

military. For instance, it provides a pathway back to the Armed Forces for servicemembers who declined to take the COVID vaccine. It also continues to prohibit the DOD from mandating that servicemembers take an emergency use vaccine.

Additionally, this legislation includes an extremely important provision of a 5.2 percent increase in servicemember pay. This is tremendously important for our enlisted ranks, and it is the largest pay raise in over 20 years.

I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation that supports our military families and ensures our national security.

CONGRATULATING THE QUAD CITY STRIKERS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I will use this time as a chance to congratulate the Quad City Strikers U15 Soccer Club who represented the State of Iowa in the 2023 US Youth Soccer National Presidents Cup, which took place in Wichita, Kansas, from July 6-11.

This is the third year in a row that they competed in the Midwest Regional, and this year, after a runner-up finish in the regional, they successfully clinched their place in the national tournament. They were one of eight teams who qualified for the tournament and the only one that represented the State of Iowa.

These boys worked hard all year long and were able to represent Iowa at the highest amateur level. I congratulate every player on the team and their coach, Juan Nuci.

We thank him for his dedication and for making Iowa, and especially the First District, proud.

CONGRATULATING CAITLIN CLARK

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, today, I congratulate Ms. Caitlin Clark of Des Moines, Iowa, for winning the National Player of the Year award for her performance this past season for the University of Iowa Hawkeyes Women's Basketball Team.

Caitlin is a junior at the University of Iowa and averaged almost 28 points a game, while leading the Hawkeyes to the NCAA Women's Basketball championship game. While averaging 28 points a game, she also averaged seven rebounds and almost nine assists through her historic season, where she swept the National Player of the Year award.

Caitlin Clark is a prime example of our constituents in Iowa, extremely talented and hardworking, while also remaining humble through all of their success. We congratulate Caitlin, and we thank her for making Iowa, the University of Iowa, and the Hawkeye nation proud.

CONGRATULATING JUDGE WILLIAM KELLY

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Judge William Kelly on his selection to be a magistrate judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. Judge Kelly is a member of the Iowa National Guard and

will now serve our country in a different way.

Judge Kelly has an accomplished legal and judicial career. He obtained an undergraduate degree from Brown University. After graduation, he moved to Iowa to attend Drake University Law School in Des Moines. For 8 years he served as a State District Court Judge for District 5C in Iowa State courts, serving Polk County.

Becoming a magistrate judge happens after a rigorous selection process, and candidates are selected based on their merit by the district judges to help assist with the smooth and speedy legal process that we enjoy in the United States. Good judges in our U.S. court system are vital to keeping our constitutional republic together. I applaud Judge Kelly for taking the position, and I wish him luck in serving southeast Iowa.

Madam Speaker, I also extend a happy birthday to my sister, Mari-Eleanor Martino. Happy birthday Mari-Eleanor.

#### FISCAL YEAR 2024 NDAA

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

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, this week the House will consider the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, otherwise known as the NDAA.

The NDAA primarily authorizes the spending levels for our military and the Department of Defense, but it also serves as the legislative vehicle for how our military ought to operate.

That is why I was proud to submit numerous amendments to this year's NDAA to ensure our military is focused on fighting our enemies and deterring our adversaries and that Congress is well-informed of the Department of Defense's goals and initiatives to ensure stringent oversight and accountability and to push back on wokeness in the military being advanced by President Biden.

One of my amendments would require that all Members of Congress receive a briefing on the joint multiyear plan to fulfill defensive requirements for Taiwan. The underlying bill only makes this briefing available to appropriate congressional committees, but my amendment would make this briefing available to all Members because I think it is important that all of the people's Representatives are included in this important process.

I also filed two additional amendments, one to require a briefing, and the other to require a report on the People's Republic of China's actions in Africa that pose a threat to U.S. national security and the Defense Department's plan to counter such threats.

We can all agree that we must continue to do everything in our power to assess the threat that China poses to our national security, which includes its actions in Africa.

On that same note, I also proposed another amendment that would prohibit the Department of Defense's Office of Strategic Capital from investing or facilitating investments in Chinese-owned firms. As we continue to counteract China's aggression, including their use of stolen intellectual property and U.S. trade secrets, we must ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are not being invested or facilitating investments in Chinese-owned firms.

Lastly, I joined a number of my colleagues in cosponsoring a bipartisan amendment that would establish the United States-Israel Artificial Intelligence Center to leverage the experience, knowledge, and expertise of our two countries to develop more robust research and development cooperation in the field of artificial intelligence.

I believe that all of these amendments I mentioned today would strengthen the NDAA and help provide for a stronger national defense. I urge the Rules Committee to make all of my amendments in order.

#### HONORING THE LEGACY OF FRANK KONCILYA

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

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor a great Montanan whose service to this country will never be forgotten and whose passing will be mourned by many across the Treasure State.

Frank Koncilya was born in Roundup, Montana, where he graduated high school in 1942. After graduation, Frank was drafted into the United States Army and was quickly shipped off to England in preparation for the invasion of Normandy.

Frank landed on Utah Beach nearly 2 hours before the main invasion on D-day and served with distinction on that fateful day. After the Allies secured northern France, Frank's platoon was deployed to Belgium, where he was one of only two survivors in a fierce battle.

Frank was awarded five Bronze Star Medals for his heroic service. After the war, Frank became a teacher and an active member of the American Legion in Lewistown, Montana.

Frank's service to his country and his commitment to education are a perfect example of Montana values. It was an honor to represent him in Congress, and it is a privilege to recognize his legacy in the United States House of Representatives.

#### STRENGTHENING OUR ARMED FORCES

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

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, our troops risk their lives and make sacrifices every day in service to our

great country. Many have given their lives to defend the freedoms we take for granted, including my Uncle Roy, who died fighting Nazis in France during World War II.

Unfortunately, our military has become a victim of the woke agenda. The Federal Government should focus on strengthening our Armed Forces, but Democratic leaders lost sight of that a long time ago.

Defense leaders in the Biden administration are now focused on creating the most diverse military instead of the best military. They spend time and taxpayer money pandering to those folks because it scores political points, Madam Speaker. It scores points with the woke mob, and the world is laughing at us for it.

Military leaders are forcing soldiers to read books on critical race theory and scheduling drag shows on the bases, of all things.

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President Biden requested around \$150 million in the defense budget for diversity and inclusion programs. That is the American people's money spent on this nonsense, Madam Speaker.

If the Biden administration is so serious about prioritizing so-called equity, then no one should have a problem with my amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, which would require anyone who identifies as a man to register for the Selective Service. If these folks want to be treated like men, they need to act like men.

I don't support the woke agenda, as you know. I am fully against it, but if Democrats want to play ball, then let's play some ball. Let's see what excuses they come up with for opposing this plan that puts some real responsibility on the folks.

We are all sick of these games. We are sick of the Democrat leaders' hypocrisy. If they insist on going down this road, they should expect the responsibility that comes with it, or we could toss the whole woke agenda in the garbage can where it belongs.

#### ENACTING LARGEST INCREASE TO SERVICEMEMBER COMPENSATION IN OVER 20 YEARS

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

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Madam Speaker, this week, the House will be debating a critically important piece of legislation, the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act.

The bill that we are considering this week provides a much-needed 5.2 percent increase in compensation to our servicemen and -women. This is of critical importance because we are one of the few countries in the world that believes in an all-volunteer military force, and the only way that we are able to attract the best and the brightest into our military is if we pay competitive wages.

This bill will enact the largest increase to servicemember compensation in over 20 years. That is a very meaningful gesture in improving the retention and recruitment of quality men and women into our military.

Madam Speaker, I also thank the House Armed Services Committee for including my amendment to perform studies to direct more resources to remote and isolated military bases like the five that exist in my district.

Civilian contractor services are critical for providing the services that make life bearable on bases like the ones that I represent. This study will be a meaningful improvement in the quality of lives of the servicemen and -women who serve in my district.

I also urge adoption of an amendment that I have offered to increase permitting flexibility for the Marine Corps' Twentynine Palms Air Ground Combat Center for the permitting of a joint exercise that allows the annual King of the Hammers event to take place in my district.

This is one of the largest off-road racing events in the world. It is beloved by residents of my district and Marines alike. It brings over 80,000 people annually to the Johnson Valley in my district. It is a major economic driver.

We want to continue to see this event take place in the future as a joint exercise between the King of the Hammers event and the Marine Corps. This amendment will make that possible, and I urge its adoption.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the entire NDAA this year. This will make some meaningful improvements in the quality of life for our military men and women. It allocates an additional \$15 million to the U.S. Northern Command to improve drug interdiction like the scourge of fentanyl that has been affecting my district.

Madam Speaker, this is a good thing for our national security and for the men and women in uniform who serve our country. I urge its adoption in Congress this week.

#### BRAZIL UNDERMINED THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SANTOS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SANTOS. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to address a grave concern about our relationship with Brazil. This nation, which holds non-NATO ally status with the United States, has constantly undermined us in recent years in ways that warrant our undivided attention.

Just recently, the former convicted criminal and now reinstated President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, known as Lula, hosted and praised the infamous dictator Nicolas Maduro from Venezuela.

Lula's actions have legitimized a man who is currently sought by the U.S. Department of Justice for narco-

terrorism, a man who, because of his alleged humanitarian crimes, cannot even set foot on U.S. soil without fear of arrest. In addition, Lula has publicly criticized the United States for support to Ukraine and has even suggested that our Nation is purposely prolonging the war for commercial interests.

This is the same leader who has actively sought to undermine U.S. currency through their BRICS agreements with Russia and China and who maintains strong ties with the Chinese Communist Party.

Madam Speaker, Brazil is not a minority player on the world stage. It is the largest economy in South America and the 10th largest globally, the 4th largest food producer in the world, the 2nd largest producer of iron ore, and a significant player in the energy sector. It holds strategic importance in the Southern Hemisphere, a fact that the CCP seems to understand better than us.

We should be working to forge stronger ties with Brazil, encouraging it toward democratic and capitalist values rather than standing by as it deepens its ties with communistic and autocratic regimes around the globe.

Brazil's growing alignment with the Chinese authoritarian government is already yielding dangerous impacts on its democracy. Even mainstream USA media outlets' reports are showing an unsettling trend: a rise in state-sanctioned actions against free speech, free press, and civil liberties in Brazil. Increasingly, the country's judicial system is being weaponized, and censorship is on the rise.

We must take decisive action to condemn Brazil's current engagement in suppressing civil liberties, its deepening ties with authoritarian regimes, and the serious risk this trend poses to Western democracies.

Madam Speaker, as the first Brazilian American elected to this House, I implore all my colleagues to treat this matter with the urgency it deserves. It is a matter that affects not only America but the free world as a whole.

#### RECOGNIZING DONNA FARGO

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a Grammy Award-winning country music artist and a proud native of Mount Airy, North Carolina, Donna Fargo.

On July Fourth, the town of Mount Airy unveiled a mural honoring Donna and the countless contributions she has made to the country music community.

I was incredibly fortunate to attend this event and to hear Donna speak about her unwavering faith in God, her small-town roots, and why she believes that Mount Airy is the best place in all the world to live. It is no wonder why