

the baseball Little League World Series.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of these young athletes who represented our district and State so well on the national stage. Congratulations to them and their families on their success.

THE PANDEMIC IS OVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. McCLAIN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reiterate an important statement made by our President: The pandemic is over.

This weekend on "60 Minutes," President Biden finally said what most Americans have known for months: We are no longer in the COVID-19 pandemic.

So if the President just admitted it, that means the national emergency is over, correct?

If that is the case, then why did the President just tell the country that the pandemic is so bad that we should forgive billions of dollars of student debt, or that it is because of the ongoing pandemic that we must continue to enforce a vaccine mandate on our Nation's military?

□ 1015

I will tell you why—it is because it was never about the pandemic. It was about the President bypassing Congress and the Constitution to push his radical socialist agenda.

Mr. Speaker, President Biden himself has said the pandemic is over. It is past time that we strip him of his emergency powers and end the vaccine mandates and reject all COVID-related funding requests.

CONGRATULATING THE LAS VEGAS ACES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and congratulate the Las Vegas Aces on winning the Women's National Basketball Association Championship this past Sunday.

On September 18, 2022, the Las Vegas Aces defeated the Connecticut Sun 78–71 in game four of the WNBA finals. The Aces won the championship three games to one and secured the first major professional sports championship in the history of the city of Las Vegas.

Even before the playoffs, the Aces had an incredible season led by rookie head coach Becky Hammon, who became the first former NBA player and rookie head coach to win the NBA championship.

Every member of the team, including Kiersten Bell, Sydney Colson, Chelsea Gray, Dearica Hamby, Theresa Plaisance, Kelsey Plum, Iliana Rupert, Aisha Sheppard, Kiah Stokes, Riquna Williams, A'ja Wilson, and Jackie

Young was critical to the success of the Aces this year.

Since coming to Las Vegas in 2018, the Aces have played well, but, unfortunately, up until now they were unable to win at all.

In 2020, during the COVID-shortened season and without key players due to injury, the team still made the WNBA finals but were ultimately turned back.

In 2021, the team was set for greatness, but, unfortunately, fell short in heartbreaking fashion in game five of the Western Conference Finals.

In the lead-up to the 2022 season, the team lost key players to free agency, and former coach Bill Laimbeer retired, but the organization shifted its focus and approach and took the league by storm.

Led by prolific three-point shooting, the Aces dominated the regular season and ended with a league best record of 26–10, securing the Commissioner's Cup along the way.

Heading into the playoffs, the team was primed for success.

Led by forward A'ja Wilson, who won this year's regular season Most Valuable Player, also Defensive Player of the Year, and first-team All-WNBA honors, fellow All-WNBA honors guard Kelsey Plum, and WNBA Most Improved Player Jackie Young, the Las Vegas Aces dominated the playoffs.

In the finals, Chelsea Gray delivered a tremendous performance, averaging 18 points per game in the series and winning the WNBA finals Most Valuable Player. In the championship-clinching game, Riquna Williams scored a crucial 17 points, with her incredible three-point shooting, to lift the Aces to victory.

Following this victory, Aces players Chelsea Gray, Kelsey Plum, Jackie Young, and A'ja Wilson, who competed and won gold medals for the United States in the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, joined an exclusive club of players who won both Olympic gold and the WNBA championship.

In closing, I congratulate owner Mark Davis who, through continued investment and caring, has put women's basketball on the map in Las Vegas; Coach Becky Hammon; all the amazing players, led by the A'ja Wilson; and the entire Las Vegas organization led by its president, Nikki Fargas, and general manager, Natalie Williams. Congratulations on this tremendous achievement.

The city of Las Vegas and all of southern Nevada are extremely proud of the Aces. They certainly raised the stakes and hit the jackpot.

RECOGNIZING 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF FINCASTLE, VIRGINIA

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 250th anniversary of Fincastle, Virginia.

In 1772, western-moving settlers John Mill and Israel Christian founded the

town of Fincastle, and by 1784 there were 59 homes as well as taverns and the early formation of a justice system.

Once Virginia's gateway to the West, Fincastle is the county seat of Botetourt, which once extended to the Mississippi River. Meriweather Lewis and William Clark visited Fincastle during their great expedition into the West. William returned to Fincastle and married Julia Hancock in 1808 in the historic home, Santillane. The town has been nationally recognized as a Lewis and Clark community.

Passing settlers stopped in Fincastle on their way into the interior of what would become the United States, conducting business and buying goods from the merchants in town.

Today, Fincastle proudly maintains its heritage and history.

Their version of the Botetourt County Courthouse, designed by President Thomas Jefferson, is located in Fincastle and contains records going back hundreds of years.

Fincastle's annual Historic Fincastle Festival will be a bit more special this year, celebrating the town's 250th anniversary, and being held this weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent this historic town, a bedrock of the oldest colony and the great Commonwealth of Virginia.

BIDEN'S RADICAL AGENDA

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to criticize President Biden and House Democrats in Washington for turning their backs on hardworking families.

Month after month, they have continued to advance a radical agenda that has crushed the American Dream.

Grocery costs are up 13½ percent, electricity costs are up 15½ percent, fuel oil costs are up nearly 70 percent. Everything has gone up since this failed President took office. Why? Because Biden and the Democrats are obsessed with spending taxpayer dollars and pushing Socialist Green New Deal policies.

Last week, after yet another inflation report showed that prices were up again, Joe Biden and the Democrats threw a party at the White House. To add insult to injury, on his recent interview on "60 Minutes," President Biden had zero remorse for the devastating effects of his raging inflation crisis.

He continues to claim that the economy is great and that tons of jobs are being created. That is a lie. Here is what he is not telling you. Full-time jobs are way down, and it is only part-time jobs that are growing.

Biden and Democrats have sent a clear message that they don't care about American families. There is one solution to this problem: Stop reckless government spending. Virginia families are sick and tired of paying the price for Biden's radical agenda.

When Republicans retake the majority next year, we will end this inflation-fueled spending, fix this broken economy, and deliver power back to the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LOIS FRANKEL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, about a year ago, it was 4 a.m. in the morning when I got a call from the West Palm Beach paramedics. They had received a call from my mother's Apple watch—believe it or not—and they rushed to her apartment, and they found her lying on her apartment floor. She had fallen and broken her hip.

I stayed close as she suffered through surgery and hospitalization and rehabilitation. I counted the endless medical bills paid by Medicare and her own personal funds. I watched as my independent mom became fearful of living alone and moved into an assisted living facility.

Mr. Speaker, I will say, there is some very good news about my mom, she is alive and well and adapting to her new lifestyle. She uses a walker and aging has reduced her stamina, but her bridge partners will tell you she still has a very sharp mind.

Listen to this. Her surgeon told me her recovery at her age, which was 96 at the time of the fall, was an exception, that most her age, after a brutal injury, quickly sundown to death.

Mr. Speaker, you may ask why am I telling this story? Because tomorrow is the first day of fall, and not only are the leaves turning, but it marks the start of Fall Prevention Awareness Week, a nationwide effort to raise awareness that falls are preventable, and also, to bring awareness to fall prevention strategies and resources.

Mr. Speaker, after my mom fell, I started hearing story after story from friends and colleagues about their own personal experiences of people who had fallen, and you know what I learned? Falls are the most frequent cause of injuries and injury-related death among people over 65.

There are 36 million falls a year in people over 65 here in America, leading to broken bones and broken spirits, and 34,000 of those becoming deadly. The cost—this is an amazing figure—the cost to the American health system is \$50 billion a year from injuries related to falls. That is billion with a b.

Here is the most important message I have today: Falls are preventable. I am going to say it again: Falls are preventable. There are simple things that seniors can do with assistance from their doctors and their family and their friends and caretakers to stop the falls before they happen.

Here are some of the top tips from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Make sure that medications

don't have side effects that can cause dizziness or loss of balance, stay hydrated, get eyes checked every year. And because most falls happen in the home, make critical changes like installing grab bars, clearing tripping hazards, and make sure that the rugs are flat on the floor. If necessary, use mobility aids like walkers and canes, when needed, even in your own home.

There are also simple exercises that seniors can do to improve joint strength, especially in the ankles, to help improve balance and stability.

I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that the House Labor, Health, and Human Services' budget plusses up fall prevention research and programs in the 2023 budget. I am hoping that the Senate will go along with that.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all my colleagues to recognize this week as Fall Prevention Awareness Week and help me spread the word: Falls are preventable. It is on all of us to keep our loved ones on their feet.

SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Louisiana (Ms. LETLOW) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LETLOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express disappointment and frustration of thousands of my constituents after our effort to bring H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, to the floor for a vote, which was delayed this week.

The Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset are unfair, bureaucratic deductions that cheat nearly 2 million Americans out of their earned Social Security benefits.

These rules impact our public servants—the teachers who educate our children, firefighters and police officers who keep our communities safe. At a time when we desperately need more men and women to enter these fields, knowing these penalties exist deter them from pursuing these occupations.

WEP and GPO have been in place since the 1980s and Congress has ignored this problem for decades. I want to be clear, we are not trying to create new entitlement programs or forgive debt. We are trying to ensure that retirees obtain the benefits that are rightly theirs.

Just last week, I received a letter from Carla Moreau, a teacher from Bunkie, Louisiana, who retired after spending 23 years in the classroom.

Carla recently lost her husband, Gerard, to cancer at age 60. However, due to WEP and GPO, she is ineligible to receive his Social Security survivor benefits simply because she was a teacher. If Carla had chosen any other profession outside of public service, she would automatically receive those benefits just like any other American would.

Mr. Speaker, Carla's story is just one of the many from across my district and around our country, and each one

is heartbreaking and unjust. Not a single day goes by that I don't hear from a constituent who is impacted.

□ 1030

Since I took office over 1 year ago, almost 3,000 people have contacted my office to ask us to fix WEP and GPO—by far, the most calls concerning a single issue.

High inflation and record price hikes continue to plague our Nation, and now, by refusing to address WEP and GPO, this Congress is essentially telling hardworking Americans that they must either not retire, reenter the workforce, or find other means to make ends meet.

It is astounding to me that this administration and the Democratic majority spend trillions to forgive student loans, bail out private industry, and create new government programs, but the people impacted by WEP and GPO continue to be ignored.

My colleague from Illinois, RODNEY DAVIS, brought forward H.R. 82 to repeal WEP and GPO. I am a proud cosponsor of this bill, along with nearly 300 other Members of this House.

Since the 117th Congress convened, we worked together as Democrats and Republicans to find a way to bring this bill to the floor for a vote. After nearly a year and a half of being denied, we worked to have it placed on the Consensus Calendar, a process that could force the bill to come to the House floor.

Only when we were on the cusp of forcing a floor vote and had 300 Members ready to support this measure did Democratic leadership take action to remove the legislation from the Consensus Calendar and essentially bog it down in a backlog.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable to me that some would play procedural games and deny this body the opportunity to vote on a bill that fixes such an obvious wrong.

What am I supposed to say to the people like Carla Moreau? That despite the fact that we were sent here to solve problems, we will just kick the can down the road?

Is that really the answer that we are okay with relaying to her and the 2 million Americans who are adversely impacted?

Mr. Speaker, I was sent here to represent the people of the Fifth District of Louisiana, and today, I can say with grave sincerity that their voices, along with 2 million other Americans, continue to be silenced.

Instead of my standing behind this podium today, we should be doing the will of the people and bringing H.R. 82 to the floor for a vote.

STUDENT DEBT CANCELLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in solidarity with the