

local and global community shines through in everything she does.

She is known not only as the matriarch of her family, but also as a mentor for many women of color serving in public service. She is one of our legacy legends of the O'Hair Park community, and we absolutely adore her.

Mother Pat never shies away from a challenge, Mr. Speaker. Her compassion and kindness toward others have had a lasting impact on those around her, including myself. We are grateful for her tireless energy and outstanding example.

Please join me in recognizing Mother Pat Braxton for her advocacy, hard work, and dedication as we celebrate her 75 years of life.

RECOGNIZING THE EPOCH TIMES

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

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, when John Tang was earning his doctoral degree in physics at Georgia Tech in 1999, he never imagined that some 20 years later he would be heading the fourth largest American newspaper by subscription count.

At the time, the Chinese Communist Party, the CCP, had just started persecuting the spiritual discipline Falun Gong, practiced at the time by roughly 1 in every 12 Chinese. People would practice the slow-moving exercises in the morning in parks before going to work.

Just like any other persecution campaign by the CCP, the regime relied on the media it controlled, both the state media and the private media, to demonize and isolate the group. In an attempt to demonize Falun Gong and justify its persecution, the media played nonstop hate propaganda attacking this peaceful meditation group.

John, who had immigrated to the United States, watched from afar in horror as friends were persecuted for their beliefs.

John decided to take action. Despite having no experience or investment, he started Dajiyuan, the Chinese edition of The Epoch Times, in the basement of his home in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia.

John was driven by a wish to provide uncensored information to not only people in China but to people around the world. Soon, other Chinese Americans left their well-paying jobs to help John with this seemingly impossible endeavor.

The Epoch Times' first reporting group was established in China in the year 2000, covering key events with a main focus on the CCP's human rights abuses. The CCP, however, sees any kind of independent reporting on its brutal human rights abuses as a threat. Within a few months, Chinese police raided the underground newsroom, arresting every reporter and every editor. They were imprisoned, specifically

Zhang Yuhui and Shi Shaoping, who received sentences of 10 years where they faced frequent torture.

The Epoch Times' China operation went underground, yet the Chinese edition quickly became a leading website on Chinese current events with millions of readers. Its print newspaper is now distributed nationwide as well as in 30 other countries around the world. Every day, many Chinese break through the CCP's internet firewall to read The Epoch Times' website.

All of this has not been easy. Since the newspaper's founding, the CCP has waged a nonstop campaign to totally destroy it. The party has threatened the newspaper's advertisers, they have launched incessant cyberattacks on its website and IT systems, and threatened relatives of staff members back in China.

The harassment has not been limited just to China. In 2006, the home of then-chief engineer Peter Li was broken into by assailants, who tied him to a chair and beat him before stealing two computers.

Meanwhile, in Hong Kong in 2019, assailants started a fire in the newspaper's printing press, and in 2021, armed men entered the building and used sledgehammers to smash printing equipment.

The Epoch Times also inspired the Tuidang, which means "Quit the CCP" movement. As a result of The Epoch Times' publication of this special series "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party," which provides the most thorough interview to date of the true nature of the CCP, more than 410 million Chinese people, and counting, have sought to sever their membership in this party and its affiliated organizations.

Realizing that the CCP had put enormous efforts into infiltrating the United States of America, especially media organizations, resulting in many U.S. media carrying the communist regime's propaganda, The Epoch Times launched in English in 2003 and started a print edition in New York in 2004.

The Epoch Times' independent reporting has attracted a large readership in the United States, now ranking as the fourth largest newspaper in the country by subscriber count. Its website is read by tens of millions of people each month.

Just like its Chinese companion, The Epoch Times prides itself on being independent and serving the interests of the readers. Under its slogan "Truth and Tradition," The Epoch Times adheres to the best practices and highest principles of journalism and seeks to highlight the best of humanity.

The Epoch Times now has editions published in 36 countries and in 22 different languages.

This is all about one word: Freedom.

REPUBLICANS CHOOSE CULTURE WAR OVER NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, later today we will begin voting on the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act, the Pentagon budget.

Moving this legislation forward has almost always been a bipartisan issue in Congress. It takes on the responsibilities of funding our military. It protects our national security. It has been a bipartisan effort for nearly six decades.

But last night, after midnight, Republican leadership decided to bring to the floor dozens of partisan divisive amendments. If adopted, these amendments would transform this bill and transform our military. It is quite literally a wish list of the rightwing extremist colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

There is an amendment to end all affirmative action in our officer corps, something even our Supreme Court refused to do just a few weeks ago. There is an amendment to full stop, end all aid to Ukraine, at the very moment we are expanding NATO and working on protecting democracy abroad on behalf of all democracies.

Another one that they passed was a divisive amendment that prevents female servicemembers in the military from accessing the reproductive care that they need and they deserve. Plain and simple, last night, they chose culture war over national security, and they are doing so as part of a clear effort to prevent every single American woman from accessing care. It is part and parcel of a larger campaign to impose a nationwide ban on abortion.

Last night, like I said, in the dead of night, the Freedom Caucus passed this amendment to stop the military from paying for a bus ticket or a plane ticket for any woman who needs an abortion, and it is proof of this bigger plan.

In addition to this amendment that passed last night, we have amendments in the Appropriations Committee that are the same thing.

We have a single Senator, Senator TUBERVILLE, who is holding and blocking 250 military promotions right now, the head of the Marine Corps, the head of the Army, the head of the Navy, because he objects to the fact that a woman might get a paid bus ticket to get an abortion.

If blocking these nominations continues, we will have no Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, no commandant of the Marine Corps for the first time in 134 years, no Army chief of staff. His colleagues, who claim to care about national security, are letting him get away with it. Now, they have used this bipartisan bill in order to make their point.

Forty-six percent of Active Duty servicewomen are stationed in States that now either ban or very severely restrict abortion. They have no choice. They are based there. They have signed up to serve their country. They have been put on a base in Texas or Alabama. That is not their choice. That is their duty.

The authors of these amendments are not set on just letting the reversal of Roe sit and having States make their own decisions. The authors of these amendments are from Alabama and Texas, which ban abortion, including in the case of rape or incest.

Why is this important? It is important because we need to hear what people are telling us. They are telling us that they will not stop with the reversal of Roe that happened a year ago. They will not stop when States like Michigan organize to make sure we have protections for women who want abortions. They want every single American, starting with our servicemembers, to live under the same rules that they choose in their States. We need to hear what they are telling us and act accordingly. They are choosing politics over our women in uniform, choosing politics in the Senate over our national security.

So, please, I have never in my life, as someone who served in the CIA, who served in the Pentagon, thought about voting against this bill. I believe in it. It is about paying our military and getting them what they need. Please keep your culture war baggage out of national security.

THE ANTI-AMERICAN ENERGY AGENDA

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

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues in the Senate to pass the Lower Energy Costs Act, otherwise known as H.R. 1.

The House passed H.R. 1 on March 30, but like so many other of our bills that we have sent over to the Senate, it seems like they fall into a black hole, never to be heard of or talked about again.

What does H.R. 1 do? Well, I am glad you asked. H.R. 1 reforms the permitting process, the permitting process not only to build out domestic production here in the U.S. but reforms the process allowing us to drill for oil and gas here in America.

In short, it stops the radical, anti-American energy agenda that the Biden administration has been pushing that is making us dependent on foreign countries. It reverses that, and it makes us energy independent again.

Here is a fact for you. The national price for gasoline has not been under \$3 a gallon since March of 2021. Now, you contrast that with the Trump administration when the price of gas never even reached \$3 a gallon.

It is this war on American energy that all started when the Biden administration revoked the permits for the Keystone pipeline and then halted all permits on new oil and gas drilling in the U.S.

It is this government overreach, these excess regulations, that are hurting the American families out there, let alone harming our national secu-

rity. That is why the Lower Energy Costs Act reverses all of that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues over in the Senate to get off the pickleball court, get back in the Chamber, do your job, and pass H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act.

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ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FOR OUR SERVICEMEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to fight for the fundamental rights of servicewomen and military families as they come under attack by the extreme Members of this legislative body.

When our servicemen and -women joined the Armed Forces prior to the Dobbs decision last June, they did so with the understanding that they and their families would receive comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services regardless of where they were stationed. That includes, what was a constitutionally guaranteed right at the time most joined, abortion care, no matter the State in which their base was located.

There are now 16 States that restrict access to abortion care at 16 weeks or less. Just this week, Iowa passed a 6-week ban. The servicewomen and military families serving in every one of those States are now facing a completely different healthcare landscape than when they signed up to serve.

According to one study, women in States with abortion bans are nearly three times more likely to die during pregnancy, childbirth, or soon after giving birth. These are the conditions our servicewomen and military families are facing when they are assigned to serve on military bases across this country.

In fact, since the Dobbs decision last year, 46 percent of servicemembers no longer have access to abortion care.

We can state fact after fact about the disturbing health outcomes for women in certain States or the scope of this issue after Roe v. Wade was overturned.

Today, I want to go beyond the numbers and share the personal and human impact of these anti-abortion laws.

In Texas, Amanda Zurawski was 18 weeks pregnant when her water broke, putting her at high risk for developing a life-threatening infection. Doctors told Amanda that her life was in danger and the fetus was going to die. The doctors could not provide the medical care she needed because their hands were tied by Texas law.

Because she was denied an abortion, Amanda eventually developed sepsis and nearly died. Her ability to get pregnant in the future may be damaged. Amanda survived and testified before the United States Senate in

April about this harrowing experience where the laws of her home State of Texas nearly killed her.

Around 120,000 servicemembers are currently serving in Texas alone. On top of that number, think of the number of family members living there with them. Our servicemembers sign up to serve our country with the understanding that one day they may be called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice. No servicemember should have to accept a reality where they could die as a result of the State laws where they are stationed.

In the wake of the Dobbs decision, the Department of Defense recognized that abortion is a time-sensitive procedure and access should not be delayed for members or military families. They moved swiftly to put in place policies that ensure servicewomen living in highly restrictive States could travel to another State to receive the healthcare they need. This is the bare minimum our government can do to support and protect the women who signed up to serve our Nation.

That is why I offered an amendment to this year's NDAA to codify this basic policy. My amendment was rejected, and instead, the majority in this House is moving forward with Representative RONNY JACKSON's amendment that does the exact opposite.

This extremist, anti-healthcare, anti-servicemember amendment is dangerous and must be defeated.

Throughout the entire NDAA process, from the markup to the current consideration by the House, far right Members of this legislative body have tried to use the defense budget—a historically bipartisan, must-pass piece of legislation—to force their extreme agenda on our servicemembers and our country.

They are attacking servicewomen, LGBTQ+ servicemembers, immigrant servicemembers, and more. Why are they using the defense budget for this?

Because they know they can't get these highly unpopular policies passed otherwise. America is not on their side.

We cannot let them play politics with our national security. As I stand here before you, every flag officer promotion is being held up by Senator TUBERVILLE to promote his extreme rightwing assault on women. A gentleman who was voted into office by less than 1.5 percent of the Nation is now holding our national security hostage.

As Members of Congress, it is our duty and responsibility to stand up and support our military and to ensure they have the resources and healthcare they need to do their job and defend our Nation. I will never back down from that duty, and I know my colleagues speaking here today won't either.

NONCITIZENS VOTING IN D.C.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from