

his wife, Erin, and his children, Alex and Maggie.

Rest in peace, my friend.

HONORING THE HONORABLE LOU FREY, JR.

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

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Congressman Lou Frey, who represented the Orlando area in this Chamber for a decade, from 1969 to 1979.

He passed away recently but leaves behind an enduring legacy. Congressman Frey was many things, but above all, he was a loving husband, a wonderful father and grandfather, and an extraordinary public servant who cared deeply about central Florida and about this country.

He was a man with strongly held views, but also one willing to make principled compromises in the interest of bipartisan progress. His accomplishments before, during, and after his tenure in Congress are too long to list, but their impact can be summarized like this: Because of him, Orlando is a better city; Florida is a better State; and America is a better Nation.

As the chair of Future Forum, a group dedicated to empowering young people, I regard Lou Frey as a role model. One of his most passionate causes was helping younger Americans learn about this country, about how our government works, and about how choosing a career in public service can bring you a sense of inner joy and enable you to improve the lives of others.

Lou, working with former Senator Bob Graham, was instrumental in getting Florida to pass legislation requiring all students in the State to complete civics education. When I saw how young Floridians responded in the wake of the Pulse and Parkland shootings, turning those tragedies into a resolute call for government action, I thought of and silently thanked Lou Frey.

Rest in peace, Congressman.

PROTECT AMERICA FROM FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. I rise in strong support of the SHIELD Act. I helped introduce this legislation, and the House will consider it on the floor later today.

This bill will protect our country from foreign interference in our elections. Russia's assault on our democracy in 2016 exposed gaps in our Nation's defenses.

It used to be that the primary threat from adversary nations was their potential use of traditional weapons of war. But our society is rapidly changing and so is the nature of conflict.

Today, our enemies are far more likely to use computer malware than cruise missiles to do us harm, and they don't think twice about exploiting loopholes in our laws in order to influence our elections.

That is why passing the SHIELD Act is so critical to maintaining the foundation of our democracy, our system of free and fair elections.

We know Russia and possibly other foreign powers will likely use similar tactics in 2020. And why wouldn't they? Russia has suffered almost no consequences for their actions in 2016.

While Russia assisted a Republican on that occasion, it could aid a Democrat in the future. That is because Moscow's loyalty is to itself, not to any U.S. political party. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle should never forget that fact.

To defend our democracy, we need to act now to protect our elections. We need to pass the SHIELD Act.

I commend Chairwoman LOFGREN for her leadership in drafting this critical piece of legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

WORDS OF PRESIDENT ZELENSKY HAVE BEEN IGNORED

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

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, an overlooked factor of these relentless investigations and this impeachment inquiry is the way in which the words of Ukrainian President Zelensky have been largely ignored.

Zelensky said, without condition, that he felt no pressure from President Trump related to corruption investigations in Ukraine. President Zelensky's words have been largely ignored because they do not fit the narrative pushed by the Democratic leadership of this House.

Just think, had President Zelensky wanted to severely damage our President, he could have lied and stated he did feel pressure. Doesn't that scenario give you chills? Had a foreign leader simply altered and fabricated one publicly stated phrase, the entire Democratic Caucus of this House would be calling for our President's head, repeating it over and over.

That is the reality of this sickening and dangerous presumption of guilt that some Members of this body are choosing to push.

Our President deserves nothing less than the due process and presumption of innocence afforded to all Americans by our Constitution. Anything less is an affront to the Republic our Founders created and to all the electorate, Democratic and Republican.

RECOGNIZING ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND TURKISH INVASION

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a concerned American, concerned because our country stands at a crossroads in foreign policy and history, I might add.

In recent days, we have seen this administration cynically abandon our Kurdish allies in northeast Syria and open the door to a Turkish invasion. These decisions were made without consulting our allies, our distinguished diplomats, and regional experts like Ambassador Jeffrey.

Much damage has been done. Yesterday, President Putin and President Erdogan signed an agreement, I believe, that harms American interests in that part of the world.

Hundreds of people have been killed. Tens of thousands have been displaced. Dangerous ISIS prisoners, who have been killing and wounding Americans, are now on the loose, threatening increased international terrorist actions in Europe and the United States. This is a real threat.

Turkey's actions have shown it to be a dangerous actor on the international stage, but it is not the first time. We must immediately impose sanctions to show our commitment to a stable international order and the rule of law, and Turkey must understand that.

Clearly, the international reputation of the United States has, I think, been deeply damaged.

As chairman of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, I know. Our European partners ask me all the time: Are we together? Do we share the same values of the rule of law, of democratic freedoms?

The United States should never, ever end up standing alone. The past few days also reminds us of another injustice that must be rectified.

In 1915, the Ottoman Empire embarked upon systematic deportation of 1.5 million Armenians. These innocent men, women, and children became the first genocide in the 20th century. Yet, as I stand here this morning, the brutal atrocity has still not received the official recognition by our government that it deserves.

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Turkey outrageously continues to ignore the voices of the survivors and the descendants around the world. Many of these survivors settled in my district in the San Joaquin Valley where they have lived and where they have raised their children in the blessings of liberty, and they made it in the American way.

But this is not justice. The road to justice begins with full recognition of the Armenian people's suffering. Both Turkey and the United States, immediately, should recognize that the Armenian genocide occurred, as the European Union has done.

I am proud to support H. Res. 296 which, over the objections of Ankara, would establish permanent U.S. recognition and ongoing American remembrance of the Armenian genocide. That is the right thing to do.

I call upon my colleagues who have yet to publicly endorse this bipartisan resolution to join me, with over 110 co-sponsors, in calling for a long-overdue

passage by the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the horrors of the Armenian genocide can never ever be undone. Words alone cannot comfort those who suffered nor dry the tears of another mother or grandmother who has lost her children or grandchildren. By acknowledging the suffering of the victims through the official recognition of the Armenian genocide, we can at least ensure that future generations will never ever forget this atrocity to mankind.

ELECTION INTERFERENCE

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the growing serious threat to our democracy and the interference in elections of foreign adversaries. Yes, these things are all related.

With the 2020 elections fast approaching, now is the time to take action by supporting the SHIELD Act. The SHIELD Act puts four commonsense bipartisan reforms to improve our defenses against anyone meddling in our elections. No one should do that, and every American should take issue. It closes loopholes, strengthens reporting requirements, restricts exchange of information between campaigns, and limits any involvement with foreign agents.

As public officials, we raise our hand to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. We must rise to this occasion to do just that. That is what we should do as Members of the House of Representatives. Our constituents expect it from us to ensure that every vote is counted and that no one—no foreign source—can meddle in American elections, ever, as took place in 2016.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN and others who have worked very hard on this important legislation to pass the SHIELD Act this week. It is the right thing to do.

TELEMEDICINE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the importance of telemedicine.

Recently, I had the pleasure of participating in a roundtable discussion at Saint Francis University in Cambria County, Pennsylvania. Representatives from the university, Better Care America, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and Highmark, among others, gathered to share their expertise on telemedicine and its impact on rural health.

Telemedicine is an incredibly important tool for millions of Americans, but particularly for those who live in rural communities. With telemedicine, we can increase access to care for those who live far away from a doctor's office or hospital.

Of course, this benefit extends beyond rural communities. Telemedicine

is crucial in ensuring older Americans and those with limited mobility are able to access quality medical care by eliminating roadblocks like finding transportation to a doctor's appointment. By increasing convenience and flexibility for patients, it encourages individuals to take a more proactive approach in managing their health.

Telemedicine can also have a positive impact on the health and well-being of our veterans. Their sacrifice and willingness to dedicate their lives to serve our country is a debt that we can never truly repay. The least we can do, however, is to ensure that they have access to quality healthcare. This includes mental health.

Many of our men and women in uniform are suffering privately with post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, brain injuries, and more. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that roughly 20 veterans commit suicide a day. We must do our part to prevent tragedies like this from happening.

That is why I introduced H.R. 2123, the Veterans E-Health and Telemedicine Support Act—or the VETS Act, as we call it—in 2017, alongside Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY. This bipartisan legislation reduces barriers for veterans seeking healthcare by removing burdensome location requirements, increasing access to care regardless of where the healthcare professional or the patient is located.

Prior to the VETS Act's enactment, VA doctors could only provide telehealth services across State lines if both the veteran and the doctor were located in Federal facilities. Undoing this restriction was successful under the VETS Act's adoption, and it is just one way that we can improve access to telehealth for millions of veterans nationwide.

Prior to the VETS Act, we were able to do that successfully a number of years ago with the STEP Act, the Servicemembers' Telemedicine and E-Health Portability Act, and it did the same thing for 1.1 million American heroes who are members of our Active-Duty military, Reserve, and Guard. The act lifted those same bureaucratic barriers to expand better access through telemedicine.

Through innovation and bipartisan support, we can continue to strengthen telemedicine care for all Americans.

PASSING USMCA

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to reconsider the unilateral push forward with impeachment. We have important and timely bipartisan issues to work on, such as passing USMCA.

Canada and Mexico represent 34 percent of all U.S. exports—by far, our most important trading partners.

The North American Free Trade Agreement that we know as NAFTA

was written more than 25 years ago, and the world has changed dramatically since its enactment. President Trump has made the modernization of trade between our three countries a top priority and has allowed us the chance to make some much-needed updates. USMCA upgrades and modernizes NAFTA. It will boost our economy, and it is a win for farmers, producers, and, definitely, consumers.

We have an opportunity to take action on trade, but the work must come first. It is our constitutional duty to start this process in the House. Delaying the enactment of USMCA hurts American jobs, border security, and agriculture, as well as innovation. We cannot afford to let this opportunity pass.

Mr. Speaker, let's begin the work in the Ways and Means Committee, and let's get this done. It is time to pass USMCA.

REMEMBERING ASSISTANT CHIEF CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life and service of Assistant Fire Chief Christian Johnson of Okanogan County Fire District 3. Chief Johnson recently passed away due to injuries he sustained while fighting the Spring Coulee fire in north central Washington last September.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Johnson is an American hero. He served our country honorably, retiring from the Army after 22 years before joining the fire department nearly 20 years ago to serve his local community. His wife, Pam, described him as selfless, kind, and always ready to help someone in need. He was well-known and well-loved in Okanogan County, which is clear from the community's outpouring of support in recent weeks.

I encourage all in north central Washington to pay their respects at Chief Johnson's memorial this Thursday, October 24, at 1 p.m. at the Okanogan County Fairgrounds.

My deepest condolences go out to Pam and the Johnson family. The people of central Washington are eternally grateful for his selfless service to protect our communities.

Chief Johnson, may you rest in peace.

A RENEWED VISION FOR JOB CORPS CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud and thank the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service for their recent announcement renewing their commitment and vision to the Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center program.

Operated by the USDA and the Forest Service, Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, or CCCs, serve rural communities across the country by training the next generation of America's workforce to carry out a unique