

investment is much larger than it initially seems. This isn't just about new laboratories and equipment. This is about a vision for the world where America is the undisputed leader in food science technology. It is just like when we invest in international food aid, and the return is staggering. We feed hungry people with American commodities, but we also stop wars before they start and create new international trading partners.

Agricultural research investment is the same story. The impact is wide-reaching, and the return on investment is enormous.

Just a few months ago, the U.S. Department of Agriculture officially opened its new state-of-the-art National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in my home State of Kansas, where scientists will conduct research into serious animal disease threats. It will be an important backstop in protecting our Nation's food supply. I am proud to have this facility in my district and right down the street from my alma mater, Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine and the Biosecurity Research Institute, creating a scientific hub that will lead the world in agricultural research and health.

In Congress, I am proud to represent Kansas State University, the first land-grant university created under the Morrill Act, and also Haskell Indian Nations University, which was granted land-grant status by an act of Congress in 1994. The idea for land-grant universities was originally proposed in the 1850s to educate students and increase agricultural expertise and U.S. productivity.

Over the years, these universities have surpassed that original vision and now represent the cutting edge of the agricultural research that supports food security around the globe. The faculty, staff, and students at K-State and Haskell have made it clear that we must support agricultural research, development, and innovation. When we do so, agricultural producers in the U.S. and abroad gain access to the technologies that increase their production even when challenges arise.

Earlier this summer, I co-introduced the Augmenting Research and Educational Sites to Ensure Agriculture Remains Cutting-Edge and Helpful Act, or the AG RESEARCH Act. This legislation would address the deferred maintenance at agricultural research facilities to ensure that America remains the world leader in research and innovation, instead of bowing to our adversaries and competitors.

Our work cannot stop there. Congress must also make strong investments in leveraging public-private partnerships to support research addressing the biggest food and agricultural challenges and quickly react to any research shortfall.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with Members of this Congress to ensure that this farm bill prioritizes research and innovation. I will be back

on the floor soon to deliver another installment of my farm bill impact series and highlight more programs and titles within the bill that I believe Congress must understand and support to ensure that agriculture continues to thrive right here in America.

SUPPORTING U.S. NAVY'S SUBMARINE PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Madam Speaker, as we prepare to consider the National Defense Authorization Act, it is vital that we continue robust support for the United States Navy's submarine program.

In recent years, we have seen that the world is still a dangerous place. Authoritarian actors all across the world pose a threat to the United States, to our democratic allies, and to peaceful people across the world.

Against that backdrop, America's submarine fleet is one of the most important advantages that we have in our vital work to make the world safe for democracy. Vessels like the Virginia-class fast-attack submarines and the upcoming Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines are powerful and difficult for our enemies to detect. That makes them an essential deterrent that keeps our would-be adversaries from committing acts of aggression.

As we work on the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act, it is imperative that we continue to fund production of the Virginia- and Columbia-class vessels at the Pentagon's recommended levels and that we also invest in workforce training, housing, and additional support for the thousands of tradesmen and -women in Rhode Island and across the country who are building these ships.

In that spirit, I urge all of my colleagues to approve the amendment that I have submitted to direct the Department of Defense to study and implement strategies for expanding access to affordable housing for tradesmen and -women involved in Navy shipbuilding.

President Franklin Roosevelt once said that for the world to be safe, America must be an "Arsenal of Democracy." Those words continue to be true today, particularly when it comes to our vital naval submarine program.

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TRANQ, THE "ZOMBIE DRUG"

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

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage the continued support for H.R. 1734, the TRANQ Research Act, which passed the House earlier this year.

Fentanyl and other deadly substances are being seized at record lev-

els by our law enforcement officers. So far, in fiscal year 2023, the Border Patrol has intercepted 20,000 pounds of fentanyl. That is enough to kill 4.6 billion people.

Now, that is an incredible amount of deadly drugs, and it doesn't include the dangerous opioid analogues, such as xylazine, which are becoming far more common and are a challenge to identify in the field.

Xylazine, also called TRANQ or the "zombie drug," is a veterinary tranquilizer and fentanyl analogue that is wreaking havoc on American communities. It is also putting our law enforcement at risk.

According to the DEA, over the past 2 years, the southern and western United States has experienced an over 100 percent increase in xylazine encounters. This is a very concerning trend.

TRANQ earned the name "zombie drug" because it kills human tissue and is also resistant to opioid overdose treatments.

Our Federal law enforcement officers are working hard to keep our communities safe and are doing it at great personal risk. They need the tools to identify these drugs in order to stay safe when encountering them in the field.

That is why 25 of my colleagues and I introduced the TRANQ Research Act. This commonsense legislation directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to conduct research on the detection and handling of the newest, most dangerous synthetic opioids.

Detection capabilities will extend to police officers, Border Patrol agents, and other first responders so they are better equipped to stem the flow of this deadly drug that is coming into our country and also keep them safe while they are doing it.

Our bill passed this House unanimously in May, and the Senate returned it in June with minor amendments that I support.

Madam Speaker, I urge you today to take up the amended TRANQ Research Act quickly so that we can send it to the President's desk. Let's deliver again for the American people and get this crucial legislation signed into law.

IT IS TIME TO END THE BLOCKADE OF MILITARY APPOINTMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JACKSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, a Senator from Alabama is now many months into a blockade of all the generals and admirals in our military who are scheduled to advance in their leadership. This is no longer just a political statement from him. This is a national security issue for all of us.

He has taken a personal crusade and made it an impediment to our entire

military. We are at 250 nominations blocked so far. By the end of this year, it will be 650.

These are our military's top leaders. The notion that all of these positions should remain vacant because one Senator objects to the Defense Department's travel policy regarding servicemembers who get an abortion is a perfect example of letting culture war politics impact our military.

This year, we have been treated to countless speeches about whether politics has infected our military and whether that has impacted its readiness. Now, the single clearest example of culture war politics colliding with our military is this blockade of our top military leaders, a blockade built by one man in defense not of our Nation but of his politics on the issue of abortion.

The clearest price yet was paid this week as the leader of the Marine Corps retired and then Congress tried to replace him with his appointed successor, General Eric Smith, and the Senator from Alabama blocked that replacement. The Marine Corps is now without a confirmed leader for the first time since 1910.

Up next, we have several members of the Joint Chiefs with scheduled retirements, including the Chair of the Joint Chiefs. Half of those positions will be vacant by the end of this year if the Senator from Alabama decides to maintain his blockade.

Asked about this, the Senator from Alabama expresses indifference. He says everything will be fine. He is wrong. We have leaders in place for a reason. When they are not there and crisis strikes, we get chaos.

We are the world's most powerful Nation, and when one Senator chooses to sideline hundreds of nominations for military leaders, he chooses to reduce our power knowingly, willfully, and in the face of our enemies who are delighted by the self-inflicted wound.

When in doubt, act in a way that frustrates your enemy. This does the opposite.

I respect everyone's sincere beliefs on matters of culture and policy. That does not extend to respecting any and all tactics in pursuit of those goals. Those who disagree with the Defense Department, as the Senator does, do their cause a disservice by adopting extreme tactics that carry with them such collateral damage.

The Senator from Alabama is in his first term in Congress, as I am. He is in the minority party in his Chamber, as I am. I have lost several battles here. I will lose several more. But when you can't get something done that you very much care about, how you conduct yourself in that moment matters. Even people who don't follow politics every day can tell the difference between standing on principle and a very powerful man throwing a temper tantrum.

I think he sees that there is no endgame where this tactic works. He is now all the way out on a limb. That

limb is starting to crack. I don't think he knows quite yet what to do.

I have been in the military a long time. One of the things you learn is that hopeless strategies produce disastrous results. The strong move for him is to change course, not to recommit to a path that will lead to nothing except chaos and danger for our country, as seven former Secretaries of Defense, from both administrations, are strongly urging him to do.

MORE EVIDENCE OF WRONGDOING BY THE PRESIDENT AND HIS FAMILY

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

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Madam Speaker, it feels like every week, the House Oversight Committee uncovers more evidence of wrongdoing by the President and his family.

I have seen thousands of pages of suspicious activity reports at the Treasury, the FD-1023 form from the FBI, and piles of evidence that suggest bribery and influence peddling.

All of this is hidden from the American people by a brazenly corrupt two-tiered justice system and a complete media blackout on the subject.

Bribery and foreign influence peddling strike at the heart of our democratic principles. It corrodes the very foundations of our Nation and fosters an environment where personal gain takes precedence over our duty to the American people. It is a responsibility of each and every one of us to demand answers and to hold the President accountable.

It is outrageous that just last month, the DOJ announced a sweetheart plea deal for Hunter Biden that would absolve him of any future charges with the foreign bribery and influence peddling schemes that we have just started to unravel in the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

On the very same day this plea deal was announced, Biden's DOJ went after President Trump. It is a joke. This is something you would expect to see in a tinpot, third-world dictatorship. What is even worse is the complete media blackout on any of the evidence that we have uncovered here.

We used to hail the free press in America as the fourth estate. Journalists used to pride themselves on uncovering corruption.

The American people have a right to know about potential wrongdoing by their elected leaders and their associates and their families. They deserve a media that fearlessly investigates and reports on matters that impact the foundations of our democracy.

These allegations that are not taken seriously by the DOJ or the media have a very real impact on the work we do here in this Chamber every single day.

This week, we are considering the NDAA. House Republicans have in-

cluded strong language to combat the threat of the Chinese Communist Party. Meanwhile, our President and his family have alleged business ties to that same Chinese Communist Party. How can we expect a President to appropriately represent the interests of the United States if there is a vested interest in seeing our adversaries succeed for their own personal gain?

If not for the work of the House Oversight Committee, the American people would be left in the dark, and this is unacceptable. We need every American citizen to speak up and say that it is "We, the people" that run this government; not Joe Biden, not the bureaucrats, and certainly not the Department of Justice, or those in the corrupt legacy media who have put a complete media blackout on this corruption story. We are not going to let this stand.

IN SUPPORT OF BIPARTISAN BURN PIT AMENDMENTS

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

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of three amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act which include language from three of my bills, the Burn Pits Registry Enhancement Act, the Reducing Exposure to Burn Pits Act, and the Toxic Exposure Education for Servicemembers Act.

All three of these amendments are bipartisan here in the House as well as in the Senate. I thank my partners and friends here in the House, Republican Congressmen WENSTRUP and BILIRAKIS.

Fighting to ensure our veterans get the care and benefits they have earned and deserve has always been, still is, and will always be a priority of mine.

Additionally, all three of these amendments are endorsed by the major veterans service organizations, including Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, and the Wounded Warrior Project. All three amendments will help care for servicemembers exposed to toxic burn pits.

Amendment 460 is my Burn Pits Registry Enhancement Act. It would allow veterans in the burn pit registry to designate someone to update the registry with their cause of death. This data is crucial to further identify the vast array of illnesses that are causing burn pit-exposed servicemembers and veterans to die, and it will help doctors recognize early symptoms of life-threatening conditions and save lives.

The next amendment, 464, is my Reducing Exposure to Burn Pits Act. It would require the Department of Defense to submit a report to Congress on what the cost would be to get rid of the use of burn pits. This amendment will get us one step closer to ending the use of dangerous and toxic burn pits to prevent illness.