

The decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Afghanistan and abandon Americans regardless of the conditions on the ground, has been correctly identified by Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL as “one of the worst foreign policy decisions in American history.” While President Donald Trump went a step further saying, “This is the greatest embarrassment . . . in the history of our country.”

President Trump has made clear his withdrawal would have been orderly and Bagram Air Base would have been maintained to defeat a terrorist safe haven.

Sadly, no response from the White House reveals admission of no ‘letters.’

It is also important to ask where the American media is on this critical issue of the claimed Afghanistan letters?

Ultimately, this ill-advised decision not only resulted in the death of U.S. servicemembers, but put the reputation and credibility of the U.S. in question, all while leaving the remaining American citizens in Afghanistan vulnerable.

The world is less safe with the Taliban regime emboldened.

In conclusion, God Bless our troops, who successfully protected America for 20 years, as the Global War on Terrorism continues moving from a safe haven in Afghanistan to America.

HONORING BRIANNA MCFIELD

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and self-motivated leader, Brianna McField. Brianna has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

Brianna McField is the 2013 Valedictorian of Yazoo County High School, an alumna of Millsaps College, and a current student at Jackson State University seeking her doctorate in Public Health Policy and Administration. She proves that beauty queens are more than pretty faces.

Brianna will go on to represent the state of Mississippi in the 2022 Miss Black USA Scholarship Pageant. She is a strong advocate for education and the uplift of women. Brianna has promoted women's empowerment and education about public health and social justice topics including heart disease, sex trafficking, autism awareness, and financial literacy.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brianna McField for her passion and dedication to educate the community on health and financial literacy.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF MR. KEN SPEARS OF NESHOPA COUNTY

HON. MICHAEL GUEST

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of Mr. Ken

Spears of Neshoba County, Mississippi. In Matthew 5:16 Jesus says, “let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Ken Spears undoubtedly was a man who embodied a servant's heart.

Mr. Spears dedicated his life to serving his community. He began his service as a law enforcement officer and continued in that role for 20 years. He cared for his community as a school bus driver for the Neshoba County School System. As a founding member of the Linwood Fire Department, he also served as a firefighter and board president.

Philippians 2:3–4 says, “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” Mr. Spears's life was an example of selflessly serving others and living a life of purpose that our Lord has called for us. He served his community wholeheartedly, was adored by many, and lived a life with compassion. I am inspired by Ken Spears's goodwill and selflessness, and I am grateful for his actions that touched numerous lives. The great State of Mississippi is proud to call Ken Spears one of its own.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERRY L. CARL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. CARL. Madam Speaker, on Roll Call No. 420 on final passage of Senate Amendment to H.R. 5376, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 420.

HONORING JOSEPHINE PRADIA RHYMES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an impeccable and an accomplished leader, Josephine Pradia Rhymes. Mrs. Rhymes currently is “officially” retired from Tri-County Workforce alliance after 25 years of dedicated service as of May 31, 2022. She has been a champion of education, and a leader of service in the Mississippi Delta and our great state.

Mrs. Rhymes received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Southern University and A & M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and her Master of Education degree from the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) in Oxford, Mississippi. She recently completed the requirements for the CITI Program at Ole Miss.

She was married to the late Robert A. Rhymes, Sr. She is the mother of one daughter Tarra Katrice Rhymes-Slack; one son Robert A. Rhymes, Jr.; a grandmother of one granddaughter, Pradia Nicole Slack; and one grandson Tyler Rhymes-Christian Slack.

Mrs. Rhymes, a Lake Charles, Louisiana native, was Executive Director of Tri-County Workforce Alliance ever since its implementation in 1997. Tri-County's mission is to pro-

mote long-term economic and community development by building a healthy and competitive workforce through education and job training to a three-county region (Bolivar, Coahoma, and Quitman counties) of the Mississippi Delta.

Mrs. Rhymes taught French, English, German, and Journalism at Clarksdale High School, and French, English, Oral Communication, and Journalism at Coahoma Community College for eleven (11) years. She taught school for 32 years total.

Mrs. Rhymes has won numerous awards over the years. At Clarksdale High she was selected “Star Teacher” four (4) times and was selected for Who's Who Among American Teachers in 1990. She received the NAACP's Education Heritage Award in 1992. Also, the English Honor Society at Clarksdale High School was named in her honor in 2014. It is called the Josephine Pradia Rhymes English Honor Society. She was inducted into Coahoma Community College's Sports Hall of Fame as a Community Leader Inductee; featured in a documentary by Blue Magnolia Films and Barefoot Workshops (through Nickalus Jones, a senior at Clarksdale High School) for her work to improve the lives of youth in Clarksdale; and as a part of the project, two life-size pictures are on the doors of the old Paramount Theater to help with revitalization of downtown Clarksdale.

Mrs. Rhymes continues to serve as a dedicated leader in the community. She is an advocate for the youth, education, and community service. She serves in a plethora of other community organizations in various capacities—her work and dedication is unending. Mrs. Rhymes has proven herself throughout her career and earned a reputation of impeccable character, unquestionable integrity, unparalleled professional achievement, and superior leadership.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Josephine Pradia Rhymes for her leadership, service, and dedication.

HONORING DINA VELOCCI

HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. GIMENEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dina Velocci, DNP, CRNA, APRN. Ms. Velocci, who is a constituent of Florida's 26th Congressional District, will soon complete her year as national president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA). I am proud that Ms. Velocci was elected as the 2021–2022 president of this prestigious national organization.

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) are advanced practice registered nurses who administer more than 50 million anesthetics to patients each year. They work in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered, including hospital surgical suites, obstetrical delivery rooms, ambulatory surgical centers, and the offices of dentists, podiatrists, and specialty surgeons. They also provide acute and chronic pain management services to patients in need of such care. CRNAs provide anesthesia for all types of surgical cases and are the sole anesthesia providers in many rural hospitals.

As a member of the AANA for 20 years, Ms. Velocci has contributed greatly to the healthcare community in the Key West area and nationwide. Ms. Velocci has long been active in nurse anesthesiology as both a CRNA and as a clinical and didactic instructor for nurse anesthetists. She supplied anesthesia services for office-based practices and free-standing surgery centers. She is also an innovator and entrepreneur and assisted in building and marketing an interactive web-based learning resource for CRNAs. Throughout her career in nurse anesthesiology, Ms. Velocci served on committees, advisory panels, and boards of directors at the state and national levels. She is a former president of the Tennessee Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Ms. Velocci on a job well done. Her service to her patients and to our community represents the best of our district. I am always proud to recognize constituents that go above and beyond for our community. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Velocci's notable career and outstanding achievements.

BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 12, 2022

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I came to Congress with a mission to make the federal government a better partner to local communities to make them more livable, healthy, and economically secure.

Last week, Congress made unprecedented progress on fulfilling the fundamental premise of this mission. The House and Senate both passed the Inflation Reduction Act, a historic investment in our nation's health, climate, and economy, including several provisions I authored to combat the climate crisis. President Biden is expected to sign the legislation into law this afternoon.

The Inflation Reduction Act will save Americans \$288 billion on health care over the next ten years. Critically, it will allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices, starting with the ten most expensive prescriptions. These negotiations will bring down costs for patients and taxpayers alike. When combined with new provisions capping Medicare beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs at \$2,000 a year, the legislation will make an extraordinary difference in peoples' lives.

This package is the single largest investment in climate action in our nation's history. It will deliver \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including for electric vehicles, solar and wind energy, pollution reduction, and support for the vulnerable communities most impacted by environmental degradation. Long term extensions to the production and investment tax credits, including direct pay and transferability provisions, are critical components in ending our dependence on fossil fuels. I am also pleased that the investment tax credit was expanded to include energy storage projects, a key piece of the puzzle in delivering renewable energy to households at any time of day.

Combatting the climate crisis also means investing in infrastructure that is sustainable and

efficient. Clean transportation incentives like an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles, an expanded credit to charge e-bikes and e-scooters, and incentives to electrify commercial fleets will help accelerate the reduction of carbon emissions and fossil fuels in our day-to-day activities. Likewise, any construction projects in the 21st century must be made to meet the needs and goals of our communities. That's why I advocated for provisions in this package that make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable.

While working families in our community and across the nation are struggling to pay for basic goods like gas, groceries, and rent, ultra-wealthy corporations are raking in record profits. Inflation is hitting Americans hard while many corporations aren't paying their fair share. This legislation will enact a corporate minimum tax of 15 percent. Currently, hundreds of the largest corporations in America pay substantially less, or nothing, in taxes. This provision ensures that large corporations will pay a minimum of 15 percent in taxes. The legislation also makes polluters pay by including my legislation reinstating the Superfund tax on crude oil.

It is no secret that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is outmatched. Decades of chronic underfunding have left the IRS understaffed and overburdened, allowing hundreds of billions of dollars in taxes owed to go uncollected. This legislation provides \$3.2 billion for taxpayer services and \$45.6 billion for enforcement, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will raise more than \$200 billion in additional revenue for the federal government. By investing in the IRS, we can finally close the "tax gap" between what people owe and what they end up paying.

The Inflation Reduction Act represents more than the sum of these individual provisions, it is proof that our system works and that the United States has the capacity to solve our most pressing challenges in the years ahead.

HONORING GLORIA TRIPLETT-JACKSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable educator and recent retiree, Mrs. Gloria Triplett-Jackson.

Mrs. Jackson began her educational journey in the '70s as a basketball player and graduate from Greenville High School, where she became the high school first female to play in the Mississippi High School All Star game.

Mrs. Jackson went on to further her education at Alcorn State University, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. She began her career teaching and coaching at Jonesboro High School in Louisiana, while in graduate school at Grambling State University.

Nine Years later, Mrs. Jackson returned to Greenville and finished her second master's degree at Delta State University. Mrs. Jackson spent more than 22 years in the Leland School District, serving in a number of positions, such as a teacher, coach, assistant prin-

icipal, principal, curriculum specialist, and eventually superintendent until 2015. Under Mrs. Jackson's leadership, Leland School District improved, moving from an "F" failing rating to a "C" successful rating.

After a short stint of running her own educational consulting firm, Mrs. Jackson returned to public school as the principal at Riverside Elementary in the Western Line School District. Once again, she propelled her school to excellence by becoming one of the few schools in the Mississippi Delta to receive an "A" rating, which the school has maintained to date. She has also served as the Deputy Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer for Western Line for the past four years.

Mrs. Jackson has received numerous accolades over the years from Western Line School District, Washington County, DAAIS, MHSAA, and from the state of Mississippi for her accomplishments as a public school leader.

After a successful career in public education, of more than 40 years, Mrs. Jackson has decided to embrace retirement and any new challenges ahead.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Gloria Triplett-Jackson for her passion and dedication to serving and educating her community.

CONGRESSIONAL BANGLADESH CAUCUS INAUGURATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I join with my colleagues, Congressmen GERRY CONNOLLY, DWIGHT EVANS, and STEVE CHABOT as a Co-Chair of the Congressional Bangladesh Caucus.

We look forward to strengthening the United States-Bangladesh Relationship on the basis of our shared democratic values to address major issues, including climate change, human rights, and humanitarian challenges. The People of Bangladesh are well represented by the Bangladeshi Ambassador M Shahidul Islam.

The Caucus was established, in part, to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Bangladesh, which began in 1972, soon after Bangladesh secured its independence from Pakistan. The United States has been a long-standing partner in Bangladesh's journey to economic development and democratic institution building since that time.

During the last 50 years, Bangladesh has made significant socio-economic progress, including increased food production, disaster management capacity building, poverty alleviation, improved health and education, and women's empowerment. For more than a decade, Bangladesh has remained one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and its economic growth is not only benefiting its own people, but is also contributing to the peace, progress, and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region.

Significantly, no other country in the world commits more forces to United Nations Peacekeeping.

Bangladesh has a population of over 170 million, with a per capita income higher than