

for his outstanding service to our country as we celebrate his 100th birthday.

CONGRATULATING KRISTY GRIFFIS ARNOLD

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kristy Griffis Arnold on her appointment to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board by the USDA.

Kristy has been involved with farming and agriculture her entire life. She was born into a farming family, growing up on her family's 465-acre farm which has been passed down through multiple generations. It was on her family farm that she learned the tools of the trade related to cattle farming.

In addition to her recent appointment, Kristy has also been awarded the Georgia Producer of the Year Award in 2010 by the Georgia Cattlemen's Association.

In 2012, Kristy and her family won the 2012 Wayne County Farm Family of the Year Award. In 2014, they won the Georgia Beef Quality Assurance Award.

Kristy has proven time and time again that not only is she one of the most accomplished and knowledgeable farmers in the district, but she is also one of the best in the country.

Kristy's expertise in agriculture speaks for itself, and I believe she will be an excellent addition to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board.

CALLING ON THE FDA TO REVERSE RESTRICTIONS ON ALZHEIMER'S TREATMENTS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand with the 6.7 million Americans who are living with Alzheimer's disease, their family members, and their caregivers.

One in three seniors dies of Alzheimer's or a form of dementia. These are our sisters, our brothers, our mothers, our fathers, our neighbors, our fellow Americans, who are living with this heartbreaking disease.

Thanks to bipartisan efforts in Congress, we have made great progress advancing research on Alzheimer's and dementia, providing hope to families struggling with this tragic disease.

However, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently declined to cover an entire class of FDA-approved Alzheimer's treatments for Medicare patients. This has significantly reduced access to care for our most vulnerable patients with no other options to treat the disease.

Unfortunately, this administration continues to put patients last and this decision of restricting Medicare coverage of FDA-approved Alzheimer's treatment is just the latest example.

I ask my colleagues to join me in calling on this administration to reverse this restrictive decision and provide those living with Alzheimer's access to FDA-approved treatments.

To all the patients, families, and caregivers out there who are struggling

with Alzheimer's, I stand with them, and I will continue to fight for them.

CONGRATULATING THE CAMDEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Camden County High School wrestling team on their ninth consecutive State championship.

It seems like winning a State championship is just part of the yearly routine for the wrestlers at Camden County, but it was not always that way. When Coach Jess Wilder took over the program in 2006, the school had not won a State championship since 1984. Some even called Camden the land of no chance, in reference to its State title aspirations.

Coach Wilder and the wrestlers of Camden County did not let that discourage them, and after 2 years of hard work and determination, Camden County won a State championship in 2008. The team took championships home in both 2012 and 2015. Their 2015 win marked the beginning of a yearly State championship run that still continues today.

I congratulate the team and Coach Wilder on their hard work and determination. They continue to make their school and the First District proud.

CONGRATULATING INGA CASHON AND BRITTANY NEARHOOF

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Inga Cashon and Brittany Nearhoof for being recognized as 2024 Georgia Teacher of the Year finalists.

State school superintendent Richard Woods, who surprised the finalists with their selection throughout the month of March, said each one of them is a shining example of the profession. I could not agree more.

Inga Cashon is a science, technology, engineering, and math teacher at North Tattnall Middle School. In 2020, she received the Georgia STEM Scholar Award for her efforts to integrate effective STEM education in the classroom.

Brittany Nearhoof is an art teacher at McAllister Elementary School in Bryan County in the First District. She is also a leadership team member and chair of the Fine Arts Night Committee.

I congratulate Inga and Brittany for their hard work and their dedication to their students. They are very deserving of this honor.

RAISING THE AGE TO PURCHASE SEMIAUTOMATIC CENTERFIRE RIFLES

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

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Raise the Age Act.

This bill would protect the public by raising the minimum age to purchase semiautomatic centerfire rifles to 21 years old. Currently, the buyer only needs to be 18 years old, even though

the minimum age to purchase a handgun from a dealer with a Federal license is 21 years old.

The Raise the Age Act would apply the 21-year-old minimum age standard to buyers of semiautomatic centerfire rifles just as it applies to buyers of handguns.

Imagine the agony that Alexandria Rubio's parents felt last May when they learned that their 10-year-old daughter's life was cut short at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

On that horrific day, 21 beautiful spirits were stolen from us: 19 precious young children and 2 beloved, dedicated teachers.

The halls of the grade school were forever robbed of their innocence due to the gruesome actions committed by an 18-year-old who used a semiautomatic weapon that he purchased shortly after his 18th birthday.

On May 14th, 2022, 53-year-old Andre Mackneil went to the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, New York, to purchase a birthday cake for his grandson. He never returned home for his grandson's birthday due to the heinous acts of an 18-year-old mass shooter with an assault weapon.

That 18-year-old ended the lives of 10 innocent souls that day. Had a 21-year-old age requirement been in place, that 18-year-old shooter would not have been able to legally purchase that firearm just a few months earlier and the tragedy and trauma that occurred that day might have been avoided.

Some of the most horrific and heart-breaking mass shootings in our history were committed by 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds using assault weapons, including the massacres at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012; at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, in 2018; and at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999.

According to CNN, in November of 2022, up to that point, at least 3,179 people had been shot in mass shootings, resulting in 637 deaths and more than 2,500 people wounded. Already in 2023, there have been more than 170 mass shootings.

Some of my colleagues insist on choosing the Second Amendment over second graders. They insist on banning books in schools instead of banning assault weapons in schools. They talk about the weaponization of our government, but they are silent when actual weapons are used to lay waste to our schoolchildren.

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Instead of supporting commonsense reforms to address our country's gun epidemic, some Members offer bills that would make the problem even worse, such as eliminating the ATF, the lead Federal law enforcement agency that fights against gun violence.

Time and time again, our communities are devastated by these mass killings. Some politicians send thoughts and prayers, but we should all

remember the wisdom in Paul's letter to James: "Faith without works is dead." This bill alone won't fix the problem of gun violence, but we know that inaction will not stop the mass killings. The time for action is long overdue.

That is why this bill is supported by many gun violence prevention organizations, including the Giffords Law Center, which observes its 10th anniversary today, March for Our Lives, Newtown Action Alliance, Community Justice Action Fund, and several others. Some major retail chains like Walmart have even voluntarily raised the age from 18 to 21 to buy a firearm at their stores.

Raising the age to 21 also withstood judicial scrutiny recently. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals recently upheld a similar law on the 21-year-old age requirement in Florida that was enacted shortly after the 2018 massacres in Parkland, Florida.

The Court determined that the act's restrictions on the sale of firearms to 18- to 20-year-olds "is consistent with the Nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation."

Raising the age to 21 to purchase these kinds of firearms is reasonable and a crucial step, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this vital legislation.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SANTOS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the beginning of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

Since 1948, Israel has displayed great resilience and strength against its opposition. This incredible nation is our strongest ally in the Middle East. Our friends in Israel carry a long history of faith and resolve.

Here in the United States, we are forever grateful for their friendship and their continued partnership. We congratulate you on this tremendous milestone of 75 years of independence and democracy. In the State of New York, we are proud to be the home of the largest Jewish population outside of Israel.

For 75 years, Israel has been a tried and trusted ally of the United States. Together, we have Americans and Israelis united by our shared commitment to democracy, economic prosperity, and regional security.

Israel is America's base in the Middle East. As the only democracy in the region, Israel is the only country that embraces American values. We have witnessed the strongest relationship between America and Israel yet, not just in words but in actions.

The American Embassy officially moved to Jerusalem. America officially recognizes the Golan Heights as part of Israel. The 118th Congress is holding strong to the commitment of allegiance to Israel even in the face of adversity.

Mr. Speaker, here is to 75 more years of partnership.

DEBT CEILING CONCERNS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the Republican's default on America plan that will hurt Rhode Island's seniors. The MAGA Republicans that have taken control of this House have given us a false choice.

Either we go along with their plan for painful cuts for veterans, seniors, and children, or they will purposefully wreck the economy by defaulting on the debt. This false choice is wrong and we do not need to accept it.

In particular, their plan would enact painful cuts on senior citizens in Rhode Island. How?

By cutting funding to the Social Security Administration so that the quarter million elderly and disabled Rhode Islanders who depend on Social Security would face longer wait times for their benefits. Also, by cutting funding for seniors' nutrition programs like Meals on Wheels, housing, and slashing funding for home care, putting the lives of seniors at risk.

This is not about deficit reduction. If this was about deficit reduction, my Republican colleagues would be lining up to support President Biden's budget, which reduces the deficit by \$3 trillion. No. This is an extreme agenda that puts working people, in particular seniors, in the back seat while doing the bidding of wealthy donors and billionaires and corporations.

We do not need to accept it. People will not stand for it. I will fight this default on America plan with everything that I have.

RECOGNIZING SHERIFF DEREK SANDERS

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

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, Thurston County Sheriff Derek Sanders was injured in a car accident while driving his patrol car. Since the accident, I have been in touch with Sheriff Sanders. He has incredible strength and resilience. Amazingly, just 2 weeks after being airlifted to Harborview Medical Center for his injuries he has been cleared to return to work.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here in Washington, I will continue to send my thoughts and prayers to him and his family back home. I hope he has a speedy recovery. I am so grateful to Sheriff Sanders and officers like him who accept the risks of their job to keep our public safe.

VETERAN WAIT TIMES

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the long wait

time veterans endure when trying to get through to the VA.

As the granddaughter of a veteran, I have deep respect for the sacrifice that comes from serving our Nation in uniform. We make a sacred promise to veterans: If they step up to serve, the Nation will be there for them when they take off the uniform.

Yet, the wait times for primary care appointments at the Vancouver VA hospital in my district are 3 weeks; physical therapy, 4 weeks; and mental health, 8 weeks.

To make matters worse, those times are absolutely an underestimate. The Veterans Health Administration reports average wait times on its website using the time at which an appointment is scheduled by staff rather than when the appointment is requested. This does not take into account the time veterans are forced to wait on hold just to get an appointment.

Last April, the Office of the Inspector General called this out in its report, but it still has not been remedied.

A lot of time is spent in this Chamber talking about our national debt, and rightly so, but we already have a kind of debt that we are failing to serve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in keeping our end of the bargain and making healthcare more accessible for our veterans.

POSTAL SERVICE DELAYS

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the unacceptable state of the Postal Service in my community and across rural America. Those of you who live in urban communities might have experienced the mail just comes on time. I have constituents whose bills are delivered weeks or days after they are due, making it impossible to pay them on time and ruining their credit.

This summer, a mail carrier in my community got sick and there was no one to deliver the mail for months. In another instance, a postal master key was lost in Clark County, which has led to incredible, rampant mail theft in the area. In all of these cases the Postal Service seems unwilling or unable to fulfill their mandated duties.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't just about southwest Washington, it is all across rural America. This state of affairs is unacceptable. The United States Postal Service is a lifeline to our communities and a critical piece of infrastructure for connecting our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand up and find a bipartisan solution with me to fix these issues, reform the Postal Service, and improve service for Washingtonians.

CONSOLIDATION

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out of deep concern for growing consolidation of agricultural farms throughout the food supply chain.

These mergers put small farmers, small businesses, and workers at a