

work for other drugs. It is not going to work for fentanyl.

At the same time, the Biden administration has put forward a proposal, and it has been put into bill form, the STOP Fentanyl Act, that looks at all of this and tries to increase treatment, tries to increase interdiction and help law enforcement, and tries to do more research to see to what extent we can find uses for synthetic fentanyl that actually will stop, if you will, or prevent overdoses from killing people.

We are just asking for a comprehensive approach. I haven't heard anything from the other side of the aisle that says you are going to do anything more than continue with the current law, which says that we are going to make synthetic fentanyl part of schedule I, which is already the law, at least until the end of next year.

All we are saying is, let's sit down and actually try to come up with something here on a bipartisan basis that is going to make a difference for this fentanyl crisis. What we have done in the past hasn't worked. If we are going to just reduce funding for all of these things, that is certainly not going to work. That is only going to make it worse.

I guess I am just pleading with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Rethink this. We have the time now to come up with a comprehensive approach that will make a difference here. If you pass this partisan bill, it is going to go nowhere in the Senate, it is not going to become law, and we will have accomplished nothing.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill, and let's look for a comprehensive solution along the line of what the President has proposed.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My friend from New Jersey did say that this law expires at the end of the year. That is why we are here today to make scheduling illicit fentanyl permanent.

We have to understand what the status quo is. The status quo currently is horrific. Before these illicit fentanyls were scheduled, although we couldn't get them permanently scheduled, there were all kinds of analogues throughout America. That is why the DEA and others recommended that we schedule these, because once you change the fentanyl molecule, unless these are scheduled, then it becomes no longer illegal. These all appeared in our country, and that is why we are reacting to it. They are scheduled now, and what we are moving to do is to make it permanent.

What has happened since they were scheduled?

They came to me, and they talked about mass incarceration. We have heard that today. There have been eight people in prison under this law, four dealing with cartels, which I would say absolutely should be in prison.

I asked some of my law enforcement people when I was looking into this bill: If you have only arrested eight people, why does it matter?

That is what they are saying on the other side of the aisle.

What they said was the only reason we have only arrested eight people is because when this was put into place, the analogues—not fentanyl, but the analogues, which can be more dangerous—had disappeared from the marketplace. They are bringing in fentanyl that is already scheduled.

The problem is, if we treat fentanyl analogues differently than fentanyl, they are going to reappear again. That is why we have to put them in the same category. If you have fentanyl subject to mandatory minimums, but not these analogues, then they are going to reappear.

We have to pass this bill, we have to move forward, and I recommend support of this bill.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1845

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GRIFFITH) having assumed the chair, Mr. D'ESPOSITO, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 467) to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

HONORING KELLE STRICKLAND ON HER RETIREMENT

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

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kelle Strickland, who is retiring after 20 years of service to the House of Representatives.

Kelle is currently serving as my counsel on the Committee on Ethics and has spent two decades providing invaluable advice to Members and staff.

A native Alabamian, Kelle started her career on the Hill as an intern. She was quickly recognized as a leader and served for 6 years as the legislative director to former Congressman Jo Bonner. She served 5 years as chief of staff to Congressman MICHAEL BURGESS, 3 years as chief of staff in the Office of House Sergeant at Arms, and the last several years in her role as counsel to the ranking member and later chairman of the House Committee of Ethics.

I could not have been able to make the transition into my role at the Committee on Ethics without Kelle's guidance. She has served as a wealth of in-

stitutional knowledge and a trusted adviser to me since last August.

Kelle's presence in the House will be missed, but she will not go far. Kelle will continue to be a resource to the institution at the helm of the Congressional Institute, where she will undoubtedly enjoy continued success.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in congratulating Kelle and thanking her for her many years of service.

IMPORTANCE OF LOAN FORGIVENESS IN BLACK COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the benefits of President Biden's student loan forgiveness plan for the Black community.

Today, American families struggle with the high costs of higher education. These financial burdens are even worse in Black communities.

Black college graduates owe \$25,000 more in student debt on average than White graduates, and they owe 12.5 percent more than they borrowed 4 years after graduating.

President Biden's plan would forgive \$10,000 to \$20,000 of student loan debt for eligible students. It would cut the loan balance for Black graduates nearly in half, and it would erase the debt for 25 percent of Black borrowers.

It is a great first step, but we must do more. We must increase debt forgiveness for students targeted by predatory for-profit colleges regardless, and we must create interest-free Federal student loans to lower the financial burdens of college.

These actions would help millions of Black graduates pay off their loans and get a fresh start.

CLOSE THE SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, we received a briefing as to what was going on in the Russia-Ukraine war, and we heard of the callousness with which President Putin treats his own troops.

Indeed, 20,000 Russian troops recently died to take a city that was apparently of no important significance.

I thought, how could a President be so callous knowing that when one of these troops died, his parents, his siblings, and perhaps his children are left behind?

Then it occurred to me that here in the United States of America, we had 109,000 people die of illegal drugs last year, most of it fentanyl, and our President seems to be willing to do almost nothing.

Mr. Speaker, since almost all the drugs are coming across the southern border, with 109,000 people dying every year, wouldn't you figure it is a priority to close the border? No.

Wouldn't you think it is a priority to arrest or put in prison those people who are selling these drugs? No.

The major concern is to leave the border open and not put any more people in prison.

By the way, as far as the ability to prevent people from selling the drugs and putting them in prison, how many people died of fentanyl last year in China? None. Why? Because the minute they try to sell it, they would be in prison.

In any event, I call upon President Biden to finally address the fentanyl crisis.

SUPPORTING OUR KUPUNA

(Ms. TOKUDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Keep Kupuna Fed Act.

According to the most current data from the USDA, 1 in 10 kupuna, or senior citizens, are experiencing hunger and food insecurity.

SNAP has played a critical role in preventing millions of Americans, including our kupuna, from going hungry in the face of a public health crisis, supply chain disruptions, and rising inflation.

While the historic 8.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment was welcome news to more than 65 million Social Security beneficiaries, for many kupuna, this has resulted in a net loss.

Seniors in every one of our districts across the country have lost or will lose access to SNAP entirely, while others will see a significant decrease in benefits because of this bump in Social Security.

That is why I introduced the Keep Kupuna Fed Act, which would exempt title II Social Security benefits from the SNAP program's income eligibility requirements. This ensures more kupuna stay on SNAP and don't go hungry.

I invite my colleagues to join me in helping end senior hunger and keep our kupuna fed by supporting this important measure.

HONORING MICHAEL R. MASONE

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

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to Michael R. Masone, an ex-chief of the Island Park Fire Department, the same department that I proudly served for the last 23 years.

This weekend back home in Island Park, we are going to rededicate our beloved local beach in his honor. The ex-Chief Michael R. Masone Beach was named for a man who back in 1942, when he served as chief of our great department, resigned. He resigned as chief to do something far greater, and

that was to serve this Nation in World War II. He returned home and married the love of his life, Sue, and they lived in Island Park for decades.

He was the senior member of our department when he passed away, serving over 70 years.

His nickname in Island Park was "The Hawk," and we called him "The Hawk" because he always kept a watchful eye on our beloved community.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward this weekend to joining neighbors, loved ones, family, friends, and fellow Island Parkers in, once again, paying tribute to a true American hero, someone whom we all aspire to be back in Island Park, ex-Chief Michael R. Masone.

RECOGNIZING ANN BERRY

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Ann Berry, who, for the past 44 years, affected the lives of students, teachers, and families in the Carmel Unified School District.

This month, Ms. Berry is retiring as Carmel High School's attendance secretary, where she ensured that students not only attended school but enjoyed school.

She started in 1979 as a parent who showed up to ensure that her daughter wasn't skipping class. She did such a good job in that role that Carmel High School hired her to keep other students in school.

It was a vocation for Ms. Berry that affected thousands of other Padres, including my two older brothers, myself, and now my two daughters, who attend Carmel High School.

Through her work, our community relied on Ms. Berry as a cop for keeping kids in class, as a comedian for keeping kids happy, as a counselor well aware of teen mental health concerns, as a coach for common sense, and as a supporter of Padre athletic and academic success.

For four decades, Ms. Berry was that dependable school administrator. She was that voice of reason for parents, and she is that trusted adult for teenagers.

As one of her students and now as her Congressman, I thank and congratulate Ms. Ann Berry for her service, for her support, and for being that solid cornerstone of the Carmel High community.

INVESTING IN OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I represent nearly 50,000 veterans across North Carolina's First Congressional District. North Carolina ranks 10th in the Nation for veteran-owned small businesses.

During Small Business Week, I introduced a bipartisan package of veterans' legislation to repay our veterans for their sacrifice and selfless service.

The first, the Veterans Jobs Opportunity Act, introduced with Congressman ZACH NUNN of Iowa, provides veterans starting small businesses with a 15 percent tax credit on the first \$50,000 of startup costs.

The second, the Coast Guard Combat-Injured Tax Fairness Act, introduced with Congressman DON BACON of Nebraska, closes a loophole in an existing law that failed to provide Coast Guard servicemembers with the same tax benefits afforded to others.

Investing in our brave veterans while helping the communities that need it most should be our highest priority.

□ 1900

CUTS TO CRITICAL SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OWENS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I know that many of our folks back home have been seeing or hearing the news nonstop about the debt ceiling and how much the health of our economy is counting on getting to a resolution.

Well, it is May 24 at 6:59 p.m., and because of Republicans, we don't have a deal because they refuse to put people over politics.

Republicans have made this all about political games. Quite frankly, it seems like they are happier to play under the guise of bipartisan negotiating to cut government spending, but there are real-life repercussions to the theater.

Let me be absolutely clear. Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY and his extreme MAGA Republicans aren't going to be the ones who aren't able to afford housing or keep food on the table if they get their way on massive cuts to essential domestic programs.

It is actually going to be everyday people across the country, including in the Third Congressional District of Illinois, which sent me to Congress to protect them from these cruel Republican cuts and an attack on our economy with bad deals.

It is going to be everyday people like Estela, a constituent of mine. Estela arrived in Chicago 13 years ago from