

My sincere condolences go out to the Wright family during this time of mourning.

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA: NAMED ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACES IN AMERICA

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the city of Savannah, Georgia, being named the most beautiful place in Georgia and the fourth most beautiful place in the country by Travellers Worldwide.

Savannah is home to a lively tourism industry due to its historical architecture, captivating greenery, entertainment, and southern hospitality.

Savannah is also considered the largest national historic landmark district in the United States, thanks to its abundance of artifacts from the Revolutionary and Civil War eras.

The coastline of Savannah is home to miles of great fishing spots, beautiful beaches, and warm waters.

Whether you are a history buff looking for a place to vacation or doing business, Savannah has something to offer for everyone.

I am proud to represent such a beautiful area that aids Georgia's economy tremendously and brings many Americans to the State I call home.

CONGRATULATING RIYON RANKIN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Brunswick High alumnus Riyan Rankin for winning the boy's high jump title at the Nike Outdoor Nationals.

Mr. Rankin has been making a name for himself in the track and field world for the past 2 years, being the first student to claim a track and field State and national championship in Brunswick High School's history.

Recently, he cleared a high jump of over 7 feet, breaking the 6A State record. It was not long after his record-breaking jump that he received the invitation to compete from Nike.

Mr. Rankin went on to win his event at the Nike Outdoor Nationals, sharing with interviewers that he only plans to improve from there. He is committed to the University of Georgia—Go Dawgs—where he will begin attending in the fall.

I wish Mr. Rankin the best of luck in his track and field career at UGA and thank him for representing the city of Brunswick and the First District with such determination and persistence.

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND VILNIUS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address two topics today: workforce development and President Biden's historic remarks in Vilnius, Lithuania, yesterday.

First, on the labor shortage across our country, job openings remain near record highs. I hear repeatedly from businessowners in my district of unprecedented hiring challenges, a senti-

ment further backed by recent data. The latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate there are one-and-one-half job openings for every person looking for one in Ohio, and the same is true nationally.

Due to legislation largely Democrats in Congress have passed, robust job creation is a fantastic achievement. However, if our country wants to achieve a steady growth economy, pay down our debt, and curb inflation for everyday, hardworking Americans, we must do more to address worker shortages.

Let's focus on key sectors: manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, business services, the tech industry, culinary arts, and other sectors that are experiencing significant hiring challenges. Local communities must focus on additional education and training, especially for the hardest hit sectors that are recovering from the pandemic.

During the pandemic, many experienced workers over the age of 55 retired early, causing large employment gaps. Less experienced workers simply do not have the necessary skills to fill these open positions.

These are jobs that pay a living wage, carry benefits, and help families and communities prosper. However, the skills gap hits hardest younger workers and midcareer workers looking for new jobs.

Local community job training programs must bolster skills advancement, focusing on these newer entrants and forging more partnerships between industry and local community high schools, colleges, universities, and labor unions.

By accelerating workforce training locally, our Nation can increase the availability of specialized skills for workers so people can advance in the marketplace. A better life awaits them and their families, ensures the health of our economy, and increases America's global competitiveness.

Democrats passed the American Rescue Plan Act without any Republican votes or support. As a result, the Federal Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge program helps to fund workforce development training across our country.

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association and the Northwest Ohio Manufacturing Alliance both have received funding through the American Rescue Plan to expand manufacturing workforce training throughout Ohio.

Manufacturing has always been a central spine and backbone of Ohio's middle class. In addition, I have introduced the Office of Manufacturing and Industrial Innovation Policy Act to improve workforce development and job creation in the manufacturing sector.

Mr. Speaker, please let me thank my bipartisan colleagues for recognizing the need for investment in manufacturing workforce development. Our bill focuses on lifting up America's workers while strengthening our economy by forging public-private partnerships critical to meeting demands for a capably trained workforce.

Quickly, the second issue, Mr. Speaker, I wish to briefly address is President Biden's historic speech in Vilnius, Lithuania, yesterday.

Standing with leaders of our fellow democratic nations bonded in mutual self-defense, he clearly celebrated the expansion of NATO as Finland and Sweden joined the longstanding, hard-fought alliance among 30 free nations. We now stand as part of a NATO alliance that is 32 members strong and comprises 15 percent of our globe's population, and the members live in freedom.

Delivering his address inside a nation that heroically threw off the yoke of Russian oppression at tremendous cost, the moving ceremony represents a pivotal moment in liberty's advance in world history. We witnessed freedom-loving nations again pledge their consequential, shared commitment to mutual self-defense and support for our ally, Ukraine.

While Democrats are working hard domestically on rebuilding the economy, lowering inflation, and solving problems at home, President Biden's leadership ensures that our defense alliances abroad are strengthened.

Let us continue to work together to deliver real results for the American people here at home and strengthen liberty's alliances globally.

#### DEFENDING PRIVACY RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to defend our daughters' right to privacy and safety.

This spring, a 16-year-old girl swimming for a local swim team in my district was banned from the YMCA for speaking out against men undressing in the girls' locker room. My constituent, Abigail, was simply exercising her right to privacy and safety. She should not be punished for defending herself and her teammates.

In Congress, I am committed to defending our daughters from the Biden administration's radical changes to Title IX that will make this an everyday occurrence for young girls across our country.

The YMCA should immediately reverse their decision and apologize to Abigail and her family. YMCA leadership should prioritize the safety and privacy of young girls instead of prioritizing a radical, leftwing political ideology that is allowing adult men to expose themselves in front of our young girls. Men should never be allowed to violate girls' locker rooms and bathrooms.

Governor Pritzker continues to promote policies that put our daughters at risk. His failure to address the concerns of parents and protect the safety and privacy of young girls in Illinois is deeply concerning to parents.

Please, we must speak out to protect our daughters and end this madness.

## GUN VIOLENCE PROTECTION

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, in February 1994, Caliph Barrett III, Elliott Martin, and Brian McCullough lost their lives to senseless gun violence in Fort Worth, Texas, in the Lake Como community. The people back then said that that was the saddest day in Como history.

A crazed individual with a gun who should have never had one caused other acts of violence throughout the city during this time.

Now, almost 30 years later, people are saying that what happened on the evening of July 3, 2023, is perhaps the saddest day in Como history. Over the Fourth of July holiday in Fort Worth, two separate acts of gun violence, the one in Como that I just mentioned and one in Polytechnic Heights, two of the most loved-filled and caring communities in Fort Worth, had to deal with these tragedies.

In Como, Cynthia Santos, Paul Willis, and Gabriella Navarrete were the names of the three young people who were murdered when people got together at Como Fest the day before the big Fourth of July celebration to barbecue, celebrate independence, celebrate freedom, and just have a good time, but, instead, they lost their lives to senseless gun violence.

I join with the Como and Polytechnic communities in mourning those who were lost and injured over the Fourth of July weekend.

These shootings especially hurt because Como is the community that I grew up in. That is where my mom and all of her siblings went when the schools were segregated, Como High School, the Como Lions. That is the neighborhood that a lot of my family still lives in.

We need to get together, Mr. Speaker. We need to do something.

I don't know much about the two gunmen who were arrested the other day for what happened on July 3 in Como, but I bet you, Mr. Speaker, they are just as bad as the person who was responsible for so many of those murders during that 1994 era. I guarantee that people like that should never ever get their hands on any firearm.

It is our duty as Members of the United States House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, to protect us from people who are deranged criminals, people who are dealing with mental illness issues that most of us should be blessed we don't have, and people who are extremely violent and terroristic in nature.

It should be easy to pass bills like background checks and raising the age limits for AR-15s to make sure that people like the ones I just described don't ever get their hands on a firearm in their lives. That should be easy.

It doesn't have anything to do with people who are law-abiding citizens. I am talking about people who are sick

and people who have caused destruction and misery in communities, in families, and in people's lives.

We have to do better as Democrats and Republicans.

I have introduced a resolution condemning these tragedies, but we need action now. We can't wait any longer. I don't want 5, 10, 15, 20, or 30 years later for people to say that this is the saddest day in Como history again because we sat on our hands, didn't do anything, and pretended that people's Second Amendment rights were being abridged when all we are trying to do is stop really awful, terrible, and bad people like I just talked about from ever owning a firearm.

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## CHARTING A NEW COURSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BEAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, how would you explain to General George S. Patton that an American President believes a drag show digital ambassador gives our military a strategic advantage?

It sounds absurd, but what is even more absurd is it is true.

The United States military is the greatest fighting force in the world. America's warfighters risk their lives so we can all be free. They are driven by patriotism and a sense of service and honor.

Yet, since the outset of this administration, we have seen our servicemen and -women, the source of our strength and national security, sacrificed on the altar of wokeness. Meanwhile, our adversaries are aggressively undermining American interests around the globe as danger knocks on our front door.

As we speak, Mr. Speaker, China is creating an outpost just over 90 miles from the Florida coast. It is all part of China's long game.

It is why they have been stealing our stuff, intellectual property from Americans, buying farmland near our military bases, invading our airspace with a spy balloon, and infiltrating our education system.

While this administration has been obsessed with culture wars, China has been focused on defeating America.

While West Point was teaching cadets about preferred pronouns, China has been focused on defeating America.

While this administration was funneling taxpayer dollars to host drag queen story hours on military bases, China has been focused on defeating America.

Our military exists to provide for the common defense of our Nation, not parroting woke insanity. These far-left policies, Mr. Speaker, have harmed recruitment, retention, and morale.

It has undermined our military readiness and wasted precious time and taxpayer dollars, but House Republicans

have a plan to chart a new and different course.

The 2024 National Defense Authorization Act puts an end to taxpayer dollars funding critical race theory teaching, guts diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, and eliminates taxpayer-funded drag shows, story hours, and digital ambassador programs. It prevents the authorization of a military Green New Deal.

Under the leadership of Speaker MCCARTHY, House Republicans are focused on honoring the legacy of our Nation's veterans, like the 72,000 who call the Fourth District of Florida home, and ensuring our military is lethal and ready because woke politics won't stop a single bullet or a communist invasion.

We, the people, deserve a military that doesn't cater to any other credo other than America first.

## RECOGNIZING TRU MOST

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

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Tru Most, a freshman at Mark Morris High School, who recently placed first in the YETI Junior World Finals of Barrel Racing in Las Vegas.

Competing against 164 other teams, Tru and her horse, Rockette, dominated the field with a run of 14.722 seconds. Her success is the result of years of hard work. She started racing when she was just 8 years old.

I am so proud of her success and for making a name for southwest Washington, and I am so excited to see what is in store for her. Her talent and her work ethic make our community proud.

## TUNNEL 5 FIRE

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the pressing issue that has ravaged my district in southwest Washington, the Tunnel 5 wildfire.

We have all become sickeningly familiar with the feeling of your heart stopping when you get the call that there is another wildfire in your community.

Over the Independence Day weekend, I and so many others in my community got that call. To my neighbors who lost their homes, my heart breaks for you.

My team and I stand ready to help you in any way that we can, whether you need to get another passport issued or you need advice navigating FEMA. If you are trying to get your military records reissued, we stand by to help you.

I thank the firefighters who chose to spend their summers felling trees, digging lines, and sleeping in tents in sweltering heat.

When I visited that fire line, I saw firsthand there is a lot of gray hair out there. Thank you to the folks who choose to spend their retirement not in Cabo but fighting wildfires in places like Skamania County. Your experience is invaluable and your self-sacrifice an example to us all.