

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

see it every day in the skyrocketing prices of goods. And if the President and Democrats in Congress get their way on major tax hikes, the economy and working families will be hurt even more.

Today, the American dollar is still king, which is how we can print and borrow money with seemingly little consequence. But huge debt-to-GDP ratios threaten that standing and could easily cause a significant decline in our standard of living.

Rampant inflation, which is really just a hidden tax, and a significantly devalued dollar could cripple our economy and easily lead future generations right back to the days of centuries before us.

Now, in contrast, the budget proposed by the Republican Study Committee for fiscal year 2022 balances the annual budget in 5 years by reducing spending and maintaining pro-growth policies. It is the most pro-life budget ever written, with 17 pro-life provisions included. It protects Second Amendment rights, secures our border, and offers real solutions to return our country to fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Study Committee budget combats Washington's out-of-control spending and puts American taxpayers first. We should all be able to agree it is long past time to bring fiscal sanity to Washington.

SUPPORTING OUR PARTNERS IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation called the HOPE and ALLIES Act to support our interpreters in Afghanistan.

I can't tell you how important this is on a personal level to me. In 2012, I was hit by an IED blast. That IED went off because one of our interpreters stepped on a pressure plate. His name was Raqman. He was responding to a call, responding to do his job, like they do day in and day out. They never get a break. And he stepped on that IED, about 10 to 15 pounds of explosives, and it ripped off all four of his limbs right away. I couldn't see him because I was blinded by the blast, but I could hear him.

When someone gets hit by an IED—you have probably seen in the movies—you think they scream. But they don't scream. They don't have the energy to scream. It is more like a groan. It is the deepest kind of pain that you can imagine. And I will never forget that sound.

Before he was hit, he expressed to us that one of his dreams would be to come back to San Diego, California, enlist in the military, and become a Navy SEAL. That was the kind of patriotism that he had. He wasn't even a citizen. Imagine if our own citizens loved their country the way that these guys did.

And that story is not unique. Raqman later died, but that legacy lived on. These interpreters showed such dedication to the cause; it is unimaginable, really. And as military units rotate in and out, we get to go home, we see our families. The interpreters stay out there. It is just another day for them. Meanwhile, their families are under threat. They are receiving anonymous phone calls constantly, threatening their lives, calling them infidels all because they supported the United States.

Now we are about to leave them. This administration is not doing enough to make sure that they don't get left to die. I am confident this body will do what it can, but it takes this administration to actually do something now before this hasty retreat occurs and before thousands and thousands and thousands of interpreters and contractors are killed; and they will be killed. They absolutely will be killed. Their families will be killed. The threats have already come, and it will happen if we don't do something about it.

Mr. Speaker, I call on this administration to do something about it. I call on the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security to get this process going, to expedite this process as quickly as possible. These people are heroes and they need to come to their new home here in the United States.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 34 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LANGEVIN) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, in the aftermath of the disaster in Miami, Florida, we commend to Your care and protection the ongoing search and rescue efforts.

We fervently pray that You would deliver all those that are yet clinging to life beneath the magnitude of the wreckage. Preserve their spirits even as they struggle with overwhelming fear for their lives. Grant them a glimpse of hope—even a miracle—that they would soon emerge from the terrifying prison of panic and distress.

And for the families of the missing and the dead, give them comfort and strength as they wait for an answer or grieve their loss. Even as they cling

desperately to a photo or a memory, may they find a way to hold fast to their faith in You.

Guide and strengthen the rescue workers who face the daunting task of digging through the concrete rubble and the devastation that surrounds them. May they have fortitude of body to brave the dangers of this precarious structure and fortification of faith to endure the suffering they attend to.

On behalf of all of these we pray with the psalmist: In our distress, we call upon You O Lord; to You O God, we cry for help. Hear our voices. May our cries reach Your heavens.

In the strength of Your name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. WAGNER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

REQUEST TO CONSIDER H.R. 18, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT

(Mrs. WAGNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a tireless advocate for the most vulnerable. I continue to fight for the Born-Alive Act to mandate lifesaving care for abortion survivors. And I also am proud to support H.R. 18, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, which will permanently prohibit taxpayer funding for abortions by enshrining the bipartisan Hyde amendment into law. Sadly, both the Born-Alive Act and the Hyde amendment are under attack by my Democrat colleagues.

The Hyde amendment protects taxpayers from paying for abortions and has saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

No one should be forced to financially support the abortion industry. I stand with the majority of Americans who believe in this essential conscience protection.