

Virgin Islands. My legislation enables a base constitution to be enacted and a local process for self-determination and a level of autonomy in our constitutional maturation.

I am asking all Virgin Islanders to speak with individuals you know who can help support this act, and I am asking Members of our diaspora living in the mainland to lobby their current congressional and Senate Representatives for support.

PREVENTING FURTHER GROWTH OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK ON ST. JOHN.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation to prohibit the net increase of federally owned land in the Virgin Islands National Park Service on St. John. The Virgin Islands National Park boundary encompasses nearly two-thirds of the island of St. John. Within the park boundary, there is both federally owned and privately owned land. There is a finite amount of land for the residents of St. John who are already confronting housing shortages. This legislation takes the necessary steps to prevent an increase in land owned by the park.

This legislation prevents any net increase of federally owned land in the park. Individuals and entities would still be able to donate or exchange land with the park, but if the Virgin Islands National Park acquires any land, an equal acreage of land must be conveyed out of Federal ownership.

The legislation includes stringent guidelines to ensure the park does not utilize bureaucratic processes to cause excessive delays. When the park elects to sell Federal land to avoid an increase in net acreage, it must offer the land for sale within a year at fair market value. Six months after the land is first offered for sale, if it is not under contract or sold, then the price is reduced by 10 percent each month.

This legislation addresses the concerns I hear consistently from Virgin Islanders about an ever-expanding presence of the park on St. John. The park has a responsibility as stewards and also as partners of the Virgin Islands. That has not always been the case.

Unfortunately, often the park seems to be solely engaged in protecting land, not the people who were the original inhabitants of that land or the people brought over as enslaved people who fought for freedom and through sweat and toil were able to obtain land on that island.

Albeit sometimes well-intentioned, what they have done is effectively crowded out Native people in furtherance of neocolonial bourgeois wildlife ideals acting under the assumption that the local people—interestingly, people of color—cannot care for the land themselves.

As we look at the history and the future of the Virgin Islands National Park, our decisions must be intentional to support St. John and the entire Virgin Islands, which includes its land, its people, its history, its culture, and our future.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance this legislation.

SOLVING THE WORST BORDER CRISIS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, since his first day in office, President Biden has actively worked to weaken our southern border through radical open border policies that have resulted in the worst border crisis in our Nation's history, turning every community—including mine, the Sixth District of Virginia—into a border community.

Despite the President's and Secretary Mayorkas' desperate attempts to downplay the crisis and tell Americans to deal with it, the facts don't lie.

Under Biden's failed leadership, Border Patrol officials have encountered a record high of more than 5 million illegal immigrants at our southern border, and nearly 2 million of them have been released in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security. At the same time, over 1.5 million known got-aways have illegally crossed the border undetected.

From halting construction of the border wall to reinstating Obama-era catch-and-release policies and deciding to halt title 42, President Biden has willingly and knowingly failed to protect the southern border and uphold the rule of law.

Now our Border Patrol is underresourced, our national security is jeopardized, and drug cartels are empowered to smuggle deadly fentanyl into our interior.

In fact, Virginia communities are being overrun. According to the Virginia Department of Health, in 2021, Virginia had a 15 percent increase in overdoses from 2020, with synthetic fentanyl being the leading cause of those 2,033 deaths.

This is an invasion, and it must be stopped. House Republicans know that border security is national security, which is why we have brought to the floor H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act.

The Judiciary Committee played a leading role in crafting this legislation, and I am proud of the work we have done to make this the strongest border security package that Congress has ever considered. However, we must get it enacted.

H.R. 2 will secure America's borders by improving the asylum system, deploying urgent resources to the southern and northern borders—including walls, manpower, and technologies—and ending incentives for illegal immigration.

Mr. Speaker, innocent lives are at stake. Our Nation's sovereignty is at stake. We owe it to the American people to tackle Biden's disastrous border crisis. That starts with passing this legislation, and I urge every one of my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill to address this national crisis.

□ 1045

CONGRATULATING STATE CHAMPIONS GLENVAR HIGH SCHOOL BOYS INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD TEAM

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Glenvar High School Boys Indoor Track and Field Team on winning the combined class ½ State championship held at Liberty University.

The Glenvar Highlanders won the trophy at the 2-day meet with a score of 58 points, a 9-point victory over the runners-up.

Glenvar's senior Heath Bowker dominated the meet, winning the boys 500-meter dash in 1:08:20.

Highlanders Jackson Swanson, Zach Curfiss, Avone Noel, and Heath Bowker joined forces to win the 4x200 relay in 1:33:25.

Another Highlanders squad of Heath Bowker, Caeden Bowker, Colby Thompson, and Zach Curfiss won the 4x400 relay in 3:29:38.

Congratulations to all these athletes, including Marshall Berryman, Caeden Bowker, Zach Curfiss, Tyler Davis, Charlie Horrell, Bryce King, Nathaniel King, Aldin Smith, Colby Thompson, Aiden Woodie, Josh Woods, and seniors Heath Bowker, Avone Noel, Davis Norman, and Jackson Swanson.

The team is led by head coach Bekka Loder and assistant Madison Bourne.

Congratulations again to these athletes, parents, coaches, and staff on an incredible season and well-deserved victory.

CONGRATULATING NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northside High School boys basketball team on winning the Virginia Class 3 Basketball State Championship held at the VCU Siegel Center.

The win marked the second basketball State championship in school history and the first since 2019.

Northside came out strong, leading by 17 in the first quarter. As the game entered the final minutes, Northside was down by 4, but this squad dug deep to come out with the trophy and pull out the 58-52 victory against Hopewell.

The Vikings' final push was led by double-digit scorers, Lawrence Cole, Cy Hardy, and Mykell Harvey, a trio that combined for the 53 of the Vikings' 58 points.

I extend congratulations to all the players, including Cy Hardy, Xavier Garrison, Nick Crawford, David Via, Mykell Harvey, Michael Pankey, Kai Logan, Jamareay Lavender, Javin Gibson, Will Smith, Kavon Brown, along with special recognition to seniors Ja'Chan Anthony, Lawrence Cole, Jayden Smith, Elijah Trigg. Congratulations also to the head coach, Billy Pope, and assistants Jake Paysour and Josh Malave.

Congratulations again to all the players, coaches, parents, and staff on a historic season.

PARENTS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against attacks on parents across our Nation.

Parents and adult guardians play a critical role in children's lives as nurturers, providers, and confidants.

However, how can they protect or provide for their children when their elected officials choose time and time again to disregard the will of the people, ignore legislation that could save lives, slash funding to critical programs for our children and families, and then defame them for being who they are.

Let me tell you who they are. In the United States, there are over 200,000 foster parents. Forty percent of married couples with children are stepcouples. Sixteen percent of children live in blended families. There are over 100,000 adoptions each year, and 4 million Americans are adopted. All of these statistics represent parents, and it is not up to any of us to define what a parent is.

As a mother, I am appalled by the state of our country. MAGA Republican legislation confuses guidelines around abortion care, threatening the lives of mothers across the country.

Our children aren't safe to go to the grocery store, school, houses of worship, or the mall. They can't turn around in a driveway or retrieve a basketball. Our children go hungry when the government decides to cruelly slash programs like SNAP and WIC that put food on our families' tables.

This Sunday is Mother's Day, and I will be celebrating with my family, but the voice in the back of my head will ask me, what kind of world are they growing up in? This is not what our country is meant to look like.

Every bio-parent, stepparent, adoptive parent, foster parent, or guardian who loves their child is a parent, and we are all scared about the world our children are set to inherit.

CONGRATULATING STATE CHAMPIONS JOHNSON KNIGHTS BOYS SOCCER TEAM

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

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the 2023 Georgia High School Association 4A State Champions, the Johnson Knights Boys Soccer Team.

Last week, the Knights became back-to-back State champions, defeating the Westminster Wildcats, boasting a final score of 4-2.

Combined with their 5A championship titles from last year and 2018, this latest victory marks the Knights' third title in the last five completed seasons.

Fueled by adrenaline, filled with talent, and led by Coach Frank Zamora,

these gifted young men continue to dominate the competition and make the 9th District proud.

Congratulations, Johnson High School Boys Soccer Team, on an exciting win and becoming back-to-back Georgia State champions.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Gracious and generous God, every good and perfect gift comes from You. We need only pause and reflect on how our lives have been blessed with family, children, loved ones, and friends, and our hearts are filled with deep gratitude that You allow us these loves in our lives.

So, too, is Your munificence bestowed on us with every skill, every talent, every opportunity that we exercise here in this place and enjoy sometimes without thinking how blessed we are. We need only stop and remember that these qualities which have brought us success in our careers and comfort in our circumstance have been afforded to us by Your kind provision.

In times of growth and grief, faith and fear, accord and acrimony, we need only turn to You in whom there is no variation and whose steadfast love never fails. We need only remember You are always the provider of every gift and, without fail, the answer to our every concern.

All good gifts around us are sent from Heaven above. We need only take the time to thank You, O Lord. Hear our prayers as we offer them in appreciation for all that we have and all that You have allowed us to enjoy.

We offer our prayers in the strength of Your name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY) come

forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TIFFANY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING WISCONSIN'S FALLEN HEROES

(Mr. TIFFANY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, my district tragically lost the life of another police officer in the line of duty. We mourn the loss of St. Croix County Sheriff's Deputy Katie Leising.

No amount of words can express the loss that Wisconsin has felt for our fallen heroes this year. Katie Leising, Emily Breidenbach, Hunter Scheel, and Peter Jerving dedicated their lives to protecting us, and my prayers are with the friends and family of the fallen.

This cannot continue. In spite of these tragedies, many lawmakers still continue to vilify police at every turn and even call to defund them while allowing criminals to stay on our streets.

Let me be clear: Our law enforcement needs our support now more than ever.

I thank all of Wisconsin law enforcement. These past few months have been tough, but we will get through them together.

Violence toward our police officers is something that we will not tolerate, and please know that Wisconsin's Seventh District stands behind law enforcement.

CALLING FOR GOP BILL ON GUN VIOLENCE

(Mr. THOMPSON of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, every day 30 people are killed by someone using a gun. Gun violence is the leading cause of death for children in the United States. When will you be bringing a bill to the floor to help put an end to this carnage?

Mr. Speaker, our country is averaging 1.5 mass shootings every day. There are over 70 suicides and accidental shootings every day. When will you bring a bill to the floor to help put an end to this?

Mr. Speaker, every day our cops are on the street protecting Americans, and they are confronted by criminals who have access, easy access, to guns that they shouldn't have. When will the Republicans be bringing a bill to the floor to help put an end to this, Mr. Speaker?