

COMMONSENSE SOLUTIONS ON
INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, there is no denying that Congress must take action to improve our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. But, sadly, bipartisan negotiations have hit a roadblock, and the infrastructure legislation on the floor this week is a go-at-it-alone, my-way-or-the-highway bill.

Instead of focusing on traditional infrastructure, Democrats have chosen to prioritize the left's Green New Deal agenda. This bill includes an estimated \$276 billion for Green New Deal-related mandates, requirements, and programs. To put that into perspective, \$1 out of every \$2 spent by this legislation is tied up in Green New Deal goals.

Further, this bill reduces flexibility for States to meet their own unique infrastructure needs and fails to streamline major project reviews, which typically face a 6-year delay. To make matters worse, the spending increases proposed in this bill rely heavily on more deficit spending. There are no pay-fors, which will only further fuel inflation and increase the cost of goods like gas and food.

We need commonsense solutions that truly work to improve our roads, bridges, railways, and rural broadband. I am pleased to hear that there are bipartisan negotiations underway to achieve these goals, but this bill this week veers off the road and into a partisan ditch.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" later this week on H.R. 3684.

□ 1015

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ANNE
SEATON

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and legacy of Anne Seaton, who went to be with the Lord on April 23, 2021.

Anne was a pillar of the Sixth District of Virginia, but her light shone well beyond the valley.

Charitable at heart, Anne and the Mehnert family served as missionaries in Jamaica and hosted refugees from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina to help provide comfort and aid to those afflicted.

In the valley, Anne was a passionate supporter of Grace Christian School and Wilson High School, as well as one who helped fundraise for the Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra.

Further, Anne was active in local politics, including the successful campaign of her husband Scott to the Augusta County Board of Supervisors.

Anne was the founder of the Republican Women of Greater Augusta and inspired many to get involved in the community.

Above all, though, it was Anne's family and her faith that defined her. A loving wife to Scott, mother to

Joscelyn Hodge and her husband Christopher, Phillip, Samuel, and Daniel, friend and daughter, Anne was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ and was a member of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church.

Anne has a grandchild due in December.

Anne not only believed in her faith, but she lived it as exemplified through her life's work.

Living through our faith is a lesson we can all learn from the late great Anne Seaton.

Anne is greatly missed and will not soon be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING AMHERST COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
GIRLS SOFTBALL TEAM

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Amherst County High School girls softball team for winning this year's Class 4 State Championship.

It was a defensive game all around, and Amherst County's pitcher, Dylan McNerney, kept the Lancers in it with an incredible performance, striking out 10 batters.

With the game tied at zero at the end of regulation, it took extra innings for the Lancers to pull off a victory against the Hanover Hawks.

Before the final inning began, head coach Samantha Thacker told the team: "This is our time, this is our inning, we have got to stay settled and be patient," and they did just that.

In the top of the eighth, two errors by the Hawks put runners on base for Amherst County with one out.

When Kayleigh Combs stepped up to bat, she put the ball into play, and an overthrow allowed Cheyenne Wall to race home from third giving the Lancers a one to nothing lead. Soon after, a wild pitch brought Maegan Lloyd home adding another run to the board.

With a two to nothing lead heading into the bottom of the eighth, the Lancers were able to keep the Hawks scoreless, securing the team's first ever State softball title.

Congratulations to the players and coaches on a great season, they have earned it.

WATER ISSUES

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the importance of water and my concerns with the Biden administration's unnecessary overreach.

We use water to sustain ourselves; for industrial manufacturing; for swimming and recreation with our family and friends; to bathe; and to produce the most affordable, abundant, and safe food supply in the world.

Agriculture is the largest industry in Kansas' Big First District and across the State, so water conditions determine good or bad crop years, the amount of time livestock producers spend hauling water or moving cattle to land with a better pond, and ultimately, the kinds of foods that show up

on the grocery store shelves across the country.

In western and south-central Kansas, the Ogallala aquifer is the main source of water and represents the supply of one-third of the State of Kansas. The Ogallala covers about 175,000 square miles across eight States from South Dakota to Texas, making it the largest aquifer in the country and one of the largest in the world.

At the beginning of the 20th century, States began pumping water from the Ogallala to irrigate the land for agricultural production use. In arid climates like western Kansas, irrigation transformed the Dust Bowl ridden region into the incredibly productive land that we see today. On average, Kansas has about three million irrigated acres with nearly 2.6 million acres irrigated with water from the Ogallala and the rest of the High Plains aquifer. The Ogallala's groundwater is essential to our food supply, as it supports nearly one-fifth of all of the wheat, corn, cotton, and cattle produced in the United States.

In 2018, when I was Lieutenant Governor of Kansas, we worked with the Ogallala Water Coordinated Agriculture Project to hold the first ever Ogallala Aquifer Summit in Garden City and gathered stakeholders from the eight States covering the aquifer to discuss the need to conserve water and sustain the Ogallala region's agriculture productivity over the long-term, adapting new technologies and voluntarily reducing water waste.

Since then, producers like Lynn Goossen have made changes to their operations to reduce the amount of water they pump and protect Ogallala. Goossen Farms has shifted from irrigated corn to a wheat rotation, adapted conservation practices when applying fertilizer, and changed from flood to sprinkler irrigation. Understanding the depletion of the Ogallala caused Mr. Goossen to take on leadership within his Groundwater Management District and work with other producers to voluntarily use their water wisely.

Efforts at the State level in Kansas through Groundwater Management Districts have also supported the sustainable use of the Ogallala aquifer where districts work with communities to set their own water conservation goals and control measures; develop plans to reduce water withdrawals in a designated area; and continue using water in a manner that is economically viable. The research from the Northwest Kansas Technical College Water Technology Farm has helped producers like Tim Franklin in Sherman County. The Franklin family farm was early to enroll in a Water Conservation Area, and uses the technology developed and tested at Northwest Tech to help meet their water reduction goals.

These voluntary, locally led efforts to safeguard our water were supported during the Trump administration when they published a reasonable and clear definition of "waters of the United

States” in the Navigable Waters Protection Rule. This rule provided certainty for farmers and ranchers, and designated authority back to States to regulate their own waters after years of Federal overreach.

Unfortunately, President Biden has once again determined that the Federal Government knows best and announced his intent to review the rule, likely signaling a return to the Obama administration’s WOTUS rule, which sought to Federally regulate every small stream, ditch or puddle of water. This announcement is especially frustrating as many western States currently face an extreme drought, leading to a severe water shortage for not only our agriculture producers, but also drinking water and hydroelectric energy generators. Further regulation adds insult to injury.

Producers and water users at the local level know their community best, which is why I joined several of my House colleagues on legislation that would codify the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and on a letter to President Biden stating our strong opposition to any return to the expanded Federal jurisdiction over waters around the country. I have also led legislation that would push back on executive overreach in our agriculture, energy, and natural resource sectors.

Our farmers and ranchers are the original conservationists and continually update practices to reduce water use and inputs so that they can continue to produce safe, affordable food while maintaining their water supply for generations to come. We must provide certainty regarding their local water rights and continue to stand in opposition to any overreaching regulations that threaten the livelihoods of Kansas farmers and ranchers.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES JACKSON FRENCH

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Charles Jackson French, a World War II hero with ties to Omaha who made one of the most underappreciated sacrifices in American military history.

The story of Charles Jackson French is an American story: One of courage, sacrifice, and hope. Charles, a Black man, was born in a racially segregated Foreman, Arkansas, on September 15, 1919. In 1937, Charles enlisted in the United States Navy. After completing his enlistment, he moved to Omaha, Nebraska, to be with family, but after the attack on Pearl Harbor, he reenlisted.

According to accounts, on September 5, 1942, Petty Officer First Class French was serving as a mess attendant in the racially segregated USS *Gregory*. As a Black man growing up in 1930’s Arkansas, Charles lived in a time when segregation laws prohibited Black people

from swimming alongside White people in public pools and beaches, yet when the USS *Gregory* was attacked and sunk by Japanese gunfire off the coast of Guadalcanal, it was Petty Officer French who dove into the treacherous waters of the Pacific to save his fellow sailors who had been wounded.

Petty Officer French loaded 15 of his fellow sailors into a lifeboat and saved his injured comrades from drowning. However, Charles knew that they could not simply float to shores controlled by the Japanese where they would meet a fate worse than death. Prisoners were often tortured then executed. Military.com recounted how Charles tied a rope around his waist with the help of his shipmates and towed his fellow sailors through shark-infested waters for 8 long hours until they were finally identified and saved by an American landing craft.

In his book “Black Men and Blue Water” Chester Wright recounted his conversation with Petty Officer French who told him that when he and the raft full of survivors were rescued, persons aboard the ship told Charles to go “where the colored boys stay” while the crew tended to the wounded White survivors. Charles further shared that the sailors rescued by him told the crew: “He ain’t going nowhere. He is a member of the *Gregory*’s crew and he damned well will stay here with the rest of us.”

Just like the sailors who stepped up at the time for French, it is our time to stand up and recognize with full measure the sacrifice and service of French, whose story has been underappreciated by the Navy and history. A real-life hero like Charles must be recognized by the military and the country that he devoted his life to.

In World War II, the Navy gave French a commendation letter. I have now asked the Navy to review and consider upgrading to a medal, and the Navy is reviewing this now.

Full recognition of U.S. Navy Petty Officer First Class Charles Jackson French is long overdue. We owe it to Charles, his family, and to the millions of Americans who learned from Charles’ story.

Last Friday, I also introduced legislation to rename one of Omaha’s post offices after Charles, and I am pleased that Representatives JEFF FORTENBERRY and ADRIAN SMITH have joined me in this effort to recognize a Nebraska hero.

Today, I call on the Navy, Congress, and the White House to recognize the service and sacrifice of Petty Officer First Class French so that all Americans, especially our Nation’s future leaders and servicemembers, can be inspired by Charles’ display of patriotism and sacrifice. But also, so the family of Charles can be comforted by the eternal gratitude of a Nation that Petty Officer First Class French so dutifully served. This three-decade veteran salutes him.

RECOGNIZING NORTH CAROLINA SWEET POTATO COMMISSION’S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission’s 60th anniversary.

In 1961, six sweet potato producers chartered the commission to support growers and to maintain North Carolina’s standing as a leading sweet potato producing State. They are now more than 400 sweet potato growers strong as well as packers, processors, and business associates who remain dedicated to supporting our State’s prosperous sweet potato industry.

Since 1971, North Carolina has ranked as the number one sweet potato producing State in the U.S. with 65 percent of the Nation’s sweet potato production. North Carolina sweet potato producers are family farmers who have been cultivating their land for generations growing many different crops. They work day and night, year after year to ship delectable, high quality, nutritious North Carolina sweet potatoes all across the country and the world.

Agriculture is the backbone of North Carolina’s economy, and the sweet potato industry is absolutely critical to our food supply in North Carolina and in the country. It is not an understatement to say that the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission has more than fulfilled its founding mission to strengthen our State’s sweet potato production, and I congratulate them on their 60th anniversary.

May they have many more years of providing every American with one of our Nation’s safest, nutritious, and might I add, delicious vegetables grown.

CONGRESS MUST AGGRESSIVELY ADDRESS THE NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, our national debt exceeds \$28.1 trillion. Congress year after year continues spending money with seemingly no regard for the debts we are pushing onto future generations. While it was necessary to spend a significant amount of money to get us through the COVID-19 crisis, we must now move aggressively to address the national debt, in my opinion, the most significant domestic threat that our country faces. And the sooner we take action the better.

□ 1030

Unfortunately, the current administration doesn’t seem to feel the need to pursue fiscal restraint. President Biden’s spending agenda is hurting families and small businesses across the country. Meanwhile, he has sent Congress a \$6 trillion budget request.

This additional spending will lead to even more inflation. The excessive spending Congress recently approved has already resulted in inflation. We