

from Republicans' harmful cuts and prevented an economic disaster for the American people.

This bill will fully fund the PACT Act's toxic exposure fund for veterans exposed to burn pits with an increase of \$15 billion, and it makes this funding mandatory. That is why I will vote "yes" today.

REMEMBERING DR. ALLAN BERNSTEIN

(Mrs. KIM of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Dr. Allan Bernstein, a former Tustin mayor known as "Doc". He passed away on May 24, 2023.

Dr. Bernstein devoted many years to serving the city of Tustin, serving on the city council from 2012 to 2020 and as mayor in 2017 and also in 2020. He also served on several State and county boards and committees.

He was committed to seeing Tustin thrive and always looked after the best interests of his residents, businesses, and staff.

Doc was a dear friend of mine, and I know he truly cared about the Tustin community. I join our Tustin community in mourning his passing and send my deepest condolences to his wife, Randi; son and daughter-in-law, Adam and Karlee; and his mother, Ruth.

OHIO ENERGY RATE HIKES

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an immense burden being shifted onto Ohio electric ratepayers beginning this week while Congress works to prevent a national default.

Ohio customers who buy electricity directly from disgraced FirstEnergy Corporation may see rates increase by as much as 47 percent starting in June.

If your energy bill is \$50, you will now pay \$73.50 a month. If your bill is \$100 a month on average, you will pay \$147 per month. These new rates will last through May of 2024.

The State of Ohio seems to have no problem with a system where FirstEnergy, a criminal nuclear enterprise, can shift \$1.3 billion in their losses to ratepayers. When it comes time to pay its taxes, the company has an effective tax rate of negative 1.3 percent. Then FirstEnergy bilks millions more from the Federal Government instead of paying its fair share.

As Ohio families struggle to keep up with inflation, put food on the table, and pay for childcare, FirstEnergy is squeezing consumers to pay for its criminal behavior. For shame. This corruption cannot stand.

RECOGNIZING GENERAL RANDY GEORGE

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

Mrs. HINSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize General Randy George, a native of Alden, Iowa, who was recently nominated to be the next Army Chief of Staff. This is a tremendous and well-deserved honor for General George.

General George served our Nation both in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is a decorated military hero, having earned a Purple Heart and Defense Distinguished Service Medal, among many other accolades.

General George exemplifies distinguished and selfless service. It is only because of brave Americans like General George that we can wave our American flag, we can speak freely, and we can practice the religion that we choose.

I am hopeful that his service inspires the next generation of Iowans and Americans to answer our Nation's call.

General George has made his hometown of Alden, Iowa, and the entire Hawkeye State proud.

CLEAN DEBT BILL

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in awe of Republicans' ability to hijack our economy and put lives at risk.

We should be voting on a clean debt limit bill, not a quasi-budget bill that began with their phony default on America act.

They usurped a legitimate policy process to get gains they knew would never make it across the finish line. This has been about a vengeful GOP party chomping at the bit for retribution and willing to push our country to the brink of economic catastrophe.

Let's not forget where we started. Republicans wanted to cut food benefits, eliminate healthcare, and take away benefits from veterans.

I want to know how they can say they stand for this Republic and the American people, when their actions say the opposite. They have proven what they were willing to do to our families and the global economy.

They think they are drawing blood from Democrats, but really, they are exacting their pound of flesh from the American people. If that is what they stand for, then like the Speaker votes, later today should be easy for them.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FAUSTO G. DIAZ

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

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my constituent and friend, Fausto G. Diaz.

A fellow member of the Christopher Columbus High School family, Fausto was a successful Cuban-American entrepreneur and job creator who, along with parents Remedios and Fausto and sister Rosie, took their business to new heights.

Fausto was deeply patriotic, loved this country and never forgot about his parents' native homeland of Cuba. He was a tireless advocate for Cuba's freedom and the importance of keeping sanctions on the brutal regime that strangles the island.

Above all, Fausto was a loving son, brother, father, grandfather, and uncle who was so proud of his growing family.

Fausto passed away unexpectedly on the morning of Tuesday, May 30, but his legacy lives on in his children, Jacqueline and Fausto; and grandchildren, Victor and Katherine.

Rest easy, my friend.

REMEMBERING CONEN MORGAN

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

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and stand in solidarity with my fellow North Carolina delegation members to honor and remember the life and legacy of Conen Morgan.

Conen was a friend and a giant in the world of North Carolina political advocacy and public policy. He had an uncanny ability to connect with people from all walks of life, bridging divides and fostering a sense of unity.

He wanted everyone to have access to the American Dream. His passion in life was to work for fairness and equity.

Conen left this world a brighter place for current and future generations of North Carolinians. May we find strength in each other as we remember the profound impact Conen Morgan made in our lives, and may we strive to carry forward his legacy of compassion, dedication, and tireless advocacy.

RESTORING FISCAL SANITY

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today on behalf of all Americans, the House will be voting on the Fiscal Responsibility Act to restore fiscal sanity and hold Washington accountable.

Yesterday, a New York Post editorial acknowledged that the debt limit deal from Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY is a win for the Nation.

It advances the GOP's control-spending agenda significantly, on multiple fronts. Most crucially, it starts reducing Federal outlays immediately and it

cuts some spending. That by itself is the first such major spending reduction ever.

It also claws back tens of billions of dollars in unspent COVID relief. It adds work requirements for food stamps. It also adds some budgeting/appropriations rules that should prevent another omnibus monster to avoid a government shutdown. It is the first reform in decades of environmental rules that slow major energy and infrastructure projects.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with Biden's open borders.

HONORING CONEN MORGAN

(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 too rise to honor a true North Carolinian, Conen Morgan. Conen was taken from us at the age of 42 in a recent boating accident.

Mr. Speaker, he dearly loved North Carolina. Conen used his God-given talents to make our State and Nation better.

He led the Longleaf Agency. Conen was wise beyond his years and known for his knack and insights into our State and Nation.

Conen's hard work, determination, and dedication did not go unnoticed. He made a positive impact on the lives of people across North Carolina.

We will miss his warmth whenever he walked into a room and his infectious smile.

Mr. Speaker, I join those in eastern North Carolina and across our State in sending our deepest sympathy to his wife, Reyna; his family; and friends.

HONORING CLEVELAND JOSEPH FOUNTAIN

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Cleve Fountain who was involved in his community with a deep commitment to public service.

Early on in his life, he was a member of the YMCA and the Boy Scouts of America. He joined the U.S. Army at age 15 and served in the Pacific theater during World War II and finished his service with the rank of second lieutenant.

He moved to Port Wentworth, Georgia, my hometown. He owned Fountain Funeral Home and Westview Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. He was our mayor. He was our county commissioner.

In 1988, I set out to achieve a goal of mine and that was to own my own busi-

ness. I went to two banks. Both of them turned me down. I went to the third bank. They gave me the loan.

They gave me the loan because Cleve Fountain called and told them that I was a fine young man and that I came from a good family.

Mr. Speaker, in our lives there are people and places we remember. I will always remember Cleve Fountain for what he did for me and what he did for my family.

ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

(Ms. TLAIB asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, everyone, no matter their ZIP Code, should be able to enjoy natural resources. This week, Congresswoman MELANIE STANSBURY and I introduced the Environmental Justice in Recreation Permitting Act to require the Biden administration to complete an inner-agency report on the effects of special recreation permits on environmental justice communities.

Our communities of color, Mr. Speaker, low-income communities, Tribal and indigenous communities are on the front lines of the climate crisis.

Enabling greater connections between environmental justice communities and recreation opportunities on our public lands and waters is just the beginning of advancing true environmental justice for our residents in Michigan's 12th District and beyond.

Every single American, Mr. Speaker, deserves the right to breathe clean air, and every American deserves to experience all that our public lands and waters have to offer. This body must do more to protect them instead of gutting our bedrock environmental laws.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, did pass the House in the Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act, and I urge my colleagues to pass this commonsense bill again this session.

USE OF AERIAL FIRE RETARDANT

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, there was a crazy lawsuit brought by an environmental group here recently in the West to stop the usage of fire retardant that is used to fight forest fires, that red stuff that comes out of the aircraft that they drop on fires to keep them from getting worse.

Thankfully, that lawsuit was overruled. A district judge ruled that the U.S. Forest Service can keep using the aerial fire retardant for at least another couple of years, so we have that going for us.

Now, they do have to keep checking back every 6 months to make sure that they are working on a permit process to keep the ability to use that fire retardant to put out forest fires.

As you know, every year millions of acres of forest go up, sending even the smoke plume all the way back here to the East Coast sometimes and causing health days to not be able to go outside.

Here in Congress, we have legislation ready. I have introduced H.R. 1586, the Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023, so we will be ready in case there is a court ruling that comes in and says they can't use that stuff anymore. Congress needs to act.

□ 1430

I AM HERE FOR STRUGGLING FAMILIES

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

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, today we will vote on a bill that reflects how little Republicans care about everyday people, even their own constituents.

We should be voting on a straightforward extension of the debt ceiling, but instead Republicans are more than willing to force our Nation and economy into default just to score political wins.

They want to increase work requirements on SNAP, a cruel resumption of student loan payments, and more restrictions on TANF. They are clearly not here for families who are struggling. Well, I am.

I am here for the 1.3 million student loan borrowers in Illinois who are being forced a resumption of payments when people are struggling to keep up with their bills.

I am here for the 76,836 people across Illinois who are counting on TANF cash assistance. I am also here for the 1.9 million residents of Illinois who all count on SNAP to put food on their table.

Representing them is my responsibility, and it is why I know that we could have worked on a clean debt ceiling, but this hostage situation is not something I can vote for.

SETTING OUR AIM HIGH ENOUGH

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

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my grave concern with the fiscal state of our Nation, as someone who spent over a decade in the finance and accounting profession.

We are going to be voting on the Fiscal Responsibility Act today. One side will say how great it is, and the other side will say how awful it is, but really it is meaningless, considering the immense gravity of our fiscal problems.

As Michelangelo once said: "The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."