

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BRITISH FRIENDS OF ISRAEL

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the Congress and Citizens of the United States a praiseworthy statement signed by thousands of our staunch ally, the United Kingdom, whose thought leaders and public figures declared solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people during one of the greatest periods of catastrophe, suffering, and trial since the Nazi Holocaust. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance, as well as the International Religious Freedom Caucus, I feel it a duty highlight and commend these significant gestures.

At a time when the world is in urgent need of moral clarity, leaders of media, government, business, sport, and the arts of the UK have risen masterfully to the occasion to establish British Friends of Israel with its clear-eyed statement—the October Declaration, signed by, as of this moment, nearly 100,000 of some UK's most influential, accomplished, and notable citizens. Many excerpts best express what much of the world holds true regarding our Jewish brothers and sisters who are tragically confronting the ugliness of anti-Semitism in real time. In part, the Declaration reads:

"We unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism against civilians in Israel, especially the massacre on 7 October 2023.

"On 7 October 2023 the State of Israel and her citizens, both Jews and non-Jews, were subjected to a brutal terrorist attack, which resulted in the murder, torture, rape and kidnapping of over 1,500 people.

"More Jews were killed on that day than on any other day since the Holocaust. We are aware that Jews are not the only victims of this tragedy. Hamas knew that there would be consequences to 7 October, but the consequences did not weigh with Hamas.

"Its ongoing terrorist operation is calculated to cause maximum fear and distress. The people of Israel have been subjected to a near constant bombardment of rockets from Gaza and Lebanon. Civilians of all kinds—including the elderly, disabled, women, children, and babies—have been targeted in a direct breach of the rules of war.

"We call for all the hostages taken on 7 October to be released immediately. It is an essential step on the path to peace and the cessation of hostilities.

"We stand in support of British Jews and condemn acts of anti-Semitism.

"British Jews should not live in fear because of actions taken by the state of Israel to defend itself. The British state must do everything in its power to protect them.

"We ask the media, members of all political parties and everyone in public life to call out Hamas for what it is: a terrorist organisation.

"Hamas, whose actions have led directly and indirectly to the tragic deaths of many Palestinian civilians as well as Israelis, is a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK as well as in many other states. The Home Secretary and the Prime Minister have iden-

tified Hamas as a terrorist organisation. Failure to use the correct language—describing Hamas as 'militants' or 'fighters', for instance—creates the false impression that Hamas and Israel's armed forces are morally equivalent and is an affront to the group's victims—the dead, their families, and those currently being held hostage.

Mr. Speaker, in our time, who could have anticipated the need to take such a stand in nations like the United States and the United Kingdom against unspeakable events that unfolded exactly one month ago today. But regrettably, denial of the atrocities and the willingness of some to side with Hamas have exposed a layer of society that raises concerns about the value placed on Jewish lives.

The idea for British Friends of Israel came from leading British public figures including journalists Laura Dodsworth, Allison Pearson, Toby Young, legal scholar Francis Hoar, Think Tank head Emma Webb and others who recognize the duty to express solidarity with global Jews. The speed at which the media narrative shifted from the savagery of Hamas attacks to concern about the destruction in Gaza is disheartening.

We have witnessed bias and antagonism by public figures, some in this Congress, some in the media, and some at leading American universities in the face of these atrocities. This is beyond troubling.

In the words of Sir Tom Stoppard, "Before we take up a position on what's happening now, we should consider whether this is a fight over territory or a struggle between civilization and barbarism."

Let us stand united with British Friends of Israel and The October Declaration. By lending our voices, we send a powerful message of support to our Jewish brothers and sisters in Israel and around the world. The stakes are critical in the fight for Civilization over barbarism.

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PIKES PEAK FIREARMS COALITION OF COLORADO

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 30th anniversary of the Pikes Peak Firearms Coalition of Colorado, a leading voice for firearms rights in my Congressional District. The organization's purpose is to advocate, support, and protect the right to keep and bear arms as enumerated in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article II, Section 13 of the Colorado Constitution, and to promote the safe, responsible, and lawful use of firearms.

Initially formed in 1992 as the Colorado Springs Chapter of the Firearms Coalition of Colorado, in 1993 the group formed their own local organization as the Pikes Peaks Firearms Coalition and incorporated as a Colorado

non-profit. Since then, they have advocated for firearm rights before the Colorado Springs City Council, the El Paso County Board of Commissioners, and the Colorado General Assembly. The effect of their advocacy is far-reaching. They sponsor groups that teach young people the safe handling and storage of firearms. Additionally, they provide financial support to local gun ranges including the Cheyenne Mountain Shooting Complex at Fort Carson and previously assisted in cleanup efforts for the U.S. Forest Service Rampart Range shooting area while it was in operation. In their monthly meetings, they promote the safe and lawful use of firearms. They invite speakers to present programs on various firearm issues, equipment, training, and techniques. Hundreds of people have benefited from the Pikes Peak Firearms Coalition of Colorado's educational and practical approach.

At their core, Pikes Peak Firearms Coalition members believe that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to keep and bear arms in defense of their home, person, and property and to protect against a tyrannical government. Ultimately, they believe the firearms issue to be entered entwined with civil rights, and object to all anti-gun proposals which limit the ability of the elderly, the poor, the handicapped, or other legally armed citizens to defend themselves. Finally, they firmly believe that to control crime, we must focus on the perpetrator rather than his instrument. The irresponsible banning of a weapon based solely on emotion only serves to empower criminals, as law-abiding citizens, by definition, do not break the law.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations on 30 years of advocacy to a group that upholds and protects the Second Amendment so well.

REMEMBERING WACONIA FIREFIGHTER JEFFREY BORG

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Waconia Firefighter Jeffrey Borg who passed away late last month.

Jeff's passion for helping others was evident in everything he did. As a firefighter for more than 27 years, he risked his life to protect the safety of his community. Over his years of service to the department, he went on to train many new firefighters, including his son Carter. The father-son duo served together in the Waconia Fire Department during the last few years of Jeff's life.

As an employee of the City of Victoria, Jeff took pride in his work and put the needs of others first, often working 18-hour shifts plowing snow for the city and then coming home to plow his driveway. During his tenure at the City of Victoria, he joined the Victoria Fire Department while simultaneously serving as a firefighter for the City of Waconia.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Jeff will be remembered as a loving father, husband and son. Whether it was serving as pit crew to his father LeRoy in local demolition derbies or being the number-one fan at his kids' sports games. Jeff's happiest moments were by his family's side.

We offer our deepest condolences to Jeff's family, friends and colleagues. May his memory bring them comfort during this challenging time.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EISNER MEMORIAL RED BANK PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate the Eisner Memorial Red Bank Public Library as its administration, Board of Trustees, volunteers, and community members gather to kick off the commemoration of its 100th anniversary. The Red Bank Public Library has been an integral part of the local community since its establishment and continues to uphold its mission to provide residents with an inclusive environment to learn and gather.

Although the community had a library since 1878, patrons were charged a subscription fee by the institution, and were restricted to borrowing one book at a time. In 1923, residents voted to create a free public library—no longer limiting access to those who could afford it—and on January 2, 1924, the Borough took control of the assets in this endeavor. Today, the library is a member of the Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium, significantly expanding its circulation materials and accessibility.

Throughout its history, the Eisner Memorial Red Bank Public Library has supported and been supported by the community. Sigmund Eisner was a prominent Red Bank resident and longtime benefactor of the library. The library's current location is the former Eisner residence, which was gifted to the library by his sons. The family continues to support the library today.

The Eisner Memorial Red Bank Public Library maintains outstanding resources and accessibility for its patrons. Over the years, the library has expanded its collection and offerings. It has evolved with technology and the changing needs of its visitors and pivoted during the COVID-19 pandemic to still meet the needs of the community while observing health protocols and precautions.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in marking the 100th anniversary of the Eisner Memorial Red Bank Public Library. Its continued service to the community is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained due to local and

state elections in my district, and I regret missing the votes on the Amendments to H.R. 4820, Making Appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, HUD, an related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 613; yea on Roll Call No. 614; nay on Roll Call No. 615; nay on Roll Call No. 617; nay on Roll Call No. 618; yea on Roll Call No. 619; and nay on Roll Call No. 620.

ADDRESSING VOTES ON H. RES. 559, H.R. 340, H.R. 3774, AND H. RES. 798

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address my votes on bills passed through the House of Representatives under suspension of the Rules the week of October 30, 2023: H. Res. 559, H.R. 340, H.R. 3774, and H. Res. 798.

I voted no on H. Res. 559 because it contained language that could insinuate U.S. support for potential military action against Iran at a moment when de-escalation is necessary. This legislation was overly broad, and without an opportunity for proper debate on the House Floor, this bill has the potential to give license to the United States to use any means, including military action, against Iran without Congressional approval.

I voted no on H.R. 340, the Hamas International Financing Prevention Act, because it was intentionally amended to delay humanitarian aid to Gaza, where people are suffering without access to food, drinking water, fuel, and medical care. The United States has rightly designated Hamas as a terrorist organization since 1997—but holding Hamas accountable cannot come at the expense of Palestinian civilians living in Gaza, roughly 40 percent of which are under 14 years of age. This is dangerous, as civilians must be protected under international law.

I voted no on H.R. 3774, the SHIP Act, because the bill contains overly broad language that would have serious impacts on the global economy and the U.S. economy as well. Sanctions are one of the most important and impactful diplomatic tools that we have in managing our relationships and security around the globe. The Executive Branch that administers them needs to be able to adjust and scale sanctions for them to be effective. The waiver within this bill provides the Executive with limited flexibility—rendering the waiver provision nearly unusable.

I voted yes on H. Res. 798 condemning the support of Hamas, Hezbollah, and other terrorist organizations at institutions of higher education because every student deserves a safe environment in which to learn and live. This resolution fails to mention the concurrent rise in anti-Muslim and anti-Arab hate. It is a glaring omission not to include other protected classes. Antisemitism and Islamophobia are on the rise in the U.S., and hatred in all its forms is unacceptable and must not be tolerated anywhere.

All people deserve safety and security, and the only sustainable path forward is one where

international human rights and international law are at the forefront and democratic ideals are upheld. Peace must remain our utmost goal in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT DANIEL J. SWIFT OF THE HORNELL POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR HIS SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today and commemorate Sergeant Daniel J. Swift of Hornell, New York for his service and sacrifice to the City of Hornell. On October 24, 1973, Sergeant Swift was targeted and murdered by a young man who had stolen his father's car with the intention to wreak havoc within his community. At only 25 years old, Daniel was cruelly taken from our world: a world which he only sought to protect. His badge number—16—has been retired from use within the City of Hornell Police Department ever since.

On October 28, 2023, constituents of the Hornell community and greater Southern Tier assembled to view the unveiling of a memorial honoring Sergeant Swift, for his service and sacrifice to his community. While some choose to target and defame members of law enforcement because their presence in our lives, members of my district chose instead to rally around the memory of one of the many police officers who chose every day to leave the safety of their homes and families in order to protect all of ours.

I am honored to join the City of Hornell in recognizing Sergeant Daniel J. Swift for his service and dedication to the City of Hornell. May his memorial forever remind us of the vital role which our law enforcement officers play in protecting our communities and freedoms.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to the last minute House floor schedule changes, I had previously committed to an event in my home state of Florida which I could not miss, so I missed the vote on H. Res. 845. Had I been present, I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 622.

HONORING THE CAPTAIN JAMES MCFARLAND AMERICAN LEGION POST 79

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Captain James McFarland American Legion Post 79 in Burlington City as