

State, protect the employment rights of our Nation's servicemembers, help to improve maternal and mental healthcare for servicemembers and their families, and strengthen ties with one of our Nation's oldest allies.

The Southern New England Regional Commission, H.R. 5124, which this bill included, establishes a regional commission that will facilitate the investment of Federal funds in southern New England, including my home State of Rhode Island, to build upon our regional strengths, such as defense manufacturing, shipbuilding, and renewable energy. This initiative will generate critical economic growth in the region to reduce poverty, unemployment, and out-migration in counties that were hit hardest by the Great Recession and now by COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge Congressmen JOE COURTNEY, JOE KENNEDY, STEPHEN LYNCH, JOHN LARSON, and BILL KEATING, who are cosponsors of this legislation, and I thank them for their support of this critical initiative which will benefit all of our districts.

This year's NDAA also includes the Justice for Servicemembers Act, H.R. 2750, which I authored, clarifying that the statutory rights of servicemembers and their families under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act cannot be waived through forced arbitration unless it is agreed to after a dispute arises.

American servicemembers, veterans, and their families have sacrificed much in service of our country. They have fought to protect the fundamental idea that we are a nation of laws and institutions that guarantee the rights and prosperity of every American.

Since the Second World War, Congress has created many laws, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, to provide essential protections and guarantee every veteran and Active-Duty servicemember, including the Reserves and National Guard, the right to be free from workplace discrimination on the basis of their military service and their right to their day in court to enforce these protections. But for too long, forced arbitration has eroded these fundamental protections by funneling servicemembers' claims into a private system set up by corporations without the same procedural safeguards of our justice system.

Buried deep within the fine print of everyday contracts, forced arbitration clauses block the brave men and women in uniform, as well as their family members, from having their day in court to hold corporations accountable for breaking the law. This bipartisan provision ends this shameful practice by clarifying that arbitration clauses are only enforceable if agreed to by servicemembers or their families after a dispute arises.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, Congressman JARED GOLDEN, Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS, and Congressman GUY RESCHENTHALER, for their strong bipartisan support for this provision to

protect our men and women in uniform.

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Also included in this year's NDAA is a provision which will require the Department of Defense to provide a report to Congress on the maternal healthcare, in particular mental healthcare, that is available to our Nation's servicemembers, as well as the spouses of servicemembers.

According to the CDC, 1 in 8 women nationwide experience symptoms of postpartum depression, and in some States that percentage can be high as 1 in 5.

Yet, according to the What to Expect Project, data related to instances of postpartum depression and other mental health conditions associated with pregnancy and childbirth is not widely available.

This report required by the amendment will require the Department of Defense to outline the care that is currently available for servicemembers and their spouses who may experience symptoms of postpartum depression.

Finally, this year's NDAA will include a provision which will encourage greater investment and trade between the United States and Portugal.

Last year, I introduced the Advancing Mutual Interests and Growing Our Success, or the AMIGOS Act, H.R. 565, which makes Portuguese nationals eligible for E-1 and E-2 nonimmigrant visas if the Government of Portugal provides similar nonimmigrant status for U.S. nationals, legislation which passed the House without opposition in December of last year.

Access to these investor visas will allow Portuguese investors to support projects in the U.S., benefiting our economy as well as that of Portugal.

As one of the first countries to recognize the United States after the Revolutionary War, Portugal is one of our closest economic partners and strongest allies.

Today, the United States maintains that longstanding relationship as the fifth largest export market for Portugal, and its largest trading partner outside the European Union.

The AMIGOS Act will strengthen this trade partnership and strengthen ties with our longtime NATO ally, Portugal.

I would like to acknowledge Congressman BILL KEATING and Congressman DEVIN NUNES for their support of this provision, and the instrumental role they played in securing its inclusion in this year's NDAA during the House Armed Services Committee markup.

I would, once again, like to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORNBERRY for supporting these provisions, and for their work on this year's National Defense Authorization.

THE CONVERSATION ON STATUE REMOVAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is time, yet again, to correct the record.

For years, my colleagues across the aisle and the mainstream media have been spouting off unfounded claims that Republicans are complicit with the presence of statues in the Capitol that memorialize figures who had ties to the Confederacy.

Democrats seem to have forgotten that members of their own party on the State and Federal levels are the ones responsible for these statues in the first place.

Since 1870 statues have been present in the Capitol, and since then, Democrats retained a majority in the House 39 times. They had ample opportunities to remove controversial statues from the Capitol, yet, they did nothing. Why has it taken this long for them to even broach the issue?

We can all agree that racism, in any shape or form, must be denounced and rejected. But it is odd that my colleagues across the aisle want to skew the narrative, do everything they possibly can to rewrite history, and insert themselves into a conversation where they lean on conjecture more than they do on facts.

For years, I have advocated that both of North Carolina's statues of Charles Aycock and Zebulon Vance be removed based on their ties to the Confederacy.

I have suggested that two statues of people that all North Carolinians and Americans can be proud of be put in their place. I am proud that the first Republican majority in North Carolina's legislature in 140 years voted in 2015 to replace the Aycock statue with a statue of Reverend Billy Graham.

For years, the North Carolina Democrat Party has used former Governor Aycock's name, along with Governor Vance, for major fundraisers, and have held meetings in buildings named after him. Where was the initiative then?

North Carolina's former Democrat Governor, Bev Perdue, sidestepped questions about buildings named after former Governor Aycock in press conferences. Instead, she pivoted to his impact on public education in North Carolina. Again, I say, where was the initiative to remove the statues then?

Even in 2007, in a Democrat primary for Governor in North Carolina, it was said that addressing controversial statues was not the answer and that "the issue of equality is one that North Carolina must deal with on a more broader level."

If our colleagues across the aisle want to have a meaningful discussion on this issue with us, we welcome it.

The decision to replace these statues goes beyond bipartisan collaboration. It is about doing what is right, in an expeditious manner, as opposed to exploiting a situation to score cheap political points.

Mr. Speaker, describing the vote we will hold today as "political showmanship" would be an understatement.

Maybe it is to compensate for the fact that Democrats are responsible for the statutes having been placed in the Capitol and the times Democrats failed to act in the past. You be the judge.

**WE HAVE BEEN WARNED; NOW
WHAT DO WE DO?**

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday night, Christopher David, a veteran of the United States Navy, was walking in Portland when he came upon an odd sight: Federal agents, in full tactical gear, heavily armed, looking for all the world like the operators that we drop into terrorist havens in Afghanistan, patrolling the streets of an American city; detaining Americans; hustling them, unexplained, into rented minivans.

Now, is Mr. David a masked ninja of anarchy? No.

Was he throwing rocks or carrying bottles of gasoline? No.

Mr. David was curious, and he stood there, clearly unarmed, clearly not a threat, curious.

And here is where it gets interesting, and any American who hasn't seen the video needs to look at it right now.

A Federal agent, gas mask, body armor, camouflage, bristling with weapons and tactical gear, approaches Mr. David, winds up, and beats Mr. David repeatedly with his truncheon.

Mr. David doesn't move. His hand has been broken by a Federal agent, but he doesn't move, not a muscle.

Well, the agent is confused by this and he hesitates. But backup arrives. Another Federal agent sprays Mr. David repeatedly in the face with pepper spray. Now this is heartening to the first agent, so he winds up and hits Mr. David again with his bat.

Now, I don't care how cynical you have become about our country. I don't care whether you have signed over your time, your talent, your treasure, your integrity to the support of Donald J. Trump. If you have a drop of American blood in your veins, your soul dies a little as you watch the heavily armed Federal agent beat a United States Navy veteran.

So what are combat-ready Federal agents doing in the streets of a city which does not want them there in a State which did not ask for them?

Are there bodies piling up in the streets of Portland?

Are there 150,000 dead—just to choose a number—Americans in Portland? No. There is not a single fatality. Of course not.

Like so many cities, Portland boiled over in rage at the murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department. And, yeah, regrettably and illegally a minority of protestors have committed acts of vandalism; bottles and rocks have been thrown, windows broken, threats made. That is not okay, ever.

But protecting property in Portland or anywhere else is the job of the local police department, the State police and, in a worst-case scenario, the National Guard. Why?

First, while Federal agents are legally entitled to protect Federal property, they are not authorized to patrol municipal streets to enforce State and local law. That is an idea that goes back to our dissatisfaction with King George, and it is an idea that my Republican friends used to care about.

Second, operationally, agents of the Border Patrol and the Marshals Service are not trained to manage protests. They are trained to patrol borders and to chase fugitives. A heavily armed individual with no identification or insignia trundling people, without explanation, into an unmarked van is likely to be misunderstood in a way that could lead to violence, particularly in a heavily armed society.

Finally, there is the question of the President's intentions, which are pretty clear. We have seen how the President responds to real crisis; almost 150,000 Americans dead of COVID-19, denial, misinformation.

We have 5 percent of the world's population and 25 percent of the COVID-19 deaths on the planet. That is a disgrace. It is a lethal disgrace.

George Floyd, an unarmed Black American, dies at the hands of the police, like so many before him. That is a lethal crisis.

The President was asked about Black Americans dying at the hands of police and he says: "So are White people; so are White people. What a terrible question to ask."

And now the President threatens to send heavily armed Federal agents to New York, Chicago, Detroit, Baltimore. Do we have a problem? No, we do not.

Take it from an unclassified Office of Intelligence and Analysis report by the Department of Homeland Security: "The regularity of violence amidst lawful protests in Portland since 26 May contrasts with national trends, which reflect a steady decline in violence during the last 2 weeks"—"a steady decline in violence during the last 2 weeks."

Mr. Speaker, this is important because democracies die, but they don't die fast. They die because people come to believe that the media is the enemy of the people. They die because a President's supporters are more given over to that President than they are to the rule of law; and they die because citizens become used to the sight of Federal agents acting, not to protect them, but to attack them.

We have been warned. The question is: Now what do we do?

RECOGNIZING THE HEROIC SERVICE OF DETECTIVE JOSH SIMMONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the excellent law enforcement personnel who serve North Carolina's 13th District. I would like to specifically mention a heroic act that happened on July 14 in Rowan County.

A detective named Josh Simmons saw a burning car as he drove down Highway 52. When he approached, he found an elderly woman unable to get out. He pulled her from the car just minutes before it went up in flames.

Detective Simmons said of his actions: "The way I was raised, you take care of people. I didn't know who was in the car. It didn't matter who they were. They just needed help."

Mr. Speaker, this is a great example for all of us. Our community is truly lucky to have such courageous folks serving and protecting us.

HEALTHY SKIES ACT

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to put forward a new proposal to help reopen our country with speed and with safety.

Between business, leisure, and tourism, air travel is a mode of transportation that must be trusted if our country can fully reopen. In fact, before the pandemic, commercial aviation drove 5 percent of our GDP and helped support more than 10 million American jobs.

Unfortunately, there are currently no concrete proposals to lessen the fear that has gripped air travelers and crippled the aviation industry. And that is why I am proposing a bipartisan bill called the Healthy Skies Act, along with Congressman RALPH NORMAN and JOHN LARSON.

This bipartisan legislation instructs the TSA Administrator to create a pilot program that would temporarily screen the temperature of all travelers going through TSA security before they reach the gate area.

Having the TSA temporarily screen passengers for elevated temperatures has a number of practical advantages. It ensures that each passenger experiences a consistent nationwide process to prevent infected individuals from boarding planes and spreading the virus. This will give travelers the peace of mind they need to confidently start flying again, while discouraging folks who might be sick from even attempting to come to the airport in the first place.

Reopening America should be the top priority of our government. Making sure air travelers are healthy enough to fly is a commonsense way to boost passenger confidence and jump-start economic activity. And that is how we can stop the spread of COVID-19 and continue a great American comeback.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) for 5 minutes.