

most advanced firefighting technologies.

Containerized aerial firefighting systems provide ground crews with dependable cover from the air by providing a rapid surge of retardant to attack these fires from multiple points of contact.

These fires can spread and expand at alarming rates, making rapid and aggressive containment strategies absolutely critical.

We must provide firefighters with the tools and resources to do their courageous work effectively and safely.

Billions of dollars are spent each year on recovering and restoring the environment and helping to rebuild communities after wildfires.

By investing in technology to increase our capacity to fight fires, we can reduce the recovery spending and preserve California's renowned parkland and countless families' homes and irreplaceable belongings.

As California faces several devastating wildfires burning through our communities and beloved forestland, I ask my colleagues and the U.S. Forest Service to consider investment in containerized aerial firefighting systems and other technologies and resources.

We have a responsibility to protect our communities, our environment, and the firefighters who run toward danger and sacrifice their safety for the safety of others.

To do so, we must equip these brave men and women with the tools they need.

Again, I ask the Forest Service and my colleagues to examine the latest aerial firefighting capabilities as well as additional resources to protect our state and communities.

THOUGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS ON SPENDING

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

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, this body just spent several weeks considering a massive spending bill proposed by the Democrats. In my case, as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, we went through a 4-day markup considering the bill and debating the bill, and I want to just share some of my thoughts and takeaways.

The number one takeaway is that I just cannot comprehend how my Democrat colleagues on this bill are thinking. In fact, I hope the American people are paying attention because I have never seen such divergent views about how to create prosperity for all Americans. I have never seen such differing opinions about how to do it.

Now, I will give this to the Democrats: I believe they do want to see the American people prosper. They want to help people. I know we as Republicans want to do that, and I hope they grant us that same courtesy of believing that. But this administration has al-

ready spent trillions of dollars in the past 6 months, trillions of dollars, and now, with this bill, they want to spend another \$3½ trillion.

Democrats literally believe that Big Government is the answer. They believe Big Government will solve these problems and will help Americans prosper.

At the same time, they are disincentivizing work and advancing policies that increase dependence on the Federal Government as if they don't even understand that those who are working and businesses creating jobs and prospering are the ones who are paying the taxes that will pay for these programs. I just don't get it.

Republicans have a far different answer. We believe in the American people. We believe in their creativity, their hard work, their ingenuity. We believe in achieving the American Dream. I have lived that American Dream.

I was born in an Old Order Amish family, number 10 of 12 children. My father was first a farmer and then a roofer, raising 12 children on that income. I was the first in my family to graduate from high school. I paid for my own education. My parents required me to attend a private Christian school.

I bought a small business when I was 17 years old, operating out of a spare bedroom in my parents' home, and lived the American Dream. Over 25 years, I grew, with other family members, that company to be a leader in the type of construction we were doing, creating jobs for hundreds of Americans, family-sustaining jobs.

There are stories like that all across this body, all across the district that I represent, all across the country. It is what we call the American Dream, the idea that every generation can do better than their parents' generation and their grandparents' generation before them.

I think we have a choice in this body, and I think the choice is clear. Will we allow the government to dictate every facet of American life, or will we renew our trust in the American people and in their freedom? That is a question that will determine how our kids and our grandkids will be able to live and whether they have the same opportunities that we had.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, whose side I am on. I am on the side of the American people. We have already seen the damage done as a result of these policies that the Democrats have implemented.

We are seeing inflation where the American people are paying more for goods, and their paycheck is buying less than it did before. It is only going to get worse if we continue going down this path. These programs can only be paid for with more debt, printing money, or raising taxes on hard-working Americans. It doesn't work.

□ 1115

Tell me a time in history when it has worked, when a country has overdelivered, overspent, and overpromised.

Mr. Speaker, we have a choice in this body. Every American's desire to achieve greatness is what has made our country the envy of the world.

Let's reject these policies and let's put us on a path to allowing every American the chance to achieve their own American Dream.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to section 513, 529, and 529A of the National Defense Authorization Act.

Section 513 would require our daughters to register for Selective Service, which is the database behind the military draft.

I thank Congressman GREEN and Congressman DAVIDSON for allowing me the opportunity to cosponsor their amendments to strip this provision from the bill.

Unfortunately, the Rules Committee refused to make either amendment in order, meaning that Members are now not afforded the opportunity to vote their consciences on the issue of drafting our Nation's daughters.

Since our country's founding, women have played a vital role in many of the critical support functions in military forces. The choices these women made in raising their hands to volunteer, to wear the uniform, and to swear an oath to uphold the Constitution are commendable and should be honored. However, it is unconscionable to me that this body would enact a provision to force women into registering for Selective Service.

This would put women in a position where they could be called at random to report for duty before all registered males have been called in the extreme scenario of authorizing a draft during a national emergency.

First of all, adding women to Selective Service is unnecessary. Our Nation has been fortunate enough through volunteer enlistment to have a force that is battle-ready and capable of withstanding any threat posed by our adversaries. If that was not the case, we would not have had a completely voluntary military for the last 40 years. A draft has not been needed since the 1970s, and I am confident that if it ever did get to that point, we would have more than enough men to satisfy the need for increased combatants. And that is the purpose of the draft, to increase available combatants to replace combatants after casualty losses. Thus, this provision is nothing more than an attempt to search for a solution to a problem that would not exist.

In 2015, combat positions were open to women who could meet the physical requirements, but only a small number of women were able to meet those requirements because men and women are distinctly different and not the same physically.

A 2015 study in the Journal of Applied Physiology, found that, on average, men had about 26 pounds more skeletal muscle mass than women. For example, in the Marine Corps, the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force found that the musculoskeletal rate of injury for a woman was nearly twice the rate of injury for a man. And research at the Infantry Training Battalion found that the rate of injury for an enlisted woman was six times the rate of injury for a man. More muscle means more strength and less injury.

The U.S. Supreme Court has already upheld the constitutionality of an all-male draft. So why are we doing this? Why are we trying to draft our daughters? It is just not right.

Secondly, I have serious concerns about the lack of explicit accommodation provided in the text that would be needed to ensure we don't haphazardly draft two parents with dependents.

While I realize the bill modernizes language regarding to whom the President is authorized to grant deferments from training and service, which does take into consideration dependents, there is no explicit language to prevent both a mom and a dad from being drafted. That is greatly concerning to me. And it should be greatly concerning to all Americans.

I believe it is an issue that should be addressed by this body and not one determined by unelected officials at the Department of Defense.

The family unit has always and always will continue to play a critical role in forming the posterity of our Nation. And it is imperative that we strive to retain it to the extent within our power to do so and not to erode it. Ensuring women are never forced to sign up for Selective Service and, therefore, never drafted, would be the correct solution.

I also stand in opposition to section 529 of the NDAA, which would shred the due process rights of servicemembers while taking away their unalienable Second Amendment rights. Just think, this section of the NDAA would create the equivalent of a red flag law in the military to eliminate the due process rights of servicemembers who have fought to preserve those very rights for the rest of the country. That is the ultimate in hypocrisy.

I also stand in opposition to section 529A. It includes a prohibition that says an individual who engages in extremist activities or is a member of an extremist organization may not serve as a member of the Armed Forces.

The real issue is the definition of extremism: "The terms extremist activities and extremist organization have the meanings prescribed by the Secretary of Defense."

So it is up to the Secretary of Defense and, thus, under considerable influence of the administration and party in control to decide the meaning of the term.

Mr. Speaker, this area is ripe for First Amendment abuse.

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 11 o'clock and 21 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. BLUMENAUER) at noon.

PRAYER

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

O Lord our shepherd, in You we lack nothing. In You we are refreshed by the stillness of Your spirit, restored as with life-giving water. In You we are given respite in fields of tranquility, peaceful pastures far away from the troubles which pursue us.

Yet, even when our paths are fraught with danger, precarious and unpopular crossroads, and challenging no-win situations, You strengthen our resolve with the hope of Your blessing.

When we are threatened by those who do not know us or who do not even wish to understand us, we need not be afraid for the promise of Your protection comforts us. A table of Your gracious welcome is set before us.

Anoint us, O Lord, and allow us to see how abundant are Your blessings. You lay before us a bounty, a feast of Your faithfulness.

Surely Your goodness and mercy are extended to us. Pursue us when we stray from them. Sweep us up in Your loving embrace when we, like sheep, are lost or afraid.

Then, may the length of our days be spent in the delight of Your presence.

In Your most merciful 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 gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina 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.

CHILD CARE IS A CRITICAL ECONOMIC ISSUE

(Ms. SHERRILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because, for too long, women in our workforce have struggled with almost insurmountable childcare issues. Due to our lack of investment, our economy has lost too many talented women as they try to juggle the demands of work and childcare.

After gaining significant ground in the seventies, eighties, and nineties, and expanding our workforce, and increasing our GDP in the process, women have not made significant gains in the workforce in the last two decades. Two decades where women faced economic penalties when they were forced to leave the workforce due to lack of quality and affordable child care. Two decades where, if we had just kept pace with some of our allies, we would have grown our GDP by another \$600 billion.

I rise today because women falling behind is the American middle class falling behind. Penalizing women in the workforce penalizes families and imperils opportunities for our children. And this crisis has been made exponentially worse by COVID.

That is why I am calling on all my colleagues to support legislation to ensure all families have access to quality and affordable childcare. Congress needs to realize this is not simply a women's issue or a children's issue. This is a critical economic issue.

NATIONAL ESTUARIES WEEK

(Mr. POSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Estuaries Week, a special time to raise awareness about the vital role estuaries play in our communities and our economies, and to encourage local involvement in caring for our diverse ecosystems.

My home in Florida is part of an estuary called the Indian River Lagoon. Supporting the health of our lagoon also supports vast economic, environmental, and recreational needs of our communities.

When our Nation's estuaries are thriving, we know our environment, our fishermen, our businesses and, most importantly, our families are thriving. I encourage my colleagues to join us in recognizing National Estuaries Week and the important role estuaries play in our communities.

BE HUMBLE, NOT ARROGANT ABOUT COVID

(Mr. LIEU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)