

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

veterans improved access to the care and resources they need to lead fulfilling lives after their service.

Beyond funding, we recognize the need to address the challenges our veterans face as they transition back to civilian life. Our focus remains on preserving and strengthening programs that assist veterans in finding meaningful employment, educational opportunities, and mental health support.

In conclusion, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to show our veterans the same unwavering dedication that they have shown to us.

JUDGE KAPLAN'S RULING

(Mr. LIEU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, on July 19, 2023, Federal Judge Lewis Kaplan rejected Donald Trump's request for a new trial and confirmed that Donald Trump raped E. Jean Carroll.

I must submit this court ruling into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and I will read what the judge found. On page 43, the judge wrote: "Ms. Carroll testified that the sexual assault—the 'rape'—of which she accused Mr. Trump involved especially painful, forced digital penetration. . . ."

The judge further writes: "The testimony of the outcry witnesses, [Ms.] Birnbach and Martin, corroborated the essence of Ms. Carroll's account of a violent, traumatic sexual assault."

On page 44, the judge wrote: "The jury's finding of sexual abuse therefore necessarily implies that it found that Mr. Trump forcibly penetrated her vagina."

The judge further writes: ". . . in other words, that he raped her. . . ."

Mr. Speaker, Judge Kaplan's memorandum opinion denying defendant's rule 59 motion can be found at: <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.nysd.590045/gov.uscourts.nysd.590045.212.0.pdf>.

RECOGNIZING PELLA WINDOWS

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Pella Corporation of Pella, Iowa, for being named one of "America's Greatest Workplaces of 2023" by Newsweek.

This designation focuses on categories such as professional development, job satisfaction, compensation, work-life balance, and other categories. Pella has been a mainstay in our community for 98 years, a family-owned business, and employs over 10,000 people nationwide.

Pella is one of the most innovative companies in the United States and has over 150 patents. They actively work to create space for professional development and employee empowerment.

Congratulations to Pella Corporation for this recognition, and I thank them

for continuing to make our community proud.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a happy 20th anniversary to my sister and brother-in-law, Mari-Eleanor and Ralph Martino on September 6. Happy anniversary, Mari-Eleanor and Ralph.

I extend first anniversary wishes to Taylor, my daughter, and her husband David Lazarowitz on September 4. Happy anniversary to Taylor and David.

APPLAUDING THE WORK OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, this week House Republicans and the House of Representatives will be considering the fiscal year 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill that prioritizes agencies and programs that protect our Nation's food and drug supply and support America's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities, like the ones I represent in Tennessee.

As a farmer and former State agriculture commissioner, I cannot overly stress the importance of the programs in this bill and how farmers and families rely on them. Whether it is rural broadband, WIC, or supplemental nutrition, the programs in this bill go a long way to make sure folks have enough food and fiber to be productive citizens in our society.

That is not all this bill does: it reins in wasteful Washington spending, protects the lives of unborn children, and prohibits agricultural land purchases by those associated with foreign adversaries.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work of the Appropriations Committee to include these provisions.

LGBTQ+ SERVICEMEMBERS DESERVE ACCESS TO LIFESAVING HEALTHCARE AND SERVICES

(Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the heinous attack on LGBTQ+ servicemembers and veterans, including in the fiscal year Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

While it is no surprise that Republicans continue their consistent attempts to dehumanize, discriminate, and devalue LGBTQ+ people, it is shameful that they have chosen to carry this distasteful political attack into this body's appropriations process. Why?

This is a voluntary military, Mr. Speaker. There are 1 million gay and lesbian veterans, and more than 130,000

of them identify as transgender. On top of that, 65,000 Active Duty members currently serving in our military identify as LGBTQ+.

In their bill, which we will debate later on this week, Republicans argue that we should turn our backs on these volunteers who have dedicated their lives to serving our country. Saying that they do not deserve access to life-saving healthcare services based on their identity is ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to stick with our LGBTQ+ veterans.

□ 1415

RECOGNIZING JESSICA CARTER

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a dedicated public servant to our country, Jessica Carter.

Jess has been my right hand for the past few years, helping me better serve the people of Washington's Fourth Congressional District as my chief of staff. During that time she has led our team with integrity, grit, and unparalleled resolve. Now, after almost 30 years of serving our Nation, she will be leaving Capitol Hill.

As one of the Hill's finest, Jess started in 1995, moving up the ranks from legislative assistant to deputy chief of staff in the office of Representative Richard Pombo. She then served as deputy chief of staff and senior adviser for Representative Steve Pearce, then director of public policy at the National Industries for the Blind. Following that she worked for Representatives Stephen Fincher and Francis Rooney before joining my team in 2020.

Since joining Team Newhouse, Jess has been instrumental in helping my office pass 59 pieces of legislation while keeping our team working together every single day. We have been able to achieve extraordinary wins for central Washington and our Nation.

Many consider her both a friend and a colleague, and she will most certainly be missed in the Halls of Congress. As my entire staff knows, once a member of Team Newhouse, always a member of Team Newhouse.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Jess all the best. Capitol Hill will not be the same without her.

REMEMBERING OFFICER JAKE WALLIN OF SAINT MICHAEL, MINNESOTA

(Mrs. FISCHBACH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Officer Jake Wallin, a brave young veteran from Saint Michael, Minnesota.

On July 14, while responding to a crash in south Fargo, a gunman shot