

Mr. Speaker, strengthening SNAP should not be a partisan issue. I also support the bills that several of our colleagues have introduced that will improve our food security programs.

Following last year's White House Conference on Hunger, and as we consider the farm bill, Congress must make it a priority to get assistance to those who need it most.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a critical moment to take action to end hunger, and the default on America act is not the answer. We must strengthen SNAP, not cut it.

#### HONORING SHERIFF JESSE SLAUGHTER

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

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Montana's brave men and women in uniform and honor those who have fallen in the line of duty. This National Police Week, I recognize a law enforcement officer who has gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Cascade County Sheriff Jesse Slaughter has been an outspoken advocate for the safety of our students and teachers. Instead of being a bystander to the tragedies occurring at schools across the Nation, Sheriff Slaughter took action to prevent this in a community he swore to protect and serve.

Last year, he laid out a plan to hire and train special service officers to defend our schools and protect our children.

□ 1015

Sheriff Slaughter's plan may soon serve as a blueprint to secure schools across the country, and his leadership is absolutely a model for those in law enforcement.

As the brother-in-law of three former Baltimore City police officers, my family and I know the sacrifices that come with that job.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Sheriff Slaughter for his dedication, and I thank law enforcement officers across the country who put their lives on the line every day.

#### CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY

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

Mr. AUCHINCLOSS. Mr. Speaker, recently the United States has considered issuing a central bank digital currency. CBDCs are digital liabilities issued by a central bank and made available to the public.

The implications for the United States dollar as the world's reserve currency, and for domestic fiscal and monetary policy, of a US CBDC are hotly debated by experts.

What should not be controversial, however, is that the Federal Reserve, Treasury, and all other executive agencies cannot issue a CBDC without explicit authorization from Congress. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution grants that power "to coin money" and "regulate the value thereof" exclusively to Congress.

Under section 16 of the Federal Reserve Act, the Fed can issue "Federal Reserve notes," but CBDCs are not Federal Reserve notes. The law restricts Federal Reserve notes to paper notes printed on "plates and dies" engraved by the Treasury Department according to a detailed process that clearly does not apply to digital money.

The Federal Reserve has consistently recognized that it lacks authority to issue a CBDC without congressional authorization. The Fed published a report on CBDCs in January of 2022 and said that it would not issue a CBDC without "clear support" from Congress "in the form of a specific authorizing law." Fed Chair Jerome Powell has personally affirmed that view on multiple occasions since that report was published.

For example, last September, he said during a panel discussion on digital finance that the Fed "will need approval from both the executive branch and Congress to move ahead with a central bank digital currency."

Although the Fed understands that it cannot issue a CBDC without authorization from Congress, some commentators continue to suggest that legislation may not be necessary. They are wrong.

The Framers of the Constitution understood the importance of a strong and stable national currency, which is why they granted Congress the exclusive power to coin money and regulate its value. Congress must not forfeit this power, which is why I am introducing the Power to Mint Act.

This bill clearly prohibits the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department from issuing a CBDC without authorization from Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative FRENCH HILL, who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology and Inclusion on the Financial Services Committee for his work with me on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, also I congratulate the gentleman from Massachusetts for having the third child join his family in this past week. We congratulate the Auchinclosses on that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the gentleman from Massachusetts' bill, the Power of the Mint Act. I thank him for our partnership in introducing the first bipartisan bill in this House to prohibit the Federal Reserve from issuing a central bank digital currency, or a CBDC.

We believe together that under the Constitution, that authority rests solely with Congress and the American people, not unelected bureaucrats. That is a nonpartisan view.

Something that sets Americans apart from others is that we are rebelliously independent and skeptical of Government overreach. It is a cultural tradition in this country that has been passed down from our Founders.

I compliment the gentleman for having a portrait of Alexander Hamilton in his office indicating his strong support of the Constitution's views on money.

Recently, the only time my constituents from central Arkansas call me about digital assets is when they are worried that Uncle Sam is going to use a central bank digital currency to surveil where they are spending money and how much and ultimately block them from using the banking and payments system.

Instead, we are working collaboratively on a bicameral, bipartisan basis to believe that innovation belongs in the private sector. That is why we had this coalition working in both the House Agriculture Committee and the House Financial Services Committee to craft a regulatory framework that preserves Americans' privacy, preserves American competitiveness, and puts America in the right form for a digital future in money.

Americans have that right to financial privacy, and that is why I am proud to support the gentleman from Massachusetts' bill.

Mr. AUCHINCLOSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative HILL for his partnership and leadership on this subject.

The benefits that the United States enjoys due to the dollar's global reserve status have been called an exorbitant privilege, but that privilege rests in part upon scrupulous observance of the rule of law and how we regulate our currency.

The Power to Mint Act reinforces the rule of law by emphasizing Congress' authority to control the future of the dollar.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor my bill and keep the power to authorize new currency with Congress.

#### HONORING OUR POLICE OFFICERS

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

Ms. LETLOW. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week we passed H. Res. 363 that I proudly introduced with Representative MICHAEL GUEST memorializing law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. I join 110 of my colleagues recognizing and commemorating the ultimate sacrifices made by our law enforcement officers.

Honoring our officers is not just an act of appreciation, it is a fundamental



responsibility of all citizens throughout this great Nation. Our police officers are the very sentinels who selflessly dedicate their lives in the pursuit of preserving the safety and security of the citizens they are committed to protecting. They stand as a brave shield between us and danger, strengthening the foundation of our communities and embodying the very best of our society.

Today, I will take a moment to honor five courageous heroes from my home State of Louisiana who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty:

Walter Soileau, Jr., with the Cameron Parish Sheriff's Department; Trey Copeland with the Cotton Valley Police Department; William Collins, Jr., with the Doyline Police Department; Nicholas Tullier with the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office; and Louis Estay with the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office.

I ask everyone to join me in praying for these officers and their families who put their lives on the line each day for every American. As we pay our respects and honor these brave heroes for their ultimate sacrifice, let us all commit to supporting and uplifting the women and men who wear the badge each day.

Let us teach our children as well as future generations the critical mission that law enforcement personnel undertake in service to our beloved cities and our communities.

Today, let us respect, let us honor, and let us remember these fallen heroes.

HONORING STATE REPRESENTATIVE FRANCIS THOMPSON

Ms. LETLOW. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you to honor an extraordinary individual who has dedicated over 50 years of his life to public service in the great State of Louisiana. That person is my good friend, State representative Francis Thompson, the longest serving State legislator in Louisiana history and one of the longest serving in our country.

Representative Thompson was born and raised in his hometown of Delhi, Louisiana, right in the heart of Richland Parish. Thompson was first elected to the Richland Parish School Board in 1968 before winning a special election for District 19 in the Louisiana House in 1975. Voters have re-elected Thompson 11 times since then, serving 12 years in the State senate and 37 years and counting in the statehouse.

His unwavering commitment to north Louisiana and our State is remarkable. From the halls of the State legislature, Representative Thompson has been a strong and unwavering voice for north Louisiana. Throughout his distinguished career, he has championed crucial issues such as education, economic development, healthcare, and infrastructure, always striving to improve the lives of those whom he serves.

Representative Thompson's leadership and experience have been invaluable

in shaping legislation that addresses the unique challenges faced by Louisiana. His extensive knowledge and understanding of the intricacies of governance have earned him the respect of his peers and colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, not only his legislative achievements make Representative Thompson a remarkable public servant, as a former educator, he possesses a rare quality: the ability to connect with people on that personal level. Throughout the years, Representative Thompson has been a true friend to those whom he serves. He is known for his accessibility, his willingness to listen, and his genuine care and empathy has touched the hearts of so many, creating lasting bonds that will extend far beyond politics.

As we reflect on Representative Thompson's lifelong commitment to public service, let us acknowledge his unwavering dedication to our great State of Louisiana. He is an exemplary leader, a tireless advocate, and a true champion for the people of north Louisiana.

It is with great respect and gratitude that we acknowledge his remarkable contributions to Louisiana.

#### POLYCRISIS

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the polycrisis, the new term of art that people are using to describe what has happened globally in terms of a global pandemic, followed by global supply chain issues, followed by global inflation, and is underscored by the war in Ukraine, that has created incredible havoc here in this country.

Of course, the group that is impacted the most are people over the age of 65 here in the United States. With slightly over 1 million people who have succumbed to the pandemic, 850,000-plus have been over the age of 65.

The same group, Mr. Speaker, is impacted by inflation. Inflation hurts people on fixed incomes the most. Those are people on Social Security, people who are Social Security recipients.

Here in this Chamber, we play games. We are in the midst of signing a discharge petition to make sure that we lift the debt limit.

Mr. Speaker, we did that three times under the Trump administration without angst or fanfare. Yet here, for the group that is most impacted by this polycrisis, this global crisis, this is all while China and Russia are looking on and cheering this side of the aisle for their efforts to default on the full faith and credit of the United States, who will that hurt the most again?

That will hurt people over the age of 65, the people who are on Social Security and Medicare, and veterans who won't be able to get their checks.

Why? To make a political point?

This is the United States of America. We need to stand up and do the right thing for the American people, and that starts with taking care of our own. It has been more than 52 years since Congress has enhanced Social Security, and this pandemic and this ensuing inflation have hurt this group the most.

There are more than 5 million of our fellow Americans who get below-poverty-level checks from their government for Social Security. It is something they have paid into all of their lives. Contrary to the belief on the other side, this is not an entitlement. This is an earned benefit. This is what people have paid for.

Mr. Speaker, 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security, and Congress twiddles and diddles here. We need to pass an enhanced Social Security bill now.

As Martin Luther King, Jr., said, it is the fierce urgency of now.

These people need this relief today. This is not the time for political gamesmanship. Now is the time to act.

I implore my colleagues on the other side: Don't be frozen in the ice of your own indifference toward the people of this Nation who need this help and relief and need it now. Let's come together as a body and do what President Reagan did, do what President Eisenhower did, and do what President Nixon did, and come together and enhance Social Security on behalf of the citizens of this country.

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#### ENFORCE EXISTING BORDER LAWS

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, President Biden's radical open border agenda has resulted in the worst border crisis in our Nation's history.

Since taking office, this administration's policies have led to over 5 million encounters at our southern border; more than 1.3 million illegal immigrants have evaded apprehension; and CBP has seized over 38,000 pounds of fentanyl. Yet, President Biden would have you believe that the border is secure.

Exacerbating an already dire situation, in just the first 72 hours since title 42 ended, over 14,000 illegal aliens were apprehended.

Title 42 was vital in curbing illegal immigration, allowing for swift deportation of anyone crossing our border illegally.

While the administration continues to ignore this crisis, House Republicans have taken immediate action. I was proud to support H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, which passed the House last week. H.R. 2 upholds Republicans' commitment to a nation that is safe and a border that is secure by restarting construction of the border wall, increasing Border Patrol agents,