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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 21, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE COLLINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

CONGRATULATING LINDA RUSHING ON HER RETIREMENT

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate Linda Rushing on her retirement from her leadership role as vice chancellor at the University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Technology-Crossett.

Linda has worked tirelessly for almost five decades to serve her community through dedication to teaching,

student administration, and academic leadership.

Linda began her career at Forest Echoes Vocational Technical School in 1975 where she was hired as a business instructor. She continued to serve this institution through 1987 when she was named director of the school.

When Forest Echoes Vocational Technical School merged with UAM to become UAM-CTC, she was named vice chancellor, where she has served for 20 years. Linda's commitment to excellence and the success of her faculty, staff, and students at the UAM College of Technology-Crossett has immensely benefited the greater Arkansas community. Her passion for serving others in leadership has cultivated a campus environment in which students can thrive and one that has served the workforce needs of southeast Arkansas and its communities.

I congratulate Linda on a commendable career of leadership and public service and thank her for all she has done for the State of Arkansas.

CONGRATULATING JOE FOX ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to congratulate my good friend, Mr. Joe Fox, on his retirement.

Joe has had a successful career in forestry in my home State of Arkansas as State forester, directing the Forestry Division of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture.

In Arkansas, Joe Fox and forestry are synonymous. He brings to the table a depth of experience, having served as president of the Arkansas Forestry Association, chairman of the Arkansas Forestry Commission, and president of the National Association of State Foresters.

I express my sincere thanks to Joe for his service and dedication to the State of Arkansas, his knowledge of forestry, and his contributions to the industry. I am proud to say that Arkansas serves as a blueprint for forest

management for the rest of the country, and that has been enhanced by the service and leadership of Joe Fox.

Without a doubt, through his work in forestry and conservation, Joe has left a legacy for future generations, not only in the example that he set but also a tangible one: Our forests are better off for our kids and grandkids because of Joe Fox.

Mr. Speaker, I will leave with you a famous Joe Fox quote: "Trees are the answer. Now, what is your question?" I couldn't agree more.

ARKANSAS IS A WONDERFUL STATE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, Arkansas celebrated its statehood last week. Arkansas became the 25th State of the United States on June 15, 1836.

Arkansas is a wonderful State with a rich history, breathtaking natural beauty, and vibrant communities. From the gorgeous Ozark Mountains to the mighty Mississippi River, Arkansas is a State of limitless opportunities.

Arkansas has changed and flourished since its entry into the Union, leaving its imprint on the history of our country. Arkansas has experienced significant events, overcome barriers, and built a strong and resilient community to be proud of.

From the Delta blues to the world-renowned Hot Springs National Park, our State provides a diverse range of activities that reflect our distinct past. Let us continue to honor Arkansas' diverse culture, customs, and people.

PROTECTING OUR TERRITORIES AND FRIENDS IS PARAMOUNT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the United States stands as a beacon of freedom with a mission to protect the inalienable rights for which many have given their lives. This mission rings from the mountains to the prairies, across our oceans, and across the globe.

This month, the Indo-Pacific Task Force was assembled to evaluate Chinese attempts to usurp our interests in the Pacific. China is a threat to our democracy, and they are attempting to

□ 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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gain a foothold not only in Cuba but also within our territories across the Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions.

To combat this hostility, our bipartisan team was assembled to support our territories and friends in the Freely Associated States to counter the communist influence.

Protecting our territories and our friends is paramount. I ask Congress to engage in this effort fully, heed the suggestions of the Indo-Pacific Task Force, and work together to strengthen our territories and deter Chinese influence in the Pacific and here at home.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER PARSONS

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a very heavy heart to pay tribute to St. Paul firefighter, my friend, Captain Christopher Parsons, who was just 48 years old when he sustained a major medical event shortly after completing his shift and passed away last week.

Christopher's untimely passing is a deep and profound loss for his loved ones, fellow firefighters, our entire city, and, in fact, the entire State.

After joining the department in 2000, he was promoted to captain in 2007. He served in leadership roles for the IAFF Local 21, the Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters, and the Minnesota Fire Service Foundation, and he took his expertise and passion for public safety to our State capital, where he improved public safety for so many.

Chris was a guide for me. I learned so much from him about firefighting and the needs of those who fight fires.

Captain Parsons had an impact on so many lives. He fought to save lives during his time on Earth, and he continues to do so through the gift of organ donation.

I extend my deepest condolences to Chris' family, and I express my gratitude for all those who put their lives on the line day after day to keep our communities safe.

RECOGNIZING ALEX MEDINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Alex Medina, a man who demonstrates the spirit of giving that is a model for all of us.

Alex is a bone marrow donor, and thanks to his generosity, he was able to provide Egerton Burroughs, a man whom he had never met, with a second chance at life.

Mr. Speaker, donations like Alex's, whether they be bone marrow, blood, or other precious resources, help save the lives of countless Americans every day.

Mr. Medina and Mr. Burroughs were brought together by a wonderful program, Be The Match, which matches viable bone marrow donors to patients across the country.

We are blessed in North Carolina that both Duke University Hospital and Wake Forest Baptist play pivotal roles in bone marrow and stem cell transplants. Dedicated professionals there and at other institutions perform life-saving work.

Mr. Speaker, across North Carolina and our entire Nation, the kindness and generosity of donors like Alex Medina should not only be celebrated but also encouraged.

We can all play a positive role in the lives of others, and donating blood and other critical resources is one way of doing so. The simple actions we take can go on to make a profound impact upon people we know as well as those we do not know.

Proverbs 11:25 reads: "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."

Let us never forget how we can serve as forces for good and give to others the gifts that God has bestowed upon us.

RECOGNIZING BILL FISHER

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Bill Fisher, a familiar voice to many within the High Country in North Carolina's Fifth District and someone I consider to be a dear friend.

After nearly 50 years of being on the radio and keeping the High Country informed on all the news of the day, Bill, or Fish, as many of his friends and colleagues refer to him, will be hanging up his headset one final time and retiring.

For years, I have been fortunate to join Bill on the radio to talk about issues ranging from the local to the national levels.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important duties that we have as Americans is to be an informed citizen, and I cannot overstate how much Bill embodies that role. No matter the topic or issue of the day, Bill always takes the time to inform people of the developments that matter most. He knows how to read the pulse of the community he proudly serves.

As Bill enters this new and exciting chapter of his life alongside his wonderful wife, Sheryl, family members, friends, and loved ones, I hope he knows that he has left an indelible mark upon his community that will be felt for many years to come.

Those who tune in to Bill's show on the commute to work, the grocery store, and everywhere in between are grateful for his work. In my eyes and in the eyes of many, Bill is the best that western North Carolina has to offer. May God continue to bless Bill and his family in his well-deserved retirement.

RESTORING AMERICANS' FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The Chair recognizes the gentle-

woman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, Saturday marks 1 year since the U.S. Supreme Court announced its now infamous decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and for the first time in our Nation's history, it took away one of America's most fundamental rights: the right to privacy.

In overturning *Roe v. Wade* and taking away Americans' right to abortion care, the U.S. Supreme Court has rolled back the clock on women's rights in this country and put the health and lives of millions of women at risk.

Everybody in this country deserves the freedom to make their own healthcare choices. Nobody should have to experience the pain and trauma that countless women in this country have now suffered as a result of the GOP's efforts to criminalize abortion care in this country.

While poll after poll shows that an overwhelming majority of the American public supports women's rights to abortion care, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle remain intent on outlawing it once and for all.

We may not have the majority in this Chamber just now, but there is no doubt that we have the majority of Americans on our side in this fight. If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle aren't willing to stand up for the people they represent, then we must.

Today, Representatives LEE and CHU and I announce that we have filed a discharge petition to bring the Women's Health Protection Act up for a vote so that we can restore Americans' fundamental rights to abortion care.

This is legislation that was passed by the Chamber not once but twice last year. There is no reason why any Member who doesn't have their head in the sand shouldn't be ready to support it a third time.

Now is the time to end the devastation that too many Americans have already experienced. Now is the time to let the American public know exactly where every Member of this Chamber stands.

I urge my colleagues to sign this petition that is now at the desk. Madam Speaker, 218 of us is all it takes to bring this bill to the floor and take us one step closer to ending this nightmare.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, never before has this country marked the day that a fundamental freedom was taken from us. This Saturday, for the first time, we will.

Almost 1 year ago, the Supreme Court's shameful and unprecedented *Dobbs* decision stripped a constitutional right from all Americans, and the harm it triggered has only grown in the year since.