

again, his reputation has spread nationwide. Therefore, it is fitting and appropriate, as I said at the outset, that Harvard University provide him with an honorary doctorate degree.

I congratulate my friend on his well-deserved honor. He is a role model and an inspiration for so many. He makes the San Joaquin Valley proud. I thank him very much.

CELEBRATING DIA DE PORTUGAL

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a special day for Americans of Portuguese descent to celebrate Dia de Portugal, a national Portuguese holiday.

The story of Portuguese Americans is part of the American story, which is about immigrants past and present—in this case, the Portuguese community.

As a proud descendant of Portuguese immigrants, the traditions and values that my family took from the Azore Islands off the coast of Portugal have never been far from my heart. It is the story of my family.

The fact is that Portugal is one of America's longest and strongest allies. It was one of the first nations to recognize the United States as an independent nation after the Revolutionary War.

As co-chairman of the Portuguese Caucus, I look forward to continuing our efforts in a bipartisan fashion to advance mutual interests and strengthen the bonds between the United States and Portugal.

We celebrate the richness and ethnic diversity of all the communities in our country. I am convinced it is the secret sauce of America. De Tocqueville wrote a book about it in the late 19th century, wondering why America could reinvent itself with every generation of immigrants that came to these shores with nothing more than the clothes on their back but a deep desire to work hard and succeed for themselves and their families. That is the secret sauce, the American Dream that we share in common.

For Dia de Portugal, Feliz Dia de Portugal.

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSISTENCY

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

Mr. McCORMICK. Madam Speaker, I wanted to take this time to explain to my constituents why consistency in political thought is important.

Many people were excited and encouraged when I voted against lifting the deficit cap recently. The reason I did this was that I did not want an unidentified amount of debt accumulation while we shaved a small portion of 11 percent off the budget. Meanwhile, we did not address executive power and bureaucracies that were out of control and that could cost us far more than we could save. In short, I wanted the REINS Act in exchange for raising the debt ceiling.

Ironically, I have made unpopular votes that are consistent with the same philosophy. For example, I voted against keeping a fee for all VA loans, that all veterans have to pay for every loan. The fee is taken in order to pay for IT training for a small number of veterans. I did not think it was fair that every veteran would pay for the education of just a few veterans that would otherwise be paid for by the GI Bill already. Just because the name "veteran" is attached to a bill does not make it the right thing to do.

Likewise, I voted against creating more government oversight on the Abraham Accords. The Abraham Accords are working great. It has created some of the most innovative peace-keeping processes in modern history. However, creating more government, especially in the form of another executive appointee, to a process that is already working well did not make sense to me. Well-intended bureaucracy and increasing executive power is the greater part of what I have been fighting against since I arrived in D.C.

We are already out of balance. The REINS Act was meant to bring back into control executive power and bureaucracies. Why would I vote for something that would increase more bureaucracy and more executive power?

No one should doubt my support for Israel or my admiration of the Abraham Accords. In April of this year, I voted in favor of H. Res. 311, a resolution encouraging the expansion and strengthening of the Abraham Accords, a resolution urging nations throughout the region to improve their relationships with Israel and strengthen the U.S.-Israel alliance.

With that said, whether it is about government spending, debt, increasing fees on an entire veteran population for the sake of a few, or increasing executive power and bureaucracy, I will remain politically consistent and thoughtful. That is my promise. I believe in the individual, not more government.

We need to bring back the balance of power that was designed by the Constitution for a purpose. More government, more debt, and more fees are seldom the answer. I remain semper fidelis to this philosophy, and to the people.

CRACKING DOWN ON WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

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

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, beware when Washington says it is getting fiscally responsible. Too often that is code for cutting programs that families rely on while throwing more money at defense contractors.

This year, my Republican colleagues want most government programs to tighten their belts while defense spending increases without accountability.

Nowhere is this more evident than the F-35 program.

The Department of Defense expects to spend \$1.7 trillion over the life of the F-35 program, including the countless spare parts contractors are losing. In fact, since May 2018, under the watch of just one company, over 1 million parts have been lost, damaged, or destroyed.

I came to Washington to protect taxpayer dollars, not flush them into the Pentagon's black hole. As Congress considers the National Defense Authorization Act, I encourage my colleagues to join me in cracking down on waste, fraud, and abuse.

ORANGE COUNTY EVICTION DIVERSION COLLABORATIVE

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, higher inflation and housing costs harm us all, especially our most vulnerable neighbors who are on the brink of losing their homes. Low-income families are struggling to make do, falling behind on rent, and unable to find affordable housing.

One unexpected medical emergency or job layoff can be all it takes to doom a family into eviction. Evictions are not momentary inconveniences. They are long-term setbacks that make it harder to find a new home, driving families deeper into poverty. Single moms and women of color are disproportionately at risk of being evicted. Seventy-eight percent of Orange County households that are behind on rent are headed by females.

Thankfully, the Orange County Eviction Diversion Collaborative is stepping in to help. By advocating for rental assistance and landlord mediation services, they are saving tenants and families from the destabilizing damage of an eviction. As a single mom myself, I am grateful Orange County is looking out for women and children. Our community is stronger, healthier, and safer when we take care of one another.

SILICON VALLEY BANK COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, when banks make promises to the public, we should expect that they are upheld. Disappointingly, First Citizens Bank is falling short of this standard.

After purchasing Silicon Valley Bank's assets at a whopping \$16.5 billion discount, First Citizens has been silent on whether it will uphold Silicon Valley Bank's promise to invest \$9 billion in California's low-income communities. This investment promised to expand affordable housing, small business loans, and other needed services in underserved areas.

I led 15 of my California colleagues in a letter last month calling on First Citizens Bank to honor this commitment. They have not responded.

It is an injustice that communities of color and low-income households stand to lose out more from First Citizens' purchase than all of Silicon Valley Bank's billionaire depositors.

First Citizens has a responsibility to make sure that neighborhoods with the least financial resources are not left behind.

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CALOPTIMA FUNDING FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise to commend CalOptima Health's board of directors for approving up to \$25.5 million in funding for behavioral healthcare for Orange County students.

All 29 Orange County school districts could use this funding to hire additional staff, enhance training and development, and develop new respite spaces for children in K-12 schools. This funding comes at such a crucial time.

Children's mental health has declined since the start of the pandemic. In California, young people between the ages of 14 and 18 are suffering the most. CalOptima Health and the Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program are doing important work by partnering with Hazel Health, Children's Hospital of Orange County, and Western Youth Services to improve behavioral health among our students.

Mental health care is healthcare, and I applaud Orange County for prioritizing the health and well-being of our children.

GAS STOVES

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

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, today I rise in opposition to President Biden's and the extreme Green New Deal Democrats' attempts to ban gas stoves and cooking appliances. I rise in support of H.R. 1615 and H.R. 1640, which would extinguish this egregious abuse of power.

Madam Speaker, natural gas stoves are currently the preferred cooktop appliance for nearly 40 percent of American households. In fact, nearly 187 million Americans use natural gas because it is a relatively affordable and reliable source of energy.

As Americans have been facing the gripping reality of surging prices for almost everything, thanks to the reckless and out-of-control spending of President Biden and Congressional Democrats, the last thing they need is to be forced to spend an additional \$1,068 per year from using only electric appliances.

During debate, Democrats will say, and have said that no one is trying to take away your gas stoves. That couldn't be any further from the truth.

In fact, a recent CNN headline read: "New York becomes the first state to ban natural gas stoves and furnaces in most new buildings."

While discussing gas stoves in January of this year, Consumer Product Safety Commissioner Richard Trumka, Jr., said: "Any option is on the table," meaning that banning gas stoves was certainly a potential option.

A month later, in February, seemingly following the Consumer Product Safety Commission's lead, the U.S. De-

partment of Energy issued a proposed rule that, if finalized, would set maximum annual energy consumption standards for electric and gas cooking tops manufactured and sold into commerce.

This proposed rule would have an estimated cost of \$183.4 million for manufacturers that will need to comply with the new standards. Somehow, the administration tentatively concluded that the new standards would be "technologically feasible and economically justified."

Give me a break.

Now, Madam Speaker, gas stoves in my home State of Tennessee may not be as common as they are in some other States. Given our relatively affordable electricity rates and our historical reliance on other forms of energy, Tennessee's use of gas stoves accounts for only 20.4 percent of households in our State. But even though only one in five Tennessee households use a gas stove, the Tennessee State legislature passed, and the Governor signed into law, legislation that prohibits local governments from banning gas stoves. As a result, no localities in the Volunteer State have pursued this ill-guided policy.

All of this to say, Americans should be allowed the freedom to make this decision for themselves. The last thing they need is the Federal Government coming into their kitchen and telling them what appliances they should be using. Not only is it extremely costly and ineffective but it is another step toward becoming a socialist nanny state.

Lastly, Green New Deal Democrats in favor of banning gas stoves claim that it will save the environment and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The truth is that homes with natural gas appliances emit 22 percent less CO₂ than all electric homes.

Madam Speaker, let's call this what it is: a blatant overreach and abuse of power by Green New Deal Democrats and the power-hungry Biden administration.

Thankfully, House Republicans are taking action to protect America's freedom to choose for themselves whether a gas stove is the best choice for their needs by passing H.R. 1615, the Gas Stove Protection and Freedom Act, and H.R. 1640, the Save Our Gas Stoves Act.

It is a shame that we have to take these types of actions to push back against an overly aggressive regulatory state led by the Biden administration.

EMANCIPATION DAY RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to honor my ancestors as we approach the 175th anniversary of our emancipation—the self-emancipation of the enslaved people of the Danish West Indies.

It is ironic that now in the United States, right now, there is a war being waged to censor and erase history and heritage, not just of Virgin Islanders but for Black and Brown people in this Nation.

The bloody insurrection of American revolutionaries to attain their freedom is celebrated, yet the history of resilience and strength, the story of the African Diaspora in this country, is attempted to be taken away.

Shackled and bound, over 120,000 of my ancestors, men, women, and children, were stolen and trafficked from the shores of Africa to the islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John in the Danish West Indies, now known as the Virgin Islands of the United States.

From the early 1650s until 1848, the Danish subjected the people of the Virgin Islands to the atrocities of chattel slavery. Forgotten today, the Danes were notorious for having some of the most grueling and inhumane conditions in the Caribbean. Under these conditions and the watchful eye of the Danish, the people resolved to mobilize and seize their freedom.

On July 3, 1848, 9,000 enslaved and freed people on the island of St. Croix collected en masse at Fort Frederik and demanded their immediate and indefinite liberation. Under the superior leadership of Moses "General Buddhoe" Gottlieb, they had coordinated, strategized, and executed a plan for freedom.

Overcome by the people, the Danish surrendered by the declaration of the Danish governor.

The Virgin Islands became one of only two places to ever successfully gain their freedom through an organized slave revolt, armed insurrection, in the history of the Western Hemisphere. They would wait for no man to unshackle their chains.

This is what it means to be a Virgin Islander, to overcome the most harrowing of circumstances, to reclaim the power that which is kept seemingly out of reach, and to wait for no one to give us freedom, equity, or prosperity.

Malcolm X at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity stated: "A race of people is like an individual man; until it uses its own talents, takes pride in its own history, expresses its own culture, affirms its own selfhood, it can never fulfill itself."

We, the people of the Virgin Islands, must not sit idle expecting that the same system that oppressed our ancestors, that continues to deny us rights, will solve the very problems of its creation. We don't need to look for others to solve our problems. We have within ourselves, within our own diaspora, all the answers to heal ourselves and grow.

Throughout the Virgin Islands and the United States and beyond, we are doctors, engineers, writers, educators, builders, economists, organizers. We are a people of immeasurable talent, borne from a history of strength and resilience, possessing a rich and vibrant culture capable of good things,