad in Asia and, sadly, in the Middle East, the very part of the world where Jesus came from.

This next chart from the same source shows that the problem is getting worse, not better. Sadly, we are seeing that the perpetrators are now more frequently governments than private individuals in these countries. The bottom part of this chart tells us the saddest news of all: the most likely people in the world to be persecuted for their religious beliefs are Christians. This is a little-known fact to many people. For some reason, the news media has not been willing to cover it as well as they should have been, but perhaps during this season of Lent in preparation for Easter, it is a time when all of us can understand that this is a real problem, a humanitarian problem, a problem for the rights and freedoms of people all over the world.

Now, there is something we can do about it, but we need to understand the problem more specifically to do so.

This last chart perhaps is the most troubling of all. In 1914, Christians made up about 20 percent of the entire population of the Middle East. By 2013, they made up only 4 percent. In Iraq since 2003, almost a million Christians have fled that country. Since the troubles began in Syria in 2011, half a mil-

lion Christians have fled. In Egypt since the troubles there in 2011, 100,000 Coptic Christians have left that country.

Now, if you look at what is happening in Iraq and Egypt, that should be of particular concern to us because we will send this year to each of those two countries in aid over \$1 billion. That is taxpayer money that has been brought to our government and that we send to those countries from the people of the United States of America. I believe we should exercise a different foreign policy. Not only should we state that we are going to stand up for the protection of religious minorities around the world that are persecuted, but in countries like Iraq and Egypt where we send hundreds of millions of dollars of aid, we should demand it, and we should demand it not just because we are a country in which the majority of people are Christians but because it is the right thing to do, and we have historically done that as a Nation.

As we go toward Holy Week and people around the world remember that Jesus Christ himself was persecuted to death, and for centuries thereafter throughout the Roman Empire, throughout what we today call the Middle East, Christians were persecuted, we need to make sure that the clock is not going to be rolled back, as it clearly is today. The United States of America, our President, our Secretary of State, this body, the entire Congress, and the American people should do what we have traditionally done, and that is to stand up for the rights of people around the world. In this particular context, that means standing up for Christians who are being persecuted and killed merely because of their beliefs.

#### RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 52 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

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

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

As the world observes the tensions mounting within Ukraine and Venezuela, may we all note well the crippling effects of ideological divides

when a shared sense of national unity might bring greater hope and possible solution to serious political problems.

Send, O God, Your healing grace upon those torn nations and upon the Members of this assembly who struggle to see the shared hope for a better future in those with whom they disagree.

All this day and through the week, may our Representatives do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

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

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

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance?

Mr. FITZPATRICK led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

#### AMERICA'S MILITARY STRENGTH

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President unveiled his budget and used the military as a punching bag to push his Big Government programs.

According to a recent Charleston Post and Courier editorial:

Congress should proceed with extreme caution before going along with the latest recommendations for "savings" through deep defense cuts. If America rapidly retreats from world power status, our enemies will jump into the void. We can't unilaterally end the Islamic radical terrorists' war on us, and we shouldn't ignore history lessons about what happens when the United States tries to isolate itself from the menaces that threaten the international community.

At a time when threats are increasing and countries on nearly every continent are in turmoil, it is naive for the President to downgrade our military strength. Maintaining our national defense is the primary function of the national government.

I find it dangerous that the President has suggested this proposal which places American families at risk of further attacks. We should follow the advice of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Our Nation is still at war. Peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

#### REMEMBERING DR. DON WILL

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true champion for education, Donald Will, who passed away this past February. Dr. Donald Will was a fervent advocate of peace and influenced Chapman University's role in promoting peace and the study of peacemaking.

A member of the Chapman faculty since 1987, Don was described as a pillar of the Chapman community for over 25 years. He came to Chapman University when it needed his expertise most, and the world needed his peace expertise, and he has had such a magnificent effect that lasts until now.

During his time with Chapman, Dr. Will put all of his heart and time from his academic and personal life into carrying out the pursuit of peace. And don't we need it today in our world?

His commitment to his students and to the value of peaceful relations shone brightly through his teachings. He leaves a lasting legacy of humility, humanity, and dedication as he strengthened the link between school and home, both locally, nationally, and in an international way.

I am honored to have known and to have worked with Dr. Donald Will, and I ask my colleagues to honor him today.

#### ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY STRATEGY

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker and my colleagues, I know the whole House is paying close attention to the crisis in Ukraine. What is going on there is more than a cause for concern. It is a cause for action. America has a responsibility to stand up for freedom around the globe, and the House will work with the administration to support the Ukrainian people and confront Russian aggression.

In fact, the House has already taken serious steps in this regard. For years, we have been pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy. It is part of our focus on the floor this week, in fact. Because developing our own resources doesn't just bring jobs home, it strengthens America abroad.

Last month, the Energy and Commerce Committee released a report that says:

By becoming a natural gas exporter, the U.S. can supplant the influence of other exporters, like Russia and Iran, while strengthening ties with our allies and trading partners around the world.

The key word in that statement is "can." We can supplant Russia's influence, but we won't, so long as we have to contend with the Energy Department's achingly slow approval process.

As we speak, the administration is sitting on 24 applications for natural gas exports. It has approved just six in the last 3 years. Now, this amounts to a de facto ban that only emboldens Vladimir Putin, allowing him to sell large quantities of natural gas to our allies.

The American people have seen the threat that Mr. Putin puts forward. They know something must be done. The President should do the right thing here and end this de facto ban, so that we can strengthen both our economy and our security here and abroad.

#### THE BUFFALO NIAGARA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, in a recent nationwide realignment, the Transportation Security Administration made the decision to consolidate all administrative functions for its upstate region at the Albany Airport.

I believe this decision was misguided and illogical. In all of the other proposed consolidations around the country, smaller airports are being made subordinate to larger airports; but in this case, inexplicably, the TSA proposes to make the Buffalo/Niagara Falls International Airport subordinate to Albany, despite the fact that Buffalo's airport has twice the passenger volume as Albany.

Furthermore, nearly 40 percent of passengers flying out of Buffalo are Canadians and other foreign nationals, which would seem to necessitate a more complex TSA operation.

Mr. Speaker, TSA's rollout of this proposed change has been full of inconsistencies and contradictions, and that is why I have asked TSA to reconsider this flawed decision and consolidate operations where it makes sense, in Buffalo.

#### TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS COMPLEX RESEARCH

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, as a member of the Rare Disease Congressional Caucus, I rise today in support of continued funding for tuberous sclerosis complex research in the fiscal year 2015 Department of Defense Appropriations Act.

TSC is a genetic condition that afflicts an estimated 50,000 Americans,