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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2023, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WARRIOR'S WEEKEND FIELD OF HONOR

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

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 15th anniversary of the Warrior's Weekend Field of Honor.

The mission of the Field of Honor has always been to honor our Nation's veterans and encourage our wounded warriors. This all began in May 2009 when Warrior's Weekend president, Ron Kocian, a Texas Army National Guard veteran, gave retired Colonel Mike Petrash of the U.S. Army the approval to conduct the first Field of Honor in Victoria, Texas, in support of Warrior's Weekend. It became an instant success during which 550 sponsored flags were posted by local area sponsors, patriots, and families, touching the hearts of over 300 visiting warriors from all over the United States.

In 2011, the Field of Honor expanded its army of volunteers, so to speak, and encouraged faith-, civic-, veteran-, and youth-based organizations to partner

with them as a way of raising funds for their own community programs in a way that is honorable and noteworthy.

As the Field of Honor matured and the mission of honoring veterans for their service continued to thrive, it eventually led to the inclusion of the third pillar of the Warrior's Weekend mission: to build a community of honor and excellence.

Throughout the lifetime of the Field of Honor, over 30,000 flags have been sponsored, prepared, and posted in honor of our veterans, wounded soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who come to Victoria from all 50 States and Puerto Rico to enjoy a weekend of respite from their wound care.

Warrior's Weekend and the Field of Honor are truly a nationwide ministry that has a positive impact on the thousands of cities and towns across America. The warriors go back and live more complete, productive lives for themselves, their families, and their communities.

On this day, we recognize the service and sacrifice of all those thousands of patriotic servant leaders who have strived for 15 years to honor veterans, encourage warriors, and build a community of honor and excellence.

Warrior's Weekend Field of Honor has shown this Nation what "right" looks like, and it is through the great work and leadership of volunteers demonstrating a true commitment to honoring the United States of America as one Nation under God.

REMEMBERING OFFICER TRUONG THAI

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

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a law enforcement officer hero from Nevada who made the ultimate sacrifice serving our community: Officer Truong Thai.

Last October, while responding to a late-night domestic disturbance, Officer Thai was shot and killed at the age of 49, leaving behind his father, brother, four sisters, his daughter, Jada, and an entire community of law enforcement officers who relied on his mentorship and support.

A 23-year veteran of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Officer Thai's colleagues describe him as someone who could have served in the highest levels of the department as a sergeant or a lieutenant. Instead, he chose time and again to serve at all hours of the day and all hours of the night on the front lines of our communities because what he cared about most was keeping people safe.

Officer Thai represented the best of our law enforcement, someone willing to put his life on the line for his community, but also a family man who never stopped giving back.

He coached girls' volleyball and enjoyed playing with his daughter, Jada. He went on fishing trips with colleagues and their children. He never hesitated to help someone in need.

We should all be grateful for the service of Officer Thai and inspired by his dedication and generosity as we remember his service.

In addition, I take a moment to honor the sacrifices of far too many other law enforcement officers from Nevada, also lost in the line of duty, including: The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Detective Justin Michael Terry; Officer Edward Aaron Contreras, Jr.; Sergeant Douglas Michael King; Officer Philip Carl Closs; Bailiff Gerald Raymond Smith from Pahrump Justice Court; and Officer Ray Edward East from Walker River.

This week, I thank our law enforcement officers for their service and remember those like Officer Thai, whose dedication to his community and family we will never forget.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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



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CONGRATULATING MS. DEE HEARD ON WINNING THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of last week's Teacher Appreciation Week to congratulate my constituent and winner of the Clark County School District Teacher of the Year Award, Ms. Dee Heard.

Ms. Heard is a sixth-grade teacher at Sedway Middle School and an innovative leader who is constantly thinking of ways to engage her students outside the textbook.

When students struggled after the pandemic, she designed a schoolwide math competition, complete with pep rallies and digital workspaces, to create learning incentives and help students track their progress and goals over time.

Ms. Heard also leads outside the classroom. She regularly collaborates with school staff to assist with everything from bus tickets to emotional support to food for her students.

I could not be more proud to represent teachers like Ms. Heard, and to know that our next generation of leaders is in such great hands. I thank her for all her hard work, and I congratulate her on her well-deserved honor.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all the incredible southern Nevada teachers who deserve our appreciation, not just this week, but every week.

SECURE OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud that my House Republican colleagues and I passed H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, last week.

President Biden's open border policies have created chaos at our southern border and the resulting crime surge and fentanyl crisis. I urge my Senate colleagues to also pass this commonsense legislation, which would finish the border wall, add Border Patrol agents, end catch and release, protect children from human trafficking, and stop the fentanyl crisis.

The border crisis is getting worse and worse every day. People on the terrorist watch list are being apprehended regularly, and there is no telling how many have snuck in illegally. I have been to the southern border, and what I saw was shocking. I saw human heartbreak, scared children, overcrowded facilities, overwhelmed Border Patrol agents, and evidence of human and drug trafficking being committed by the Mexican cartels.

Mr. Speaker, I saw whole giant sections of the unfinished border wall, with the materials to finish these sections lying in piles in the sun. We need to fix this humanitarian crisis now, and we have done our part in the House to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the U.S. Senate and the President will step up to the plate, as well.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, this is National Police Week, and I am proud to use my voice and my vote in Congress to honor the brave men and women who wear the badge and put their lives on the line to protect all of us.

Since President Biden took office, crime rates have skyrocketed. In the last 3 years, the number of officers shot in the line of duty is up 52 percent; in major American cities, homicides are up 13 percent; rapes are up 23 percent; and aggravated assaults are up 33 percent. Meanwhile, Federal arrests are down 35 percent. These numbers confirm that we need to do a better job supporting our law enforcement officers and ensure that they have the resources they need to do their job.

I support law enforcement officers. This week, as a part of my commitment to the Big First, I am honored to support commonsense reforms to issues affecting police, oppose any efforts to defund them, and memorialize law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

I am going to memorialize four of those officers from the great State of Kansas now, who paid the ultimate price while protecting their fellow Kansans: David Leroy Ingle from Iola; Stacy Annette Murrow from Linn County; Robert Price Craft from Marion County; and Sidnee Taylor Carter from Sedgwick County. May they rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I ask everyone to join me in praying for law enforcement and in thanking your local police officers this week for their service.

HONORING DR. MARTY VANIER

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Kansan and member of the Kansas State University family, Dr. Marty Vanier, who is receiving the Jay Dillingham Award for Agricultural Leadership and Excellence this week.

The Agricultural Business Council of Kansas City selected Dr. Vanier as a recipient of this year's award for good reason. She has deep roots in Kansas agriculture, having grown up on her family's ranch where they raised commercial and registered Hereford cattle. She has held several leadership positions in the fields of veterinary pharmaceutical and food safety. She is now the director of the National Agricultural Biosecurity Center at Kansas State.

Dr. Vanier received her undergraduate degree from Kansas State. She began her career in Washington, D.C., serving with the Animal Health Institute and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In 1987, she returned to Kansas State and has since worked for the university's Department of Animal Sciences, the Office of Strategic Partnership Development for the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, and the Kansas State Agricultural Biosecurity Center, which she now directs.

Dr. Vanier has the unique ability of bringing her diverse experiences to bear as an educator. She is a student,

professor, veterinarian, advocate, scientist, and philanthropist all at the same time.

Her thoughtful, systematic approach to leadership has made her a favorite in the classroom and among so many others.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Dr. Vanier on this well-deserved award.

NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH ON THE NATION'S DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, Republicans aren't being honest when they tell you they are trying to negotiate in good faith on the Nation's debt ceiling.

First, this shouldn't be a negotiation; it is paying our bills we have already spent. We have lifted the debt ceiling over 80 times before, including three times during President Trump's tenure because you have to pay your bills.

Second, the legislation they passed, as an alleged negotiation, shows how drastic they would like to cut spending but can't because they can't even put specifics on paper, like the President and the Democrats have. They would love to cut programs drastically, but the cuts would hurt so many Americans they can't actually do it. That is why they haven't released a budget.

I serve on the Appropriations Committee—let me explain what the Republicans want to do. They passed a bill to cut spending to fiscal year 2022 levels. That sounds innocuous enough, but here is what it actually means. Deep cuts.

We have discretionary and nondiscretionary spending. We can't cut nondiscretionary spending like Social Security and Medicare because, well, it is your money that we hold on to as a public trust. By law, we can't cut nondiscretionary spending. That only leaves discretionary funds that can be changed.

Discretionary funds are eligible for cuts or increases, but the GOP majority further limits that by saying they won't cut Pentagon spending, amounting to over half of the discretionary funds.

That leaves a much smaller portion of the total budget to absorb all the cuts they propose, adding up to a 22 percent cut of all remaining funds. That is 22 percent of the funds that help veterans, 22 percent of the funds to protect the border, funds for Meals on Wheels programs, funds for railroad safety inspections, education, housing, and healthcare, all cut.

Think about those levels of cuts and what that effect would have on you and your family. They talk a tough game on the border, but they would cut 22 percent of the funding going to protect the border. Cutting Border Patrol and Customs officers could increase the flow of people coming into the country and cut back on searches for fentanyl and other drugs at our points of entry.