

them. As these fallen airmen were escorted from the base, a sea of American flags rose up to flank their caskets. As their families prepared to say their final good-byes, an unquestionable, unwavering sense of patriotism swelled, carried on the backs of the Patriot Guard Riders' bikes.

They have especially made our Nation's heroes their priority when others have neglected to show their appreciation. Time after time, when a veteran of World War II, Korea, Vietnam has been buried without family or friends, you can count on the Patriot Guard Riders to have been there. We need more Pete Jepsens in our world, who is the senior ride captain for all of Suffolk County. There's Mary-Ann, LW, Wayne, John, Eugene, Susan, Nancy, Marc, Dennis, Richard, Warren, Karen, and so many others who would drop everything at a moment's notice to stand for those who stood for us.

The Patriot Guard Riders are made up of hundreds of thousands of everyday people all across America. With the inspiration that consumes us whenever we see them in action, we should all aspire to the ideals and dedication each and every one of them embody. To our Patriot Guard Riders, thank you for your service to our great country.

CONGRATULATING COACH JERREMIAS JOHNSON AND AS- SISTANT COACH BRETT BARTA ON THEIR COACH OF THE YEAR AWARDS

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, many years ago, an outstanding coach from my home State of Minnesota once said, "I learned early on that you do not put greatness into people but somehow try to pull it out." That coach was Herb Brooks, who led Team USA to victory at the 1980 Olympics. Minnesota is home to many outstanding coaches who carry on the legacy of Coach Brooks every day.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two of my district's incredible coaches for receiving awards from the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association. St. Michael-Albertville High School's Jeremiah Johnson achieved the AA John Mariucci coach of the year award, and Andover High School's Brett Barta received the assistant head coach of the year award.

In Minnesota, we treat the sport of hockey as a lifestyle, and our youth coaches spend a lot of time with our young people. I am proud that coaches like Coach Johnson and Coach Barta are carrying on the legacy of Minnesota legends like John Mariucci and Herb Brooks and pulling the greatness out of our young athletes every day.

Thank you, Jeremiah and Brett, for passing on lessons in perseverance, integrity, and the great game of hockey to the next generation.

CELEBRATING THE ST. MICHAEL-ALBERTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the St. Michael-Albertville High School wrestling team for winning their first-ever undisputed Class 3A State title. The young men on this team came close to winning in 2013. Due to a tie, however, they had to share the title with another team. But not this year. This year, the St. Michael-Albertville High School wrestling team finished what they started.

Congratulations to the wrestlers of St. Michael-Albertville High School for your first State championship. We expect many more.

RECOGNIZING TAMMY OVESON FOR BEING NAMED NATIONAL CHILDCARE PROVIDER OF THE MONTH

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tammy Oveson of Waite Park, Minnesota. Tammy is an outstanding childcare provider in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District. She operates Learn 'n Play Preschool and was recently named National Childcare Provider of the Month for her dedication to early childhood development and learning techniques.

Mr. Speaker, right now in Minnesota, at this moment, Tammy and her assistant, Karla, are working with young children who will one day grow up to be great citizens and, hopefully, leaders of this great Nation. Tammy and Karla's work keeps Minnesota and our Nation moving forward. I am grateful for them and all of our childcare providers, teachers, counselors, and educators who are fostering future generations of Americans across the country.

I am honored to recognize Tammy today and thank and congratulate her on the incredible work she does for young Minnesotans.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VIETNAM VETERAN LEO K. THORSNESS

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Vietnam veterans, to remember the heroes who served our great Nation during the most expansive war in American history. To those who have passed and those still living, we offer our humble and eternal thank you. While you may not have always received a warm welcome or the gratitude you deserve, we honor your sacrifice to this Nation, now and forever.

The great State of Minnesota is home to many of these incredible heroes, and today I am proud to honor the life and legacy of Leo K. Thorsness, who was recently interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Leo was Minnesota's last living recipient of the Medal of Honor. He deserved that great honor and distinction for the incredible courage he displayed in the Vietnam war.

During his time in Vietnam, Leo was captured and imprisoned for 6 years, spending one full year in solitary confinement. In honor of brave men like Leo, I rise today to say thank you. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your willingness to put your life on the line and fight to preserve America's values.

RECOGNIZING ANOKA COUNTY SPECIAL DEPUTY VERN WALDNER

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vern Waldner of Anoka County, Minnesota. After serving for 26 years as special deputy with the Anoka County Sheriff's Office reserve program, Vern is retiring.

Local communities are made better by people like Vern who are willing to give their time and service to help others. Simply put, he made Anoka a safer place to live.

For nearly three decades, Vern ensured the safety of families during each annual Anoka Halloween Parade, an event so large and so widely attended, it has earned Anoka the title "Halloween Capital of the World." Vern was at that parade every year, dedicated to protecting his neighbors and friends.

As a community, we are grateful for Vern and congratulate him on being the second longest serving reserve deputy in Anoka County history. Thank you, Vern. We wish you a long and happy retirement.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, here we are, 4 legislative days after passing a \$1.3 trillion omnibus bill that is going to blow the deficit through the roof. And what are we going to do today? Oh, don't worry. We are going to fix it all. We are going to vote for the balanced budget amendment. That is right. This is going to tie our hands. This balanced budget amendment will cure everything that ails Congress. It is going to balance the budget. It is going to make us balance the budget.

Mr. Speaker, there is a dictionary over here in the House of Representatives, 30 feet from me. I suggest we go in there and rewrite the definition of "audacity," because it is that quality of Congress that leads them to believe that 4 legislative days after they blow the budget they can pass a balanced budget amendment and think that will convince America that they are serious about balancing the budget. That is the definition of audacity.

Look, this is an unserious vote. We know this balanced budget amendment is going nowhere in the Senate. But this is a very serious topic. This is the Constitution we are talking about amending. This is the document we swore an oath to uphold, support, defend. Our Founding Fathers died for it.

What is wrong with this balanced budget amendment? Well, first of all, let me tell you, it has got a loophole you could drive a truck through. Section 1, the very first part of this balanced budget amendment, says, if three-fifths of the whole number of each House of Congress pass a budget that is unbalanced, that is fine, but you have got to get three-fifths vote. Okay. Higher threshold. That will cause us to balance the budget. Three-fifths is hard to get, isn't it?

How many? What is three-fifths? Sixty percent. How many Members of Congress voted for that omnibus bill 4 legislative days ago? 60.5 percent in the House. How many in the Senate? More than that.

□ 1100

This balanced budget amendment wouldn't have stopped the omnibus bill. There is something worse in this balanced budget amendment. Any year that we are at war, it does not apply. Let's think about that.

The first day of Congress, we elect the Speaker. We are going to elect a new one this time. We elect the Speaker. We adopt the rules. The third order of business will be to declare war so we don't have to follow the balanced budget amendment. That is a loophole right there, but it is a dangerous one.

Some people say: Well, at least we will start declaring wars. We haven't declared a war since World War II. Maybe it will get Congress to do its job, its constitutional duty.

Well, I don't think so. We have been at war in Afghanistan for 17 years, and this article in the balanced budget amendment says: Well, you don't have to be at war as long as there is a conflict with our national security at stake. Oh, you can forget the balanced budget amendment.

What does that mean? For the last 17 years, this balanced budget amendment wouldn't apply to the war in Afghanistan or Iraq, where we have racked up trillions of dollars of debt. The balanced budget amendment would do nothing to stop that.

Look, I am not against the concept of an amendment to the Constitution that limits the growth of government. This government is so much bigger than it was when our Founders started this country, and for many years thereafter, but that is not what this balanced budget amendment does. It is not carefully crafted.

The thought that our Founders put into the Constitution has not been put into this document. It has not even been debated in a committee. Yet, today, we are going to vote on it. How ridiculous is that?

So here is what I think we need to do. Instead of having a balanced budget amendment that encourages you to go to war, that is toothless, that encourages you to raise taxes instead of cut spending, we need a balanced budget amendment that somehow limits the growth of government. Frankly, what we need are people here that are serious about balancing the budget, not another document, not an unserious proposal.

So I would just say this. I know this is a popular concept to have a balanced budget amendment. I am not going to urge a "yes" vote or a "no" vote or a "present" vote. I am going to vote "no" because it is an unserious approach to a serious topic, and it should be called "the CYA," not "the BBA," but I just want my colleagues to think deeply and long about this amendment.

Please read it. Please read it before you vote on it. It is right here. It is only three pages. Please read it. Think deeply before you cast your vote to alter this sacred document.

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 11 o'clock and 2 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: Gracious and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

You bring forth blessings from just deeds. Listen to our prayers for the Members of this people's House. Give them the wisdom to meditate upon Your revelation, Your law. Help them find confidence in Your love, especially in times of difficulty.

May their efforts reflect the mindset and gracious manner revealed in Your loving commands, and may their work contain the depth of justice and the expansive embrace of human goodness that You reveal to Your people.

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.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. 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. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. ROBY 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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING THOSE KILLED OR WOUNDED IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER. The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in honor of those who have been killed or wounded in service to our country and all those who serve and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

DAIRY FARMERS ARE FACING A CRISIS

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the urgent crisis facing dairy farmers across my district.

The low price of milk, labor shortages, and dwindling access to new markets are just some of the many challenges faced by the hardworking family farms in my district. Additionally, the Margin Protection Program has failed North Country dairy farmers by providing little to no return on our farmers' buy-in.

Recently, I was pleased to support the Bipartisan Budget Act, which contained many urgent reforms to this program, such as raising catastrophic coverage for the first tier of covered production for all farmers, reducing premium rates to help farmers buy coverage, and waiving costly administrative fees for underserved farms.

Agriculture is truly the backbone of our North Country economy, and generations of farmers have helped make dairy production a way of life for many families that I represent.

In Congress, I will keep fighting every day to strengthen our family farms for future generations.

CONGRESS DOES NOT NEED A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO DO ITS JOB HONORABLY

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans recently voted to add \$2.5 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. That is more debt in the shortest period of time by any one political party, the