

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to consider joining these caucuses as we start the 118th Congress.

ACKNOWLEDGING STORM DAMAGE ACROSS ALABAMA'S SEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the storm damage impacting Alabama's Seventh Congressional District following the devastating tornadoes that struck our State earlier this month.

On January 12, severe storms, including multiple tornadoes, tore through the Southeast, ravaging communities in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and destroying over 16,000 homes. In my district alone, 6,000 properties sustained damage, many to the point of irreversible repair.

Across Alabama's Black Belt, rural communities that were still recovering from financial ruin of COVID-19 were once again devastated.

Hale County, with less than 15,000 residents, lost over 92 homes with an estimated \$2 million worth of damage. Greene County and Sumter County, also in my district, sustained damage.

Just outside of my district, in Autauga County, seven precious lives were lost that day. In my beloved hometown of Selma, Alabama, an EF-3 tornado tore through the town center, leveling homes, businesses, churches, and community centers in the Queen City.

I spent much of last week in Selma, boots on the ground, to survey the damage and to assist with the recovery effort. I will never ever forget the scene as I entered Selma that evening. It was pitch black as I crossed the bridge; no lights, just street after street of complete devastation.

The following morning, I was joined by Governor Ivey, Senator BRITT, Selma Mayor James Perkins, and State and local officials to tour the wreckage. My heart broke to see the depth of destruction in the light; trees uprooted from the ground, homes destroyed, lives destroyed.

It is not lost on me that this devastation struck our community on MLK weekend. But despite the debris and the horrific scenes that we saw, I did see a vision of what Dr. King meant by a beloved community. I saw neighbor helping neighbor and community members lending a hand to take care of the place that we call home.

I am thankful that President Biden heard our cries and expedited a major disaster declaration for the State of Alabama. This designation will provide critical Federal resources.

I am endlessly grateful to our partners at FEMA who are on the ground right now helping my constituents. Today, the Alabama congressional delegation is sending a letter to President

Biden requesting an increase in disaster assistance to Alabama, increasing the Federal share to 100 percent of the total eligible costs. We need this. We need this desperately.

I also thank the many mayors and residents of surrounding communities who offered a helping hand. We are indeed resilient people in Alabama's Seventh Congressional District, and nothing about that will change. Out of this destruction, I know that we have a unique opportunity to reimagine Selma and surrounding areas and to build back better and stronger than before.

We will do all we can, working together at all levels of government to bring every resource at our disposal to those who have been affected.

This evening, at 6:30 Central Time, I will be hosting a live telephone town-hall about disaster assistance to answer questions, and for my constituents to hear directly from FEMA and the Alabama EMA on disaster assistance.

I am asking my colleagues to keep Alabama's Seventh Congressional District and all of Alabama that was affected in your thoughts and prayers as we recover and rebuild. But for the grace of God go all of us.

We do need to make sure that our Federal resources are adequate to help those who have been impacted by disasters. We are, indeed, Selma Strong.

COMBATING CRIME IN NATION'S CAPITAL

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

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, right here in our Nation's Capital, crime continues to soar at an alarming rate. Yet, the D.C. Council is determined to advance a severely misguided bill to reduce penalties for violent criminal offenses.

In fact, some of the very crimes that the D.C. Council included in their radical legislation are on the rise. For example, last year, robberies were up, vehicle theft increased by 8 percent, and carjackings skyrocketed by 14 percent. Yet, the D.C. Council is fighting to reduce—yes, reduce—penalties for these offenses. You just can't make this stuff up.

Now, to her credit, D.C. Mayor Bowser opposes this dangerous effort, correctly claiming: "This bill does not make us safer."

For once, I agree with Mayor Bowser because combating crime and protecting citizens is not a conservative issue, it is a commonsense issue; it is an American issue.

In the face of D.C.'s failed leadership, Congress must take immediate action to prevent this disastrous bill from emboldening criminals and threatening the safety of residents and visitors.

In the coming weeks, I will introduce a joint resolution of disapproval to stop this insanity in its tracks. I look

forward to leading this fight, and I urge all of my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, to join me so we can ensure that no American faces fear and violence in our Nation's Capital.

DEFENSE OF AMERICANS' SECOND AMENDMENT FREEDOMS

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in the defense of Americans' Second Amendment freedoms.

The Biden administration is moving forward with yet another gun-grabbing tactic in order to register and ban millions of firearms, moving one step closer to the left's ultimate goal of disarming our Nation and dismantling our Second Amendment freedoms.

Earlier this month, the ATF finalized an unconstitutional rule pertaining to firearms with stabilizing braces. Under the ATF's new rule, any pistol-braced firearm would be considered an illegal short-barreled rifle, making these guns subject to the draconian regulations under the National Firearms Act of 1934.

Let me be clear: Unelected, anti-gun bureaucrats at the ATF do not have the authority to make laws. That authority rests right here in Congress.

Congress cannot continue turning a blind eye to the Biden administration's weaponization of the National Firearms Act and ongoing assault on Americans' Second Amendment freedoms. The time to act is now, and I am proud to lead this fight.

Next week, I will re-introduce the Stop Harassing Owners of Rifles Today Act, or the SHORT Act, to repeal elements of the National Firearms Act, thereby prohibiting the ATF from registering and banning pistols with stabilizing braces.

Additionally, as soon as the ATF's unlawful rule is published to the Federal Register, I will introduce a Resolution of Disapproval under the Congressional Review Act to override the Biden administration's unlawful overreach.

I have always done my utmost in the defense of our constitutional right to keep and bear arms. It is now time, now that the House is under the Republican majority, to go on offense.

Madam Speaker, I want gun owners to hear me loud and clear: We are fighting for you and your Second Amendment freedoms, and we will never give up.

LAWLESSNESS AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the lawlessness happening at our southern border.

To no one's surprise, President Biden attempted to conceal the ongoing chaos, chaos created by his disastrous policies at the southern border, by releasing the latest CBP report on a Friday night news dump. But these tactics can't hide the truth.

Last month, over a quarter of a million, over 251,000 illegal aliens were apprehended at the southern border, making December the highest monthly total on record.

More than a quarter of a million in a single month. If that doesn't pressure

the Biden administration to fix this crisis, what will?

In a dangerous addition, 17 suspected terrorists were caught illegally crossing the border in December, bringing the total number of individuals to 38 who were on the terrorist watch list and caught at the southern border, in just the first 3 months of fiscal year 2023.

How many suspected terrorists have to cross the southern border before the Biden administration will take this border crisis seriously?

To make matters worse, CBP has already seized over 9,000 pounds of fentanyl so far this fiscal year, which is enough to kill more than 2 billion people, over 6 times the population of the United States.

When will the Biden administration finally put an end to the wide-open southern border that allows this deadly drug from China to devastate our communities?

While the White House willfully destroys our southern border and subsequently demolishes our national security, House Republicans are determined to secure the border and put Americans first.

Part of that commitment is ensuring that every solitary individual responsible for this self-inflicted crisis will be held accountable, starting with Secretary Mayorkas, whose impeachment is long overdue.

Without accountability, Americans will not have the safe and secure Nation they deserve.

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REMEMBERING WILLA CASH

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

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Mother Willa Cash, a resident of Detroit and community mother in Michigan's 12th Congressional District, as we mourn her recent passing. She was lovingly called Willie by those who knew her well.

Ms. Cash's work touched the lives of so many. She worked for the State of Michigan's Department of Unemployment Services and later the Michigan Department of Human Services before retiring in 1999 after 26 years of service.

Ms. Cash was a caring, compassionate leader in our community. She volunteered her time and energy to the Unity Temple Church of Detroit and Greenwich Park Association block club. She was a proud, lifelong, engaged voter and a member-retiree of the United Auto Workers Region 1-A.

Ms. Cash's love and compassion for her family were extraordinary. Willie and her late husband, James, were married 53 years at the time of his passing, and they were parents of two beautiful twins.

Please join me in recognizing Mother Willa Cash and her contribution to our community as we honor her memory.

DETROIT'S WATER SHUTOFF MORATORIUM

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, just over 3 weeks ago, the city of Detroit's water shutoff moratorium ended, terminating vital protection for Detroit's most vulnerable residents.

We only got the lifesaving moratorium in the first place thanks to years of determined organizing and advocacy from our community's water warriors. Many are the mothers of our neighborhoods.

In response to that organizing and advocacy, the city has now created an affordability plan, but many of the mothers in our community and advocates continue to highlight shortcomings and a lack of awareness amongst struggling Detroiters of the resources available, which leaves thousands still in jeopardy of shutoffs.

For many Americans, water shutoffs are only the beginning. Even after they pay off outstanding debt or arrange for payment plans, reconnection fees further penalize them.

We need to move beyond treating missed payments as a moral failing and acknowledge the reality of families struggling as they try to make ends meet. The cost of water in our country has gone up 400 percent.

In the wealthiest Nation on Earth, there should not be a single family without water. We have had enough of punishing people for being poor. It is time to take our public health seriously and guarantee water as a human right. We all know water is life. It is time we start treating it as such.

IN SOLIDARITY WITH IRANIAN PROTESTERS

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the protesters in Iran. In the streets, they are demanding human rights and women's equality.

The courageous protesters are risking their lives to stop the massive policing and security operations hurting women.

No one protesting for human rights in Iran or anywhere in the United States or anywhere in the world should be met with government violence. No one should be persecuted or executed for fighting for freedom for their sisters, their daughters, or their mothers from oppressive and harmful actions.

Mahsa Amini should be alive today. Countless protesters should be alive today. I stand, and I know we all do, with all the brave and courageous Iranians, especially the young women at the forefront of this movement, who are fighting for liberation and bodily autonomy.

BIDEN BORDER CRISIS CONTINUED

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

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, another month and another record, as the crisis at our southern border has gotten worse.

Under President Biden and Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas' watch,

the Federal Government has completely ceded control of our border to Mexican drug cartels. Yet, time and time again, Secretary Mayorkas has repeatedly claimed that the border is secure. Well, the facts tell a different story.

Late last Friday, CBP reported that December 2022 had the highest number of illegal crossings at our southern border ever recorded—over 251,000 illegal migrant encounters in just 1 month.

In fiscal year 2022, we saw a record-breaking 98 people on the terrorist watch list attempt to cross the border. Since October, we are already on track to break that number, with 38 people caught trying to illegally come into the interior of our country.

How many more suspected terrorists have to cross over the border for this administration to take the crisis seriously?

CBP seized over 9,000 pounds of deadly fentanyl that the cartels attempted to smuggle across our border. That is enough to kill over 2 billion innocent lives.

Madam Speaker, it is far past time that we hold the Biden administration accountable for its complete dereliction of duty to secure our borders. That is why I am glad that, next week, Chairman JORDAN and the House Judiciary Committee will be holding the first of many hearings on this crisis.

Secretary Mayorkas has completely abused his authority and ignored the United States' immigration laws. Questions are coming. I hope the Secretary clears his calendar because we have a lot, and I look forward to getting answers to those questions.

CONGRATULATING RIVERHEADS HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Augusta County's own Riverheads High School football team for winning the Virginia Class 1 State football championship this year. This was the Gladiators' 10th State title in the program's history.

A 21-7 halftime lead helped propel the team to a resounding 49-27 victory over George Wythe High School. Riverheads has now won a notable seven consecutive State titles, and junior running back Cayden Cook-Cash, who led the team with 282 rushing yards, said: "People had doubted us. . . . I think we proved them wrong." Cayden and his teammates sure did that.

The Riverheads running game had been strong all season, which allowed the Gladiators to catch the George Wythe Maroons off guard with an impressive seven touchdowns, culminating in an all-around unstoppable offense.

When asked how it felt to take home the title once more, Head Coach Ray Norcross said: "Our kids played hard and played well, and we did enough to win."

Indeed, every State championship is earned, not given, and this squad certainly earned it, finishing out the season with a 12-1 record.