

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 5598

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove myself as a cosponsor of H.R. 5598.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. AXNE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

□ 1630

HONORING THE LIFE OF GRANDMASTER KEVIN THOMPSON

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a true warrior from my district, Grandmaster Kevin Thompson. Grandmaster Thompson was a son of Newark and a world-famous martial artist.

He was a lightweight fighter at 155 pounds who defeated many heavy-weight challengers.

In his time, he won more than 100 trophies at world championships in three disciplines: weapons, forms, and fighting.

Today, he is in the Black Belt Hall of Fame alongside noted martial artists Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris. Through his skill, he earned the rank of grandmaster, a rare honor for his achievements and contributions to the sport.

Grandmaster Kevin Thompson's bravery and courage helped him battle Lou Gehrig's disease until his passing on January 8, but that will not dim the bright legacy he left in the world of martial arts and in our Newark community.

RECOGNIZING HARLEY WHEELER ON HIS RUGBY ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Harley Wheeler, an outstanding rugby player from Knoxville, Tennessee. His granddad, Roy, and his grandmother—he recently lost—Alice, were dear friends of mine.

Harley played rugby since he was 14 and is now one of the top players in the United States. Harley began his rugby career with the South Doyle Rugby Club while a student at South-Doyle High School. In 2015, he enrolled at Life University to compete on its rugby team at the collegiate level.

Harley's 4 years on the Life University rugby team were incredibly successful. The team advanced to the Division 1A College Rugby National Championship match every year he was on the team, and won the championship in 2016, 2018, and 2019.

After graduating with a degree in business, Harley was selected to represent the United States on the inter-

national stage at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru. Team USA finished third at the games, defeating Brazil 24-19. Harley scored 10 points during the bronze medal match.

As we approach the 2020 Summer Olympics, I wish Harley the best of luck as he competes for a spot on the national rugby team. I hope to see him representing Knoxville and the United States in Japan.

PREVENT DOMESTIC EXTREMISM

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

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Madam Speaker, last week in my New Jersey district I hosted a briefing with over 80 faith leaders: Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh. We didn't discuss how to build a better world. We just talked about how to protect their houses of worship from violence.

Whether a synagogue in Pittsburgh, a mosque in New Zealand, a shopping mall in Texas, or a Jewish deli in New Jersey, people are being targeted for who they are, for what they believe.

Last year, Congress did something to help. We restored funding to the Department of Homeland Security to prevent domestic extremism—including violent acts of anti-Semitism—which the Trump administration cut in 2017. This has allowed DHS to substantially increase the number of staff working with State and local governments to stop these attacks.

This year, there is more to be done, from stepping up investigations and prosecutions of domestic terrorists, to designating transnational neo-Nazi groups as terrorist organizations, to confronting social media companies over algorithms that amplify hate.

Let's make this a priority in 2020 until no one need be afraid anymore.

NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. SPANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Globally, there are over 40 million victims of human trafficking at any given time, 75 percent of them women and girls, and 25 percent are children. While 81 percent are trapped in forced labor, millions more are in forced sexual exploitation and forced marriages.

Not only is human trafficking at epidemic levels overseas, but it is also experiencing rampant growth in our own backyard.

Statistics rank the State of Florida as the third highest trafficking destination in the U.S. Human trafficking traps millions of the most vulnerable

members of society into modern-day slavery and generates annual profits of \$150 billion.

Events like the February Super Bowl in Miami are major targets. It is imperative that we give law enforcement the tools needed to identify and prevent human trafficking.

We also need to pass legislation that deters and punishes the perpetrators and allows the victims to heal and re-acclimate.

This rapidly growing issue demands our attention. Let's work together, no matter which side of the aisle we sit on, to end this evil for good.

RECOGNIZING JAMIE DURRENCE

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Jamie Durrence who has been selected to serve as the 2020 chair of the Georgia Restaurant Association Board of Directors.

I can't think of someone more deserving of this responsibility. In his more than 20 years managing restaurants in Savannah, he has rejuvenated Savannah's restaurant scene with four restaurants that serve fresh ingredients, unique menus, quality service, and overall exceptional dining experiences.

Much of Mr. Durrence's penchant for the restaurant industry stems from his youth when he was raised on a working farm just outside of Savannah.

As chairman of the Georgia Restaurant Association Board of Directors, Mr. Durrence will be tasked as the chief spokesperson for the industry and will be an integral part of the statewide events.

I know that the Georgia restaurant industry is in good hands with Mr. Durrence.

Congratulations, Mr. Durrence. Keep up the good work.

HONORING BRETT MILAM FOR DONATING HIS KIDNEY

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

Mr. WENSTRUP. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Clermont County resident Brett Milam for selflessly donating his kidney to a stranger in need.

He recently shared his decision with our community in The Clermont Sun in Ohio where he works, describing his recent kidney donation and journey.

Brett was inspired by an article written by a man who had made the same choice to donate a kidney for no other reason than to commit an act of kindness.

As Brett tells it, after months of research, contemplation, and discussion with other organ donors, he decided to help a stranger, giving them an early Christmas present: a healthy kidney.

I applaud Brett for making this donation to save a complete stranger's life, and I am particularly moved by the selflessness and kindness that Brett made with this action.

Brett's choice to donate his kidney demonstrates the most compassionate side of humanity.

Today, I recognize Brett Milam for his extremely selfless act of kindness.

Thank you, Brett, and God bless.

COMMENDING EPA ADMINISTRATOR ANDREW WHEELER

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I wish to commend EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler for his recent clearing up of the definition of waters of the United States, known as WOTUS, indeed, causing a lot of woe for people in my district and the Western U.S., especially.

Under the 2015 definition, it seemed every puddle, every ditch, every possible water source was going to be brought under the fist of the U.S. Government. With much dismay, many farmers, ranchers, people building, and people doing simple things were unable to understand what they were supposed to do. Indeed, it was a long arm of government overreach.

What we have heard since then: "Oh, the sky is falling. This is going to roll back protections."

These aren't protections. These are things that are way beyond the scope of what government should be doing.

It limited the scope of rivers and large streams and our oceans. So with all of "the sky is falling" you are hearing, no, it isn't anything like that. Indeed, it is putting it back into more equitable space.

What this rule does is, indeed, end the confusion and ends the Federal overreach and helps us get back to business and still protect the environment.

STATE OF THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon with a number of my Democratic colleagues to

speak about the subject of paramount concern for most Americans: the economy. Healthcare, the economy, and their jobs are what folks are focused on when they wake up in the morning.

The Joint Economic Committee now headed on our side of the aisle by DON BEYER from Virginia, released two reports today that all Americans should look at carefully. One of them focuses on the failure of the 2017 Trump tax cuts which Chairman NEAL will be focusing on shortly.

Republicans claim that the tax cuts would pay for themselves and not add a penny to deficits and debt. That is a theory that we have heard time and time again from Republicans to support their tax cuts for the wealthiest in our country. Both experience and evidence tell us that their tax cuts always end up driving our deficits up, hurting the middle class, and placing the burden on future generations.

I hope Americans will read that report and draw the same conclusions that so many economists have made about the dangerous tax scam.

The second report which we will be focusing on this evening concerns the economy more broadly. It asks a question that many Americans may be asking this year: Is the Trump economy doing as well as the President claimed it would?

And: Can the President take credit for economic growth that began long before he took office?

I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) for his efforts as vice chair of the Joint Economic Committee, as well as the former vice chair, CAROLYN MALONEY, who now heads up the Oversight and Reform Committee.

I will be yielding to Mr. BEYER soon to speak more about the content of the committee's report. He will be followed by Mr. NEAL who is the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and a senior member of this body. He is probably one of the most knowledgeable people, not only about taxes, but about the economy in general.

But first I want to speak a little bit about this President's record on the economy.

President Trump sought office on a raft of economic promises. He promised to create 25 million new jobs in 10 years.

He promised 6 percent growth in our domestic product.

He promised to eliminate the \$19 trillion national debt.

He promised to get wages up for American workers with \$4,000 raises as a result of the tax cuts.

And the President promised to make healthcare much less expensive and much better.

□ 1645

Let's see how he is doing.

On the first measure, job growth, job growth has slowed under President Trump. Let me repeat that. Job growth has slowed under President Trump

compared to the level of the economic expansion that began under his predecessor.

This chart—and it will probably be hard to see for many viewers—shows that job growth was highest here in the years before President Trump took office and then lower, following.

Now, what does that mean?

Let me give you the big figure, Madam Speaker, because the specifics of the chart will be difficult for people to see on the floor and in the gallery.

What it means is that, on average—and this is an important fact to remember—under President Obama, there were 227,000 jobs created per month over the last 35 months of his term.

Now we have had 35 months of the Trump term. What has he done to realize that promise of 25 million jobs?

Madam Speaker, 36,000 less jobs per month have been created under Donald Trump than under Barack Obama in the same timeframe.

Now, that is important because the President, of course, claims that this is the best economy we have ever seen. As I said, that is 36,000 fewer jobs per month, and 1.26 million fewer jobs over President Trump's term from the trend he inherited.

Madam Speaker, I am going to show you a chart on how the economy that President Obama had put in place with the help of the Congress was going straight up.

At this pace, President Trump's 4-year term will not achieve the same level of job creation as the previous 4-year term of President Obama. In fact, he would fall—listen to this figure—2.5 million jobs short.

So, when we hear the President at a rally claiming this great economic boom, remember, 2.5 million less jobs created.

President Trump also loves to cite the low unemployment rate, which, in December 2019, stood at 3.5 percent. That is, indeed, a low number. It is a good number in the sense that it shows that so many of our people are working. But underlying those facts are so many of our people are working one, two, and three jobs so they can support themselves and their family.

Now, when he took office, the rate was 4.7 percent. It is 3.5 percent now and 4.7 percent when he took office. Compare that to the decline in the unemployment rate during the same period in President Obama's second term.

At his second inauguration, the rate was 7.9 percent. He left office with 4.7 percent. That is 3.2 percent less. He left the office with a 4.7 percent unemployment rate, continuing a strong decline.

Under President Obama, a decline of 5.3 percentage points from when he took office; under President Trump, a decline of 1.2 percentage points.

Madam Speaker, let me give you that figure again. Under President Obama, he inherited from George Bush a declining employment. It spiked at 10 percent, and under President Obama,