

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your expeditious response.

Sincerely,

ROGER MARSHALL,
United States Senator.
BRENDAN BOYLE,
Member of Congress.
FRENCH HILL,
Member of Congress.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, this recent omission tracks with the administration's diplomacy disconnect from our American values. First, earlier this year, State erred and did not include Nigeria, leaving them off as a country of particular concern for religious freedom. And now it is Syria left off as a major drug-producing country.

Mr. Speaker, this is why this bill is so critical and important at this time.

We need an all-of-Government approach to addressing the Assad regime's drug production and trafficking.

Captagon has already reached Europe, and it is only a matter of time before it reaches our shores. If we do not work with our like-minded partners to first hinder the narcotics trade and replace it with a working system of institutions that serve the Syrian people, then Assad will, in fact, add the title drug kingpin to his recognized global status as a leading mass murderer.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, FRENCH HILL, for authoring this very, very important piece of legislation. It mandates an interagency strategy on how the U.S. is responding to the destabilizing Captagon drug trade in the Middle East.

Captagon, as I think my colleagues know, is a highly addictive amphetamine that is fast becoming the most widely abused drug in the Middle East. Given the growing threat Captagon poses to the stability in the region and to individual human lives, the lack of resources devoted to address its proliferation is alarming.

In addition to this drug trade creating a crisis along Jordan's border, there is growing evidence that the murderous Assad regime is deeply involved in Captagon trafficking. This narco trafficking fuels Assad's war on the Syrian people and further threatens regional stability. The administration clearly is not doing enough, as was pointed out by my good friend and colleague, FRENCH HILL, to focus on this threat, which is why we need this bill to admonish the administration and to force the administration, the executive branch, to acknowledge this problem and to respond to it.

The CAPTAGON Act will help ensure that we are countering this destabilizing drug trade which is helping to bankroll one of the most brutal tyrants of our time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, once again, my colleagues, Representatives FRENCH HILL and BRENDAN BOYLE, for introducing this critical legislation. I hope all of our colleagues will join us in supporting it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6265.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

URGING THE EUROPEAN UNION TO DESIGNATE HIZBALLAH IN ITS ENTIRETY AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 558) urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 558

Whereas, in April 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States Embassy in Beirut killed 63 people;

Whereas, in October 1983, a Hizballah terror attack against the United States Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killed 241 American and 58 French servicemembers supporting the Multinational Force peace-keeping mission;

Whereas, in July 2012, a Hizballah terror attack, carried out by an operative with dual Lebanese-French citizenship, in Burgas, Bulgaria, killed 5 Israeli tourists and 1 Bulgarian;

Whereas, in March 2013, a Swedish-Lebanese Hizballah operative in Cyprus was convicted of planning terror attacks against Israeli tourists;

Whereas, in June 2015, a Hizballah operative was sentenced to 6 years in prison after he stockpiled more than 8 tons of ammonium nitrate in Cyprus;

Whereas the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-102) and the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-272) broadened financial sector sanctions against Hizballah to compel foreign financial institutions to refrain from supporting the terrorist group;

Whereas, in May 2018, the Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on Abdullah Safi-Al-Din, Hizballah's representative to Iran, Mohammad Ibrahim Bazzi, a Hizballah financier, and blacklisted 5 of Bazzi's companies, including Belgian energy services conglomerate Global Trading Group NV;

Whereas, in October 2018, French police raided the Islamic Zahra Centre on suspicion

of supporting Hizballah, freezing the organization's funds, and seizing illegal weapons;

Whereas, in September 2020, 4 former leaders of the Zahra Centre France were arrested on suspicion of continuing to run the association;

Whereas, in July 2019, the Department of the Treasury designated 2 Hizballah-backed members of Lebanese Parliament, Amin Sherri and Muhammad Hasan Ra'd, and Hizballah security official Wafiq Safa, stating that Hizballah uses its operatives in parliament to advance its violent activities;

Whereas, as of April 2020, Germany believed there to be 1,050 people with suspected links to Hizballah in the country;

Whereas Europol's June 2020 European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report outlined that Hizballah is "suspected of trafficking diamonds and drugs and of money laundering via the trade in second-hand cars", and the report also stated that "investigations face the difficulty of demonstrating that the funds collected are channeled to the military wing of the organization";

Whereas United States-led Project Cassandra and Operation Cedar exposed the criminal-business wing of Hizballah, the Business Affairs Component (BAC) of Hezbollah's External Security Organization;

Whereas, during Project Cassandra, Hizballah elements involved in drug trafficking were arrested in the United States, South America, and several European countries, including France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy;

Whereas Hizballah's criminal activity in Europe is run by the BAC, which reports to the External Security Organisation, also known as Unit 910, or the Islamic Jihad Organization, and Abdallah Safieddine, Hizballah's representative in Iran, is also involved in this activity;

Whereas, in August 2020, United Nations Secretary General Guterres called on Lebanon to disarm Hizballah, citing the terror group's persistent violation of Resolution 1701 (2006);

Whereas Iran is the prime sponsor of Hizballah, harboring, financing, training, and arming the group;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury and Department of State estimate that Iran provides as much as \$700,000,000 per year to Hizballah in the form of financial and logistical support, weapons, and training;

Whereas Hizballah now has an arsenal of approximately 150,000 missiles and rockets, many of which can reach deep into Israel;

Whereas Hizballah fighters have been supporting the Assad regime in Syria, often leading operations in the conflict which has left more than 500,000 dead;

Whereas Hizballah's destabilizing actions in Syria have contributed to a migrant crisis that has brought over 700,000 refugees to Europe;

Whereas Hizballah trains and provides weapons for militias in Iraq and Yemen, further destabilizing the region and perpetuating violence in those countries;

Whereas Hizballah activities continue to plague Lebanon with profound economic and political instability and violence;

Whereas, in August 2020, at least 220 people died and thousands more were injured when a massive stockpile of ammonium nitrate exploded in Beirut's port;

Whereas Hizballah's cross border illicit arms and drugs trafficking undermines the Lebanese Armed Forces, the legitimate security establishment of the country as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006);

Whereas, in October 2012, Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem stated that "[Hizballah does not] have a military wing

and a political one . . . Every element of Hizballah, from commanders to members as well as our various capabilities, are in the service of the resistance”;

Whereas the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Serbia, and Kosovo, among others, have designated Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization;

Whereas, in March 2016, the Gulf Cooperation Council formally branded Hizballah, in its entirety, a terrorist organization, and the League of Arab States shortly thereafter adopted the same designation;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury has diligently added persons and entities to the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists who have provided material support to the Hizballah terrorist organization, thereby hampering its financing and logistical capabilities;

Whereas the European Union, in July 2013, designated Hizballah's so-called “military wing”, but not the organization as a whole, as a terrorist organization;

Whereas, despite restrictions put on Hizballah since the designation of its military wing, the group continues to conduct illicit narcotrafficking, money laundering, and weapons trafficking throughout Europe and the world; and

Whereas the House of Representatives has previously called on the European Union to fully designate Hizballah as a terrorist organization, passing House Resolution 359 in October 2017: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) applauds and expresses support for the continued, increased cooperation between the United States and the European Union (EU) in thwarting Hizballah's criminal and terrorist activities;

(2) supports transcontinental efforts within Europe to share intelligence information among police and security services to facilitate greater cooperation in tracking, apprehending, and prosecuting terrorists, foreign fighters, and potential offenders;

(3) encourages the European Union to implement sanctions against Hizballah-affiliated terrorists in tandem with the United States;

(4) recommends greater civil society engagement in both the United States and Europe to underscore Hizballah's malign regional influence; and

(5) urges the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and increase pressure on the group, including through—

(A) facilitating better cross-border cooperation between European Union members in combating Hizballah;

(B) issuing arrest warrants against members and active supporters of Hizballah;

(C) freezing Hizballah's assets in Europe, including those masquerading as charities; and

(D) prohibiting fundraising activities in support of Hizballah.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 558, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 558, urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

I thank first my dear friend, TED DEUTCH, the chairman of our Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism for reintroducing this important legislation which previously did pass the House in the 115th Congress. When Ted departs our Foreign Affairs Committee in October, we are all going to miss his voice, particularly on issues regarding the Middle East, and his tireless advocacy in defense of American interests and those of our allies around the world.

Now, despite all we know about Hizballah, a murderous, terrorist organization that also serves as an Iranian proxy in the region, our friends and partners in the European Union only include Hizballah's military branch, not its political branch, on its list of sanctioned terrorist organizations.

The Government of the United States, in contrast, makes no distinction between its two branches and includes Hizballah in its entirety on the U.S. foreign terrorist organization list because we know they are one and the same. The European Union is long overdue in coming to the same realization.

Congress is pleased that many individual European countries have acted despite the position of the E.U. as a whole. The Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council have also designated Hizballah in its entirety. So it remains troubling that the E.U., an organization that shares so many of our values, interests, and policy goals, continues to allow Hizballah's political wing to operate freely, advancing Hizballah's violent agenda around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this important resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

I would like to start off by thanking my good friend and colleague, TED DEUTCH, for not only introducing this important resolution but his tremendous work during his tenure in the House, particularly in combating anti-Semitism. There is no better friend of Israel than TED DEUTCH, and there is no better friend of the Jewish community that is under siege here in the United States and around the world than TED DEUTCH.

□ 1545

He and I co-chaired the House Anti-Semitism Task Force. As we all know,

and many of my colleagues know, he is leaving on October 1 to head up the American Jewish Committee, AJC.

What is AJC's gain is our loss, for Mr. DEUTCH has brought character and leadership to this Congress, and he will be deeply missed, and I thank him again for his very, very strong voice.

Mr. Speaker, as the Lebanese lira continues its downward decline, Hizballah has become increasingly reliant on illicit criminal networks across Europe to help finance their criminal enterprise.

Combating Hizballah's malign activity requires robust transatlantic law enforcement cooperation. This can only take place once Hizballah is designated as a terrorist organization in its entirety.

Recognizing an arbitrary distinction between Hizballah's political and military wings gives Hizballah space to operate across Europe, providing legal cover for its military wing to continue financing terrorism through its political branch.

There is no distinction between Hizballah's political and military wings—both serve the same ugly malign agenda that seeks to undermine the stability of the Lebanese state, prop up the murderous dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad, and threaten Israel's security.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the recent steps taken by Germany and others to designate Hizballah in full as a terrorist organization, and all of the European Union needs to do likewise.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING).

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative MALINOWSKI, for yielding. I also thank my dear friend and colleague, Congressman TED DEUTCH, for his tremendous leadership on this and so many issues as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism. It is a privilege to serve with him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 558, a bipartisan resolution I was proud to help introduce with Chairman DEUTCH, urging the European Union to designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

The Iranian-backed terrorist group, Hizballah, is responsible for thousands of civilian deaths, not just in the Middle East, but around the globe. Until 9/11, Hizballah had killed more Americans than any other terrorist group. Today, it maintains an arsenal of 150,000 rockets aimed at Israel.

Just this past week, Hizballah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, issued a series of grave threats and provocations against Israel, claiming its missiles are locked on an Israel offshore gas field, which Israel seeks to develop to export much-needed energy supplies to Europe.

This is another reminder of why it is incomprehensible that any EU member

can credibly assert any distinction between Hezbollah's so-called military and political wings. The truth is, there is one unified Hezbollah, and it is dedicated to carrying out terrorist activities around the world.

That is why this bipartisan resolution calls on our partners in the EU to take a stronger stand against worldwide terrorism by designating Hezbollah—as a whole—as a terrorist organization.

We must continue to keep pressure on Hezbollah and all other terrorist groups that threaten the United States and our ally Israel, and undermine peace, security, and stability throughout the region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this bipartisan measure, and I thank Chairman DEUTCH for his steadfast leadership on this important issue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Mr. MALINOWSKI, for yielding, and for his friendship, leadership, and kind words. I thank my other friend from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his leadership and for his kind words. I thank Ms. MANNING for her leadership and kind words, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 558, which urges the European Union to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization.

Mr. Speaker, this is Hezbollah. Hezbollah that bombed the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the U.S. and French Marine barracks in Beirut, the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, the AMIA Jewish Center in Buenos Aires, bombed Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, and has—as Ms. MANNING pointed out—over 150,000 rockets pointed at Israeli civilians.

First, I thank Chairman MEEKS and Ranking Member MCCAUL for their leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee and for bringing this resolution to the floor today.

I also want to extend my gratitude to my good friend from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for partnering with me on this resolution, and to Ranking Member JOE WILSON for his leadership on the subcommittee and for his commitment to working with me on this and a host of so many other critical issues—issues critical to America's security.

Mr. Speaker, I also take this moment on the House floor to thank my Foreign Affairs staff, Sophie Mirviss, MENA staff director; professional staff member, Jack Steinberg; and of course, Casey Kustin, our former staff director.

Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, a Hezbollah suicide bomber blew up a bus in Burgas, Bulgaria. On that bus were 42 Israeli tourists, mostly young people. That day, Hezbollah ended five lives and injured 32 others. In 2013, almost exactly 1 year later, the Euro-

pean Union took action to designate Hezbollah's military wing as a terrorist organization.

But the inadvertent result of this designation was that a false distinction was made: a false distinction between Hezbollah's military and political wings. Let me be clear, there are no different branches of Hezbollah; it is in its entirety a terrorist organization.

You don't need to take my word for this. The United States Government makes no distinction between the organization's branches and includes Hezbollah, in its entirety, on the U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organization List. But you also don't need to take our Government's word for it, or the word of Germany, Israel, Guatemala, Argentina, the United Kingdom, or the many other countries that have designated all of Hezbollah, rightfully, as a terrorist organization. Take Hezbollah's word for it. One of their own representatives in the Lebanese Parliament explicitly said, "the military wing of Hezbollah is inseparable from its political wing."

It is a fact that Hezbollah is one unified terrorist organization. An organization that, with support from the Iranian regime, has carried out horrific terror attacks around the globe and continues to spread violence and terror throughout the Middle East.

It is an Iranian terror proxy. The same Iranian regime whose President last night on American television deemed the reality of the Holocaust—deemed it false—denied the reality of the Holocaust. It denied Israel's very right to exist.

Iran-backed Hezbollah consistently threatens Israel and its citizens with drones, missiles, threats of invasion, and undermines stability and economic opportunity in Lebanon. What's more, the organization supports the brutal Assad regime and is complicit in its murder of more than half a million people from the ongoing conflict in Syria.

The facts are clear: Around the world, Hezbollah should be designated as a terrorist organization in its entirety.

That is why I stand in support of this resolution: as global partners of the United States and key players in the international rules-based order, the EU must designate all of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization so we can increase global cooperation to isolate and dismantle this group.

I recognize there are legal concerns from our European friends that designating all of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization could prevent support for the Lebanese people, as Hezbollah has infiltrated the country's political system.

The EU rightful recognizes Hamas in its entirety as a terrorist organization, despite that fact that Hamas operates as a political party in Gaza. This does not impact the EU's ability to support Gaza reconstruction, just as designating Hezbollah as a whole would not

prevent the EU from supporting the needs of the people of Lebanon, and the refugees inside Lebanon.

It is time for the EU to fix this false distinction once and for all, and the global momentum is on our side. In 2016, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League both designated Hezbollah as a terrorist organization with no distinction between its political and military wings, despite Lebanon being a member of the Arab League. The EU should take note of that.

A full EU designation now would demonstrate Europe's commitment to cracking down on Iran's use of proxy terrorist groups, destabilizing the region, and attacking our shared national security priorities.

This resolution sends an important message to our European allies. More can and must be done to counter the Iranian proxy Hezbollah, which begins with calling them what they are, a terrorist organization in its entirety that is committed to the destruction of our ally, Israel, and continues to undermine the values and interests of both the United States and Europe. It is time for the EU to join us in designating Hezbollah in its entirety. A nearly identical measure passed the House in 2017 by voice vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute and 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress in April 2010 committed to standing up to Iran's malign activities, and support for Hezbollah is a prime example. As I prepare to conclude my time in this Chamber, I urge my colleagues to continue to unite the world against Iran's terror proxies and to boldly take action to ensure Iran never has nuclear weapons; never forgets that the U.S. will always stand against its human rights violations, against its support for terror, against its anti-Semitism, against its call for Israel's destruction, against its unlawfully detention of Americans—Morad Tahbaz, Emad Sharghi, Siamak Namazi, Baquer Namazi, and refuses to bring closure to the family of Bob Levinson.

My colleagues, we must continue to stand up to Iran's aggression. Today's vote is a vote to urge our European allies to designate all of Hezbollah—what it is—an Iran-backed terror proxy.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their cooperation on this bill, and I thank them for their friendship all these many years.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly agree with Representative DEUTCH. I have always believed the first principle of foreign policy is to call things by their proper name. Sometimes we have to be pragmatic in our dealings around the world, but always start by being honest. Hezbollah is a terrorist organization.

Say it. The European Union should do so, as well.

Today, we are being heard again on a bipartisan basis—loud and clear—and I hope the European Union hears our message. I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 558, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1600

HELEN KELLER NATIONAL CENTER REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2022

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1433) to reauthorize the Helen Keller National Center for Youths and Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1433

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Helen Keller National Center Reauthorization Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. HELEN KELLER NATIONAL CENTER REAUTHORIZED.

The first sentence of section 205(a) of the Helen Keller National Center Act (29 U.S.C. 1904(a)) is amended by striking “1999 through 2003” and inserting “2023 through 2027”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEMPOLINSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1433, the Helen Keller National Center Reauthorization Act of 2022.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1433, the Helen Keller National Center

Reauthorization Act, which would reauthorize the Helen Keller National Center for 5 years.

The Helen Keller National Center for Youths and Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind was first authorized by Congress in 1967 to assist the deaf-blind community in America.

To this day, it is the only comprehensive national program that provides information, referrals, support, and training exclusively to Americans who have combined vision and hearing loss, while also supporting families and professionals who work with the deaf-blind community.

Moreover, the Helen Keller National Center is the only comprehensive national program that provides for information, referral, support, and training exclusively to youth and adults who have combined vision and hearing loss. The center also supports families and professionals who work with the deaf-blind community.

Thankfully, through our actions today, we will be one step closer to reauthorizing the center’s important work through 2027.

The Helen Keller center performs life-changing work. This work and the population it serves deserve all of our support.

Lastly, I thank the sponsor of the legislation, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN), and the cosponsors, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK), for their leadership on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support the American deaf-blind community and support this bipartisan legislation before us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SEMPOLINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1433, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Helen Keller National Center Act.

This center is unique. In fact, it is the only one of its kind. Since 1967, the center has helped individuals with combined vision and hearing loss by providing them, as well as their families and service providers, with specialized, intensive services to help them lead successful and independent lives. This includes, but isn’t limited to, career and technical education.

Simply put, the center offers hope and dignity to those it serves. This center is on the forefront of research in developing new and innovative ways for those that are deaf-blind to live a full and independent life. The end goal is allowing those with combined vision and hearing loss to work and thrive in communities of their choice.

The Helen Keller National Center is living up to the legacy of its namesake. Helen Keller is the epitome of perseverance. She overcame every obstacle to lead a successful life that impacted the lives of so many.

She once wrote, “A happy life consists not in the absence but in the mastery of hardships.” There is so much we can learn from Helen Keller’s commitment to serving others despite her own trials.

This bipartisan bill will ensure that the Helen Keller National Center continues to help deaf-blind youth and adults triumph over adversity, just as Helen Keller did more than 50 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and, in doing so, empower those who are deaf-blind to live full, successful, and independent lives. This bill will help ensure these students and adults have all the resources they need to reach their fullest potential.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI), a cosponsor of the legislation.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for giving me the opportunity to speak in support of H.R. 1433, the reauthorization of the Helen Keller National Center for Youths and Adults Who Are Deaf-Blind in our country.

Let me start by thanking not only the chairman but Congressman POCAN and all of my colleagues who, on a bipartisan basis, have shown overwhelming support for this legislation and the national center.

The Helen Keller National Center for the Deaf-Blind, located in my district, is the only center of its type anywhere in the Nation. People from all over the country travel to the center for help, and they have regional support centers, as well.

In my first 2 weeks in office, back in 2017, I visited the Helen Keller National Center for the first time. I heard stories from people whose lives were changed and whose families’ lives were changed because of the miracles that were brought into their lives by this exceptional national treasure.

People’s lives have been changed dramatically because of the work of this center supported by this Congress for 55 years, since 1967. We need to continue to support the center.

I thank my colleagues for the great work that they have done in supporting it and continuing to increase its funding year after year. Let us keep working together on a bipartisan basis to serve the people of our country, especially this vulnerable population. Imagine what it would be like to be deaf and blind.

This is truly a national treasure, and I thank my colleagues for their support.

Mr. SEMPOLINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of reauthorizing the Helen Keller National Center Act.

Helen Keller’s story is an example of determination and hard work. Not only did she overcome her difficulties, but