

□ 1215

GOP = GOVERNMENT OF PUTIN

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, Helsinki will be remembered as the place where GOP became shorthand for "Government of Putin."

Just as Trump surrenders to Vladimir Putin, these Helsinki congressional Republicans surrender to Trump.

Trump's own intelligence chief, former Senator, lifelong Republican Dan Coats, says "the warning lights are blinking red again" on Russian attacks. Yet Helsinki Republicans refuse to act, providing zero funding to the States to protect election integrity today. Their refusal to appropriate a dime for state defense against Russian interference really represents nothing less than unilateral disarmament.

Enough excuses. Enough weakness. Instead of a President with no scruples and a congressional Republican majority with no spine, we need strong leadership, unafraid to protect our borders and unafraid to protect American families from the ongoing Russian aggression against our democracy.

ACKNOWLEDGING LAMAR SMITH FOR HIS WORK ON THE DYSLEXIA CAUCUS

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the work of Chairman LAMAR SMITH of the Congressional Dyslexia Caucus. His work on this important issue has brought much-needed attention in Congress to a learning disability affecting as many as one in five Americans.

He championed the READ Act, which mandated that the National Institutes of Health direct specific funds towards dyslexia research. This law is deepening our understanding of dyslexia and providing additional tools for us to help those with this learning disability.

Last week, I began serving as co-chair of the Dyslexia Caucus, alongside Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY. It is my hope that we can work together to continue the impressive work of Chairman SMITH and effect positive change for those living with dyslexia.

Individuals can overcome dyslexia and achieve greatness in their education and careers when they have the right tools and instruction. We will work hard in Congress to give them what is necessary to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank Chairman SMITH for his leadership and lifetime of dedication.

NO MORE PRESIDENTIAL WARS

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, Article I, section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the exclusive authority to declare war, but the last time Congress officially declared war was December 8, 1941, the day the U.S. entered World War II. Ever since, Congress has failed to uphold their constitutional responsibility and has instead ceded power to the President.

So we remain in a state of perpetual war, led by Presidents in both parties, at great cost to the American people, with no declaration of war by Congress and no input from the American people.

The direct and indirect costs of these Presidential wars are astounding. They take a toll on our troops, our veterans, and on the American people.

Since 9/11 alone, we have spent trillions of dollars on regime-change wars and nation building, while people in our community suffer and struggle because of a lack of resources here at home—not to mention the cost borne by our troops, those who pay the ultimate price as well as those who come home with wounds that are both visible and invisible.

The American people deserve accountability. Mr. WALTER JONES and I have introduced bipartisan H. Res. 922 to make sure that Congress fulfills its constitutional role, ends Presidential wars, and has robust debate before making a decision to send our troops into battle.

SYRIAN LAW 10

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the pressing issue that has the potential to exponentially worsen the humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country of Syria.

I know I don't need to remind this body or the American people of the dire circumstance that the Syrian people face as their country continues to be ripped apart by a known war criminal, their President, Bashar al-Assad.

While millions of Syrians have fled the country, seeking asylum and safety in neighboring countries, the majority of these refugees' only hope is to one day return back to their home. However, the Syrian regime recently passed a law that will make that nearly impossible.

Law 10, passed in April of this year, forces all Syrians, regardless of where they are currently residing, to register and provide proof of ownership of their private properties in Syria within 30 days, or else they will be forced to hand their properties over to the state of Syria. This amounts to a massive land grab by the corrupt Syrian regime that would essentially push out the nearly 13 million displaced Syrians and ensure that they never have a chance to return home.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this body will understand this and we will speak loudly.

I urge my colleagues and this administration to take a serious and critical look at this law that would have far-reaching implications for the United States and our allies who have offered these refugees temporary asylum in our nations and the disastrous consequences for the Syrian people for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NEYSA TONKS

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

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Neysa Tonks. Neysa attended the Route 91 festival in Las Vegas on October 1.

Neysa was a single mother to her three kids: Kaden, Braxton, and Greysen. She worked at Technologist in Las Vegas and was known as being a fireball from the minute she woke up to the minute she went to bed.

Neysa was spontaneous, adventurous, and full of life. She loved waterskiing, ziplining, hiking, jumping off waterfalls, and traveling. She had even competed in a Tough Mudder with very little training.

Despite her many adventures, she would always save time in the winter to carry out her tradition of packing hundreds of backpacks with supplies and delivering them to the less fortunate with her sons.

Neysa was compassionate and had plans to retire early so she could spend more time with her boys.

Neysa enjoyed going to concerts, laughing, and trying new things. Neysa is remembered as always being the life of the party.

I would like to extend my condolences to Neysa Tonks' family and friends. Please know that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieves with you.

NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to speak about our national parks and our parks and recreational opportunities.

I grew up in California's San Joaquin Valley, where we are blessed with some of the Nation's most beautiful lands. Like many, I spent my youth exploring local Fresno recreational areas and the California State parks.

My family and I, many times, visited Kings Canyon National Park and one of the crown jewels of all national parks, Yosemite Valley, seen in this striking photograph.

Wallace Stegner, famous writer, historian, and environmentalist, once said: "Our national parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst."

July is Parks and Recreation Month, and I urge everyone across this great country to visit our parks and recreational areas. It is great for our families and for all of us. Share in something that reflects America at our best.

Let us also remember that wildfires are a regular threat to our parks during this season. Fires are, sadly, burning as we speak today near Yosemite National Park and throughout the West.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those brave men and women fighting those fires, and their families, while protecting some of America's most precious resources.

RUSSIAN ENERGY INTERESTS IN EUROPE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, control of energy equals national security. I rise to warn how Russia, through hybrid warfare, seeks to destabilize and divide our closest European allies through control of their energy supply.

As Americans well know, whoever controls the energy spigot controls the function of a nation. Russia uses its growing dominance of energy in Europe as its primary pressure point to destabilize the West and our allies. That is why I was floored that President Trump inserted himself so haphazardly into Europe's energy debate.

Nord Stream II poses new, troubling dependency threats by Russia on Europe's energy security and boosts undemocratic Russia's claw hold on the European continent. Russia is weaponizing energy in countries across Europe, including Germany and Ukraine, creating a dangerous new dependency by those recipient nations.

The fight for Ukraine's liberty depends on its energy independence in the future, and the free world must help Europe and Ukraine reduce their economic reliance on Russian gas.

Risking alienation of nations that share freedom's values is counterproductive and aids and abets our enemies.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the RECORD President Trump's and President Putin's comments on this topic.

SPENDING BILL WILL DAMAGE OUR ENVIRONMENT

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, later today the House will vote on a spending bill for the Department of the Interior. This bill is a travesty that will do enormous damage to our environment. It cuts critical funding that keeps our air clean and our water safe.

This bill eliminates \$100 million in funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, \$65 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund,

and \$150 million from both the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. It will make it more difficult to protect some bodies of water from pollution and endangered species from extinction.

Perhaps most troubling of all, it actually eliminates protections that help keep lead out of our water.

A vote for this bill is a vote to make our air more dangerous to breathe and our water less safe to drink. It is a reckless bill that should be opposed by all Members of this body.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and to oppose this and to protect the quality of our air, our water, and our environment. Our constituents are depending upon us.

CONGRESS TO ELIMINATE FUNDING FOR THE ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I, along with so many Americans, looked on with great shock as we saw the President capitulate to Vladimir Putin. It was truly a stunning and worrisome moment for me.

In fact, in that European trip, the President insulted our allies and then openly embraced a man who attacked our democracy, invaded and annexed other countries, and authorized lethal attacks on his political enemies and other countries.

Yet the President still embraced him.

It is a moment of alarm for the whole Nation, but it is important to note that there is something we can do about it, as the President has also urged the U.S. Congress to eliminate funding for the Election Assistance Commission.

This is very serious because we know that Russia assisted in the hacking and attack of over 21 States' election systems. The President may not be concerned, but Congress ought to be.

Unfortunately, today we expect to have a vote in which we are voting on a bill that eliminates the funding of the Election Assistance Commission. This should be rejected, as we should reject the President's failure to stand up for our values.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S LATEST TWEETS

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, well, the latest tweets from the President:

"So many people at the higher ends of intelligence loved my press conference performance in Helsinki."

Obviously, he is referring to Putin, because there are not many people in the United States who saw that press conference as a success. In fact, it was an unmitigated disaster.

Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats said, "The red lights are blinking." Our election process, our critical infrastructure, is being attacked by Russia, and what is the House of Representatives doing today? Eliminating funding to protect our election process.

Obviously, those who vote for this reduction in funding are not at the higher levels of intelligence.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEND AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the President put the "hel" and the "sink" back in "Helsinki" because our Republic is sinking under the weight of his radical actions in capitulating to Vladimir Putin in the eyes of the world.

Now, some of my colleagues have called this appeasement. I want to correct that. Appeasement is a misguided policy where you give concessions in order to try to make peace and stability with a dangerous, aggressive foreign power.

This was not appeasement. This was simple surrender. The President wasn't trying to make peace with a hostile power. He was trying to capitulate and have us go over to the other side of the hostile power.

The President has sided with authoritarianism, with every kleptocrat, dictator, despot, and tyrant on the planet Earth today.

We the people of the United States and we in Congress have a responsibility now to defend American constitutional democracy. We must invest in our elections and fortify our elections so we can begin to restore the principles we have lost under the terrible leadership of Donald Trump.

□ 1230

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2018.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 18, 2018, at 11:28 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without an amendment H.R. 6042.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.