

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, on May 24, 2023, I was unable to be present for the recorded votes on Roll Call No. 233. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on H.J. Res. 39, Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Commerce relating to “Procedures Covering Suspension of Liquidation, Duties and Estimated Duties in Accord with Presidential Proclamation 10414.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for personal reasons from votes on May 23rd and 24th. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 232, YEA on Roll Call No. 233, and YEA on Roll Call No. 234.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MAJOR GENERAL TREVOR J. BREDENKAMP

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the proud Co-Chair of the Army Caucus, I extend my deepest gratitude for the service of Major General Trevor J. Bredenkamp to the United States Congress as the Army’s Chief Legislative Liaison.

Under his stewardship, the Army maintained strong relationships with members of Congress, committees, and staff. His many accomplishments within the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison are a testament to his leadership, particularly in how his team persevered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congratulations to Major General Bredenkamp on his selection as the Commanding General of the Military District of Washington and Commander of the Joint Forces Headquarters-National Capital Region. His dedication and experience will undoubtedly result in a disciplined and prepared force, entrusted with securing our Nation’s Capital.

I extend my best wishes as he transitions to a new assignment and express profound thankfulness to him and his family’s service to our Nation.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FEARS OF DEFAULT

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I demand that Republicans get back to Wash-

ington and finish the job the American people sent all of us to Washington to do.

House Republicans have fled the Capitol leaving their worries behind, ready to enjoy the holiday weekend. The everyday American doesn’t have that luxury.

My constituents have been calling and writing expressing their anxiety and feelings of uncertainty. Americans are worried about paying their rent, buying their groceries, and caring for their children in the event of a default.

Everyday Americans will spend the weekend worried about whether or not they will receive their next social security check. Everyday Americans will spend the weekend hoping their retirement savings will still be intact by next week. Everyday Americans will use their weekend to figure out how to pay their rent and mortgages in the event of a default.

In the event of a default, at least 7 million jobs will be lost, unemployment will rise, our GDP will decline, and roughly \$10 trillion in household wealth will be wiped out.

The House Republicans don’t have these problems to worry about. The House Republicans don’t have to feel the consequences of their own actions like their constituents will.

The Democrats are here and ready to pass a clean debt ceiling. We are working for the people. It is deplorable that my Republican colleagues won’t do the same.

INTRODUCTION OF A HOUSE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL POPPY DAY

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to re-introduce a bipartisan resolution recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of National Poppy Day on the Friday before Memorial Day, with Congresswoman Spartz.

The importance of this day cannot be overstated. This bipartisan National Poppy Day Resolution recognizes the sacrifices of America’s veterans and fallen service members.

In the last several decades, Memorial Day has become synonymous with the start of summer, and not as it was intended as a time to mourn and remember the U.S. military personnel who have fought and died while serving in the United States armed forces. While the United States has great respect for those who serve in the Armed Forces, we often focus on the living veterans. There are many parents, spouses, siblings, and children who still mourn their fallen service member.

Yes, there are ceremonies to remember those we have lost, such as the ones at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, at the Pentagon, and small ones at National Cemeteries. However, as a Nation we no longer take the time to remember those we have shed blood in the name of freedom.

The poppy flower has long been a marker of respect and a way to raise awareness and support for members of our nation’s veteran communities, servicemembers and their families, and the families of those who died in service to their country. Poppy Day is widely recognized by America’s allies, especially in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Great Brit-

ain, and Ukraine, but is less recognized here at home.

The red-flowered corn poppy became forever linked to soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice on the battlefields of World War I, as result of the poem “In Flanders Fields.” The poem, written by a Canadian soldier actively serving on the front-lines of WWI to honor his fellow soldiers killed in battle, reads:

“In Flanders Fields the poppies blow, between the crosses, row on row”

Around the world, the red-flowered corn poppy continues to serve as the living symbol of the blood shed by those who served and is worn as a gesture of gratitude and recognition of the sacrifices people have made in service to their country. Many nations incorporate the poppy into their Veterans or Remembrance Day ceremonies.

In the United States, the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars first called attention in the 1920s to the importance of the poppy flower in honoring the fallen. They continue to distribute poppies and promote the importance of a National Poppy Day on the Friday before Memorial Day and Veterans’ Day; raising money for disabled veterans.

With wider recognition of National Poppy Day and wearing a red poppy, we honor every servicemember who has died in the name of liberty, freedom, and democracy. Additionally this provides us the opportunity to thank their families, veterans, and current service members for our freedom now and for generations to come. In the words of American Moina Michael,

“And now the Torch and Poppy Red, We wear in honor of our dead.

Fear not that ye have died for naught; We’ll teach the lesson that ye wrought”

Our Resolution, would begin on May 24, 2024. We should honor past and current members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families. We should encourage all citizens, residents, and visitors of the United States to join in observing “National Poppy Day.” Wearing a red poppy the Friday before Memorial Day—and through the weekend—is an simple declaration of our admiration for and thanks to those individuals who shed blood to preserve freedom.

In this body we have people who have served and those who have lost. At the very least we should honor them.

We invite all Members of Congress to wear their poppy red, support the goals and ideals of National Poppy Day on May 26, 2023 and every year after, to pay tribute to those who have sacrificed for our country—both living and dead. I also invite all of my colleagues to join me in sponsoring this resolution.

HONORING DR. TELENA WRIGHT UPON HER RETIREMENT

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Telena Wright upon her retirement as Superintendent of the Argyle Independent School District in Argyle, Texas. Raised by two educators in Ballinger, Texas, Dr. Wright initially chose a pre-pharmacy major before switching to an education major and her ultimate attainment of a teacher’s certification.

She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin, followed by a master's degree in education from Hardin-Simmons University and a doctorate in education from the University of North Texas.

Prior to coming to Argyle ISD, Dr. Wright worked at San Angelo and Lewisville ISD's. She previously served as a math teacher, elementary and high school counselor, and as an assistant principal, before joining Argyle High School in 2000 as principal. After three years at the helm of AHS, she moved into district administration as an assistant superintendent, then interim superintendent before being named Argyle ISD Superintendent in 2009.

Under Dr. Wright's capable leadership, Argyle ISD added a pre-kindergarten program and implemented special education programming on all campuses. In addition, the Argyle ISD Police Department was created in 2013 to heighten security and now includes the addition of armed staff and the positioning of an officer on each campus.

Argyle ISD has seen tremendous growth, and Dr. Wright oversaw the transition from K-8 grades to Pre-K-12 and three successful bond packages to provide updates and renovations to the district's existing facilities, addition of new campuses, new school buses, and new technology and security systems. The district covers over 35 square miles and enrollment has increased from 1700 to 5000 students and 200 to more than 700 employees.

Dr. Wright has been a hands-on leader and has forged a strong partnership between students, parents, teachers and administrators to ensure the best possible educational experience and outcomes for AISD students. A consummate professional, she is known as a tremendous recruiter and developer-of-educators, serving as a mentor to many whom have benefited from her wisdom and inspirational guidance. She has also served as an adjunct instructor at her alma mater UNT, preparing the next generation of teachers.

During her tenure, Argyle ISD has won twelve UIL Lone Star Cup awards, including a record setting 10 consecutive times. The Lone Star cup is awarded annually to only six high schools in the state based upon the accumulation of the largest number of UIL points with students competing in academics, fine arts and athletics. She has traveled across the region and state to support AISD students and teams as they've competed and won multiple state championships including UIL Academics, Girl's Basketball and Volleyball, Boy's Baseball, Football, and Golf, as well as Marching Band.

After 15 years as superintendent, Dr. Wright is retiring. It is my privilege to recognize the long and dedicated service that Dr. Telena Wright has tirelessly devoted to the children of Argyle ISD. I join the students, families, and staff in wishing her all the best in her retirement.

HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PIEDMONT AREA SOAP BOX DERBY

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Piedmont Area Soap Box

Derby on its 20th anniversary. Since June 27, 2003, Virginians have participated in this fun and family-friendly event that started as a 75th anniversary celebration of Rosson & Troilo, a family-owned and operated business. The inaugural race in Culpeper, Virginia began with a total of 35 drivers and was awarded "Outstanding New Race City" by the All-American World Championship Race.

In 2005, the Piedmont Area Soap Box Derby piloted the first-ever Junior Committee for a soap box derby. Members of the Junior Committee are between 13 and 21 years of age, and they take on the same responsibilities and goals as the adult committee. The Junior Committee operates as a mentorship program, providing members with leadership opportunities and allowing young derby drivers to learn from seasoned drivers in the community.

By 2007, the Piedmont Area Soap Box Derby was ranked "2nd largest derby in the world." In 2008, they claimed the title of "largest derby in the world." In 2009, with the help of the community through donations and volunteers, they began building a permanent track facility, the Paul Bates Raceway. Since 2003, Rosson & Troilo has made it possible for derby champions and their families to travel to Akron, Ohio for the All-American World Championship Race. Throughout the last 20 years, Piedmont Area Soap Box Derby drivers have brought home many awards, including five world championships—Brandon Feagan (2008), Sean Brown (2010), Gabrielle Beville (2011), Joey Kratochvil (2014), and Mason Breedon (2016).

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Piedmont Area Soap Box Derby for 20 years of providing Virginia with a wonderful event that promotes community, leadership, and encourages young and seasoned drivers towards success. I look forward to all that they accomplish in the years to come.

HONORING THE REMARKABLE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GEORGE BONFE

HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mr. STAUBER Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and accomplishments of George Bonfe. George's unwavering can-do spirit was indeed an inspiration to us all. Despite suffering a spinal injury during an Army leave at the age of 21, which left him paralyzed from the waist down, George refused to let this obstacle define his life. Instead, he adopted three children, two of whom served in the military, one of whom even graduated from West Point. George's resilience was further demonstrated by his building of an airplane and becoming a pilot from his wheelchair, along with driving an automobile, boat, jet skis, snowmobile, and flying an ultralight. He also tirelessly sent care packages to deployed troops, including his adopted daughter. George was an active member of his community, participating in various military events and the Forest Lake Veterans Memorial. Additionally, he built a daycare, owned a liquor store, and engaged in numerous community service

activities. George made a lasting impact on those he met, often visiting the Forest Lake American Legion Post No. 225 with his daughter. He also attended many funerals of Minnesota fallen soldiers.

George Bonfe serves as a remarkable role model for everyone. Despite facing physical limitations, he never allowed them to hinder his success; his only obstacle was stairs, but somehow he always made it to the top. He dedicated himself to his loved ones, community, and fellow veterans, leaving a lasting impact on all those he touched. We are grateful for his service to our Nation and his incredible story that will continue inspiring future generations. May he rest in peace, knowing that his legacy will continue to positively impact the world.

THE WAR IN UKRAINE

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks submitted at the request of a Virginia Beach constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman of Temple Lev Tikvah, and are a reflection of his views:

The war in Ukraine hits close to home. I was a refugee the first four years of my life following my birth in Kazakhstan (USSR) in 1945, and my late father was a Russian soldier defending Leningrad and Moscow. My 102-year-old Israeli mom who died recently in Israel was a Ukrainian Holocaust survivor. My wife and I travelled in Ukraine with its vast Jewish past in 1991, where we lost so many family members during the Holocaust, including at Babi Yar. It is hard to fathom that the historic and beautiful landscape with a population yearning to be Western is being obliterated before our eyes.

These searing events—an invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces who obey the absolute authority of Russian President Vladimir Putin—are beyond shocking. Who would have imagined that once more, following WWII and the Holocaust, we would witness an eruption of such magnitude in the heart of Europe, with the evil design to seize a newly democratic nation of 40 million people in an ill-begotten scheme to restore the collapsed Soviet Union and/or revive the preceding Russian Imperial Empire? What is the impetus behind Putin's plot to charge forward with uncontrolled rage and reckless impunity despite a dire outcome for all?

Perhaps it is a case of over-confidence that he could literally get away with mass murder with little opposition from a world community, acceding to his past mischief in Chechnya, Georgia, Syria (Remember Aleppo!), Crimea and Donbas. He's gambled that his saber rattling with a nuclear arsenal would result in finger pointing while avoiding detrimental consequences to his megalomaniacal dream of reordering the world order through disorder with total disregard for human life and immense suffering for millions of young and old, who are now homeless refugees. He, whose family was personally impacted by the inhumane siege of Leningrad (St. Petersburg) in WWII, shows no mercy for a vast civilian population with close cultural and fraternal bonds that already had experienced Adolf Hitler's similar approach. Putin shows uncontrolled impulses of divine grandeur and sick grandiosity. The global community hopefully apprehensively watches, with the notable exception of the