

the No ESG Act, as the very first bill of its kind to be introduced in Congress.

The No ESG Act would stop this burdensome rule from being enacted and help put an end to redundant and onerous shareholder proposals.

More specifically, for companies listening back home, this would address the SEC's proposed amendments on rule 14a-8.

While the current system benefits a small group of activists over everyday investors, this proposed rule would increase the burden on shareholders and businesses and divert attention away from the issues that actually matter.

The bottom line is that southern Indiana companies shouldn't be forced to become political platforms where politics overshadow sound financial decisionmaking.

When I said that my priority was to improve the financial landscape for the Ninth District, I meant it. Accomplishing that depends heavily on putting forth legislation that would make a real difference, and the No ESG Act is that kind of legislation.

I am glad to be contending on behalf of the State of Indiana to solve this problem that has been overlooked for far too long.

TUCSON PASSPORT CENTER AND WESTERN PASSPORT CENTER

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

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the monumental effort happening in my district of the Tucson Passport Center and Western Passport Center.

The employees here are working around the clock—sometimes 7 days a week—to help Americans across our country receive their passports during an unprecedented surge in demand and clear the backlog of applications.

These men and women are not only helping Americans in a timely manner, but they are also coming up with creative and innovative solutions so travelers' plans are not disrupted.

A record one-half million passport applications are being submitted every week—every single week—by our friends and our neighbors. Families going on vacation, students studying abroad, business travelers seeking trade opportunities, whatever the reason, Americans are traveling abroad like never before, and they aren't going to get very far without a passport.

The Western Passport Center is seeing upwards of 200 in-person emergency and urgent traveler counter appointments per day.

The Tucson Passport Center has ramped up organizations to print 80,000 passports per day, working in tandem with their colleagues in Arkansas to supply the 29 passport agencies and centers across the country.

Last month alone, Tucson printed 1.1 million passports—eclipsing the million they printed the month before.

I am honored to have these passport centers in Arizona's Sixth Congressional District. These individuals are really stepping up on behalf of myself, my constituents, and all the people they have helped. I thank them for a job well done.

□ 1245

POWER OF THE PURSE

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

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker, I am reminded of the old hymn, "There Is Power in the Blood," "power in the blood, wonder working power." It also reminds me of something else, that Congress has the power of the purse.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, before I returned to D.C., I had a meeting with a local county official. I thought we were going to discuss infrastructure and workforce problems. He wanted to talk to me about veterans, homeless veterans, how it was increasing so much in his county, and the fact that we have borders that are just porous, with record numbers of people crossing those borders. Here we are, setting them up in rooms and with food, yet we have veterans all across this country living under bridges.

Madam Speaker, when I got to the world's busiest airport, I ran into a dear friend, a marine, on his way to his next assignment. I thought it was very ironic because here we are this week, discussing the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. That is right, the power of the purse.

We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude that we can't ever repay. We also owe our military, our current members of the military, all the tools that they can get in their toolbox.

That is why, this week, we are going to be discussing things. We are fully funding the health program for our veterans and fully funding the veterans benefits in all the VA programs. We are also focusing on infrastructure investments for our current military.

There is another thing we have with that power of the purse—not just funding, but cutting. See, we are going to cut out of our military DEI and CRT, which are hurting recruitment and killing morale.

Madam Speaker, as we go throughout this week and have this debate, for their salvation, I encourage my colleagues to focus on that power of the blood, but I also encourage them to focus on the power of the purse for these appropriations bills.

ENSURING A SAFE AND SECURE FOOD SUPPLY

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

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Madam Speaker, this week, in this great House, we are set to consider this year's agriculture appropriations bill, a piece of legislation that will impact not only our farmers but every American across this great Nation.

This legislation put forward by my colleagues on the House Appropriations Committee represents a critical step forward in safeguarding our Nation's food and drug supply, supporting our farmers, and ensuring that all Americans, including those in rural communities and low-income families, have access to essential nutrition programs.

If we learned anything from the pandemic, it is that we should have a strong domestic supply chain so that we aren't relying on foreign countries for things like food and medication. This bill demonstrates our commitment to strengthening our national security and food supply by making strategic allocations for agricultural research, rural broadband, and programs focused on animal and plant health.

These are not just budgetary allocations. They are investments in the future of our Nation. By providing sufficient funds for a strong supply chain and for safe food, drugs, and medical devices, we reaffirm our dedication to the well-being of every American.

This legislation further protects our national security by ensuring that agricultural land remains out of the hands of foreign adversaries, such as Communist China, Russia, North Korea, or Iran, safeguarding our national interests.

Our efforts to rein in wasteful spending and bureaucracy are paramount. This bill would redirect funds from partisan bills, such as the Inflation Reduction Act, and utilize them to support our producers in our rural communities.

I personally met with dairy farmers, grape growers, and other agricultural producers in my district to understand the unique challenges faced by our farmers in our rural communities.

I am proud to support this year's agricultural appropriations legislation and to demonstrate our commitment to our hardworking farmers, rural communities, and all Americans who rely on a safe and secure food and drug supply.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand together in support of this critical legislation.

FUNDING AGRICULTURE AND MILITARY PRIORITIES

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to comment on the two appropriations bills before the House this week and to point out that I would like to thank the Appropriations Committee for doing a good job on both bills.

We are going to take up, this week, the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act and the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

I am proud to say that the U.S. has the strongest military in the world, but I recently ran into someone on break and heard about the horrible conditions, almost embarrassing conditions—you have to kind of wonder about the military—that they had to live in.

In any event, when we put together this bill, we had to make sure that the living conditions for the military were such that they are, first of all, appropriate for such brave fighting men and women, and, secondly, that we continue to attract and retain our people who signed up for the military.

It is apparent, therefore, that of all the appropriations bills that will come up, the military construction and veterans affairs bill, contrary to what we have been hearing around here in partisan attacks, does contain an increase in funding over last year's bill—just about the only segment of the government that does.

Meanwhile, I am glad to say that the agriculture bill contains a significant reduction over last year. Why do we have to spend less? For one thing because the excessive spending is where the inflation comes from. With too many dollars sloshing around the U.S. economy, those dollars have led to the spiraling, out-of-control cost of housing and the out-of-control cost of automobiles.

The Republicans have done a good job of, at least with regard to discretionary spending, finally saying we should have a year in which the overall level of spending is going down.

First of all, I would like to point out some of the things that are funded in the agriculture bill. We continue to have critical investments in agriculture research and rural broadband.

I will tell you, I have a rural state. I have 10 counties. When I show up at my town's association, again and again, I hear about the need for more rural broadband for health purposes and also to keep up-to-date on all research and anything else that we have to do to help people in the rural areas.

I am also glad that we are going to prevent the purchase of agricultural land from foreign countries that will inevitably lead to a loss in this country of our sovereignty.

We are going to, even more importantly, eliminate the USDA's diversity, equity, and inclusion office, which I think requires a little bit more of a discussion. It is not that huge of an office, but I think the effort of President Biden to continue to emphasize this equity, diversity, is misplaced.

The goal of these offices is to, I think, encourage people to view people by where their ancestors came from, not where they are now. Their goal is

clearly to persuade the American public that we have racial problems.

If you look at the statistics, that just plain is not so, and I want to point these things out for everyone, including any children who may be getting the wrong idea from television or education areas.

During the last year, the 10 countries that saw the greatest number of people sworn in as Americans were, in order, Mexico, Philippines, India, Dominican Republic, China, Cuba, Colombia, Vietnam, Haiti, and El Salvador. None of these countries are European countries. In other words, people from everywhere else around the world are trying to get in here. Obviously, we do not have a big racial problem in this country or all these people would not be trying to come here.

Another interesting list is the most successful, in terms of income, people coming to the United States. Number one, people from India—I know a lot of very successful people from India. Frequently, they came here not even knowing how to speak English, but they succeed by hard work and strong families. People from the Philippines, Taiwan, Cuba, and Pakistan are all doing better than the native-born.

I am very pleased that the Appropriations Committee removed this DEI funding. I intend to vote for these bills.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Holy and eternal God, You have made everything suitable for its time. Give us pause to consider the beauty inherent in this day and the rightness of all that is around us at this very moment.

What a challenge that presents us, as there is so much that is far from beautiful, so much that isn't right. Yet You have set eternity in our heart, and this is a mystery we cannot comprehend, we are blind to Your creative and redemptive work in our lives.

Give us faith, O God, in Your eternal purpose. Grant us the faith to believe that You see all things past, present, and future. All the things of yesterday, today, and tomorrow are subject to You.

Remind us that You are outside and above time. Your power to guide and

direct our steps and order our days is not restricted to the limitations of our linear understanding.

In our haste to control the chaos around us, in our anxiety to the face of uncertainty, in our impatience to rectify the wrongness we battle daily, grant us a sense of Your steadfast love and sovereign protection, which was granted us in eternity past, abides with us now, and will guide us in the future.

Sure of Your everlasting kindness, we offer our prayers in Your most holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. LIEU) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LIEU led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

NEVER FORGET THE DEBT OF GRATITUDE THAT WE OWE OUR NATION'S HEROES

(Mr. LANGWORTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, we must never forget the debt of gratitude we owe to our Nation's heroes.

This year's Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill does just that.

First and foremost, this bill ensures that veterans' healthcare programs receive full funding. We have an obligation to provide them with the best medical care and support they deserve without compromise.

This initiative also aims to make the VA more efficient, which will give our