

The recorder takes down every word, sometimes in the heat of a rhetorical exchange, which eventually helps the Chamber sort out the claims, reconcile them, and return to business.

I also want to point out the friendly faces and voices from the Office of the Clerk of the House. Many of them are right in front of me, Mr. Speaker. These nonpartisan employees record, file, keep in order, track time, and help the Speaker or Speaker pro tempore identify Members and call on them.

The wizard of the House is the Parliamentarian and his staff. I have known four over my career. They are the keeper of the Jeffersonian rules and precedents. Any Member who is smart and up to some trickery best run their idea by the Parliamentarian. They will not only provide great counsel, but will keep the discussion confidential.

My thanks go to the Office of Member Services. They processed me in and are now processing me out. They are our office of human resources and, as with everything, as time passes, so do your needs. I have checked with them often over the years, and that has helped prepare for my departure.

Also assisting me is the Office of House Ethics. The last thing I want to do is screw something up as I walk out the door. They, too, are 24/7 and only a phone call away.

Any time you create a list, you risk forgetting someone or some office. If I have done so, please forgive me. It has been a great ride, and the nonpartisan professional staff who cover the everyday activities deserve my thanks and, with that, I thank you.

THE NATION CONTINUES TO FACE AN INCREASINGLY DEADLY PANDEMIC

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

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, as we move into the last weeks of 2020, as we move into a dark and uncertain winter, our Nation continues to face an increasingly deadly pandemic. Grief, economic hardship, and anxiety can be felt in every corner of our country.

Despite the challenges that face our Nation, the past few weeks have seen millions of Americans stand up and make their voices heard.

And millions of Americans have chosen unity over division, stability over chaos, and looked forward to a future filled with faith and hope for a brighter world.

That world requires something from each and every one of us—we all must do our part. We all have a role to play in transforming our aspirations into real, effective progress.

Over the last 2 years, I have heard from thousands of families who have called on my office in a moment of need; a grandparent whose Social Security checks just simply stopped coming; a veteran who desperately needed

an appointment at the VA hospital; a small business that required assistance to keep their employees paid during this pandemic.

For many of these people, their call to my office may have been the first time that they have ever interacted with a government official. It may be the first time that they have ever asked their government for help.

Each and every day, we are called upon to serve our communities in Congress. They are trusting us to do everything that we can to advocate on their behalf.

We must never lose sight of that faith and that trust that they placed in us.

Hardworking families across Georgia, and from around the Nation, understand that the days and the months ahead may be the most important of our lifetime.

And Americans have been very clear. They have asked their leaders to put aside their partisan bickering and focus on American fellowship.

And the mandate that they have given us is one of compassion and cooperation.

It is a mandate to heal fractures and mend their wounds.

It is a mandate to solve problems and protect them.

And it is a mandate to compromise with common sense.

It is a mandate to enact policies that provide every person in this Nation an opportunity to fight for their very own American Dream.

For many years, before I had the honor of serving my community in Congress, I worked as a flight attendant for Delta Airlines, and I shared journeys with people from every corner of our globe and of every color and every creed and of every race and every religion.

Yes, we all come from different backgrounds, and we share different beliefs, and we all belong to different political parties. But what we must understand is that we share a common purpose that transcends partisanship.

We are all uniquely American. We are all far more alike than we are different. We all need to spend time with those that we love, to share our stories with those who make us smile, make us laugh. We all want what is best for our families.

On these journeys across America, I watched first-generation Americans chart a course toward a lifetime of new and exciting experiences.

And I watched men and women in uniform fly home to surprise their young children, their mothers who have been worried sick, their brothers who haven't seen their best friend in years.

I have watched parents beam with pride as they reunited with their new college graduate. After decades of hard work, they knew, with faith and with certainty, that the days of their children would be better than their own.

This is the America that our constituents sent us here to fight for and

sent us here to lead; to preserve the ideas that this Nation was founded upon; to protect the values that must endure long after every single one of us in this Chamber is gone.

Our strength as a Nation has always been on our ability to come together to address America's greatest challenges, which we are in right now. And that is the opportunity that we have in this very moment.

And when we look back at this time in years to come, I pray that we can all take pride in our response; that we fought against all those who seek to sow the seeds of hatred and division—and for all those rooted in peace and prosperity; that we fought to strengthen our fellow Americans with love and with unity; that we fought for progress alongside our brothers and sisters of this great Nation with unshakeable resolve; that we fought for a future that we can all believe in.

RECOGNIZING DANE HAYGOOD

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mayor Dane Haygood of Daphne, who recently retired after 8 successful years in office.

The Jubilee City is truly a jewel of southwest Alabama, and as Baldwin County has experienced the fastest growth in Alabama in recent years, Daphne has led the way. No city could experience such rapid growth while retaining its sense of community without good stewardship, and Mayor Haygood deserves a tremendous amount of credit for his 8 years of steady leadership.

With Mayor Haygood at the helm, Daphne was one of the chief beneficiaries of the past decade of economic expansion in our region.

Mayor Haygood can leave office knowing that Daphne is well positioned to continue on the path to prosperity. I congratulate Mayor Haygood and his family, and I look forward to seeing what the future has in store for them in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING DAVID BAKER

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mayor David Baker of Semmes on his many years of service. Mayor Baker recently left the mayoral office after a distinguished and diverse history of service to his community.

Since Mayor Baker began serving as city councilman for Semmes in 2011, he has always been a highly visible and accessible public servant. While in office, Mayor Baker has overseen a period of growth and annexation, and Semmes is well prepared to continue its growth and meet new challenges.

A proud graduate of the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Mayor Baker retired as an officer in the United States Army after 20 years of honorable service. Since becoming an educator in 2003, countless high school students in the community have benefited from his wise instruction.

I have every confidence Mayor Baker will remain involved in the community, and I wish him and Alice the best in the days ahead.

CONGRATULATING TERRY DOWNEY

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Terry Downey upon his recent retirement. Since his election in 2016, Mayor Downey has guided Bayou la Batre through a series of significant challenges, including several severe hurricanes and the recent pandemic.

Bayou la Batre has a unique heritage as a diverse home with the fishing and seafood processing industries, and Mayor Downey's leadership helped Bayou la Batre weather the storms and protect the livelihoods and culture of its residents. The city is well-prepared to continue handling whatever else may come its way.

I thank Mayor Downey for his service, and I join the people of Bayou la Batre in wishing him all the best in the next stage of his life.

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CONGRATULATING JIMMY LYONS ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Jimmy Lyons upon his retirement as director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority.

Over more than two decades, Jimmy's creative, forward-thinking leadership led to transformative growth at one of Alabama's premier assets.

Jimmy's steady stewardship guided the port authority during economic highs and lows. Despite a range of challenges, the port has thrived under his leadership.

With him at the helm, the port is now one of the fastest growing container terminals in the country. It has added a steel terminal and has vastly expanded its ability to load and unload automobiles, and those are just a few examples.

Jimmy also played a critical part in securing upgrades at the port and in the channel that allow a higher number of increasingly large ships from around the globe to use the port with growing ease.

While he will be missed, the Alabama State Port Authority, and Alabama's economy, are better positioned for future success than they have ever been because of Jimmy Lyons. I wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE LIVES OF WILLIAM AND EUBER COLLINS

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the lives of two dear friends who recently passed away, William and Euber Collins.

William, known by most as Monty, passed away at 90 years old on November 2, only 1 day before his wife, Euber, who was 88. They were married a remarkable 68 years.

After meeting and falling in love at the University of Alabama, Monty and Euber married and found their way to Mobile. Their close partnership enabled

them to raise four wonderful children and Monty to have a long, successful career, culminating in his retirement from the First National Bank of Mobile.

After his retirement, Monty served as a field representative for my predecessor, Sonny Callahan, and served two terms as a member of the Alabama House of Representatives.

Throughout their marriage, Monty and Euber maintained a remarkable level of engagement and service to Mobile.

Monty and Euber leave behind a legacy of love for each other, their family, and their community that will be difficult to match in its intensity and longevity. They will be deeply missed and fondly remembered.

My heartfelt condolences go out to their family.

PROTECTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DURING PANDEMIC

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

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to address a pressing problem that concerns Americans' constitutional rights. The liberties enshrined in the Constitution still apply to every American, even in the midst of a national emergency.

It is becoming clear to many Americans that our national life has slid toward a double standard. For weeks, officials have asked the public to put life on hold and help fight this virus. The American people did their part and are doing their part, have made sacrifices to help our Nation, and continue to do their part.

But throughout this pandemic, we have seen a troubling trend of State leaders leaning on religious institutions harder than any other group or organization.

In 2018, Pope Francis, while addressing "red martyrdom," those who face death and persecution on account of their religious beliefs, also warned our nations about "white martyrdom," which occurs in democratic countries when freedom of religion is restricted.

So far, lawsuits claiming that State restrictions on religious gatherings infringe on freedom of religion have been filed in Kentucky, California, Louisiana, Virginia, and elsewhere.

In Virginia, at Lighthouse Fellowship Church's Palm Sunday service, there were only 16 people present, all properly socially distanced. Yet, the pastor was subjected, Mr. Speaker, to a criminal citation.

In Kansas, two churches settled with Democratic Governor Laura Kelly after they sued over her 10-person limit for religious services. A Federal judge ruled that the State appeared to have singled out religious activities for stricter treatment. Now, Kansas churches can hold those services as long as they abide by the protocols for businesses and other establishments,

such as providing hand sanitizer, face masks, and social distancing.

In Kentucky, despite claiming that his order allowed congregants to attend drive-through services, Governor Andy Beshear had State police leave notices to self-isolate on churchgoers' windshields on Easter Sunday service at the Maryville Baptist Church outside of Louisville.

In defiance of the Governor's mandate, Pastor Jack Roberts, along with congregants, ripped up those notices and filed a lawsuit.

Mr. Speaker, a Federal appeals court sided with the pastor and blocked part of Beshear's order, allowing congregants to attend drive-in services. In the ruling, the three-judge panel of the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals expressed support for the church's argument that it wasn't being treated fairly, noting "hundreds" of cars parked in the lot of the nearby grocery store on the same day the police informed churchgoers that they were violating the law.

"The breadth of the ban on religious services, together with a haven for numerous secular exceptions, should give pause to anyone who prizes religious freedom." That is what the judges wrote.

They continued, "But it is not always easy to decide what is Caesar's and what is God's, and that is assuredly true in the context of a pandemic."

Mr. Speaker, I commend the judges for standing up for the fundamental right of religious freedom, including the freedom of worship.

Americans have shown that they can convene for religious services in a responsible way. The compassion and care for communities of faith throughout the pandemic are needed now more than ever.

Our first Chief Executive, President Washington, prized our First Amendment to the Constitution, saying, "No one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

Let's urge our colleagues in Congress, our State legislatures, our Governors, and down at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue to honor Washington's passion for our enshrined right to religious liberty.

CALLING FOR TARGETED COVID RELIEF

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, during this lame duck session, this House needs bipartisan leadership to achieve critical, needed COVID relief for central Arkansas.

The majority of these issues are easy and have significant bipartisan support.

We need to extend and expand the Paycheck Protection Program and ease paycheck protection forgiveness.

Pandemic unemployment payments need to be addressed in a way to help families but also encourage work.

Finally, States need flexibility on spending money from the CARES Act,