

tools and equipment necessary to execute their mission safely and efficiently.

Congress supports first responders through DHS homeland security grant programs. However, communities cannot use such funding to purchase novel, state-of-the-art equipment because it is not on FEMA's authorized equipment list.

This equipment is rendered ineligible not because it is inferior. It is ineligible because it is so innovative that it does not meet or exceed the consensus standards that FEMA relies upon.

I first introduced this bill in the 114th Congress to require FEMA to establish an accessible and transparent process for such equipment to be evaluated. The House approved this legislation three times already. Each time it stalled in the Senate. Nevertheless, today I feel very confident that the fourth time is the charm. With the support of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, I am hopeful that this bill will get action in the Senate.

With that, Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in sending a strong message to the Senate with a decisive "yea" vote on this bill.

Our first responders are always there to help us. Now it is time to help them with the most modern equipment available to do their jobs.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3254, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, in closing, we owe it to our hometown heroes to give them access to the necessary tools to carry out their missions safely and effectively.

H.R. 3254 would allow communities to use DHS grant funding to purchase advanced lifesaving technology such as systems to track firefighters in burning buildings or wildland fires.

It was cosponsored by the gentleman from Alabama, Representative STRONG, and endorsed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs. The House approved the First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act in the 114th, 115th, and 116th Congresses. It is time for us to come together to get this bill enacted.

Madam Speaker, this is very timely legislation. I am sure that people saw the tragedy that we had in Newark, New Jersey, in my district where we lost two firefighters fighting a fire on a ship in the Port of Newark. They needed this type of equipment.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to support this legislation, H.R. 3254, which would support our first responders, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3254.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GUEST. Madam 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 pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS PRIMARY SPONSOR OF H.R. 2752.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the primary sponsor of H.R. 2752, a bill originally introduced by Representative Cicilline of Rhode Island, for the purpose of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Rhode Island?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL HIRE A VETERAN DAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor today as National Hire a Veteran Day.

This day is crucial to the spirit and health of both America's veterans and our communities. Set aside to raise awareness to the unique skills and useful abilities of servicemembers after military service, we must use this day to recognize the sacrifice and the strength of our veterans.

In America's private and public sectors, qualities like dedication, determination, and tenacity are highly valuable. These are features fostered during military service and can be even more useful in nonmilitary employment. As 200,000 military members retire and become veterans each year, more and more qualified potential employees are eligible to join the greater American workforce.

Madam Speaker, as employers look to hire, they must value the talent present amongst our American troops. Each and every servicemember deserves the opportunities to create unique and positive impact after they have made sacrifices to defend our great Nation.

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CELEBRATING TREVOR BAPTISTE

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Trevor Baptiste, an all-star, two-time world champion lacrosse player.

Trevor is a professional lacrosse player for the Philadelphia Wings of the National Lacrosse League and the Atlas Lacrosse Club of the Premier Lacrosse League.

He was born and grew up in Newark, New Jersey, before becoming a lacrosse star at the University of Denver.

In his 4 years there, Trevor was a four-time, first-team all-American and a national champion. After college, Trevor won two world championships with the United States men's national team, and he has been an all-star every year as a professional.

His specialty is winning face-offs. In college, he owns the national record for face-offs won and the highest winning percentage. For Team USA, he has the highest face-off winning percentage in team history.

Trevor Baptiste is an exceptional lacrosse player, and I am proud to highlight him on the House floor today.

BRING NAVY LIEUTENANT RIDGE ALKONIS HOME

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

Mr. LALOTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of United States Navy Lieutenant Ridge Alkonis, who, for the last 365 days, has been unjustly jailed by the Japanese Government.

The State Department and the Department of Defense need to demonstrate strength and exercise leverage and bring Ridge home and bring him home now.

America needs to bring Ridge home for justice's sake. America needs to bring Ridge home to send a message to the 50,000 troops we have stationed in Japan that the brass, bureaucrats, and politicians have their backs.

America needs to bring Ridge home to demonstrate to the Japanese that we are the United States of America, the world superpower, and our commitment to their defense against China and North Korea comes with a few conditions, and one of them is to treat our troops fairly.

Madam Speaker, our government has negotiated for the release of other Americans who have done far less for our great Nation than an Active-Duty naval officer. America needs to bring Ridge home. A year in prison is far too long.

HONORING JOYCE HAMLETT

(Ms. TLAIB asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I still remember the first few months here almost 5 years ago. One of the people I looked for was a young woman sitting to the left of the House Chamber. I would lock eyes with her, and when she smiled at me, it was always with a warm welcome.

Joyce Hamlett will be sorely missed as she retires as the Keeper of the Mace and Assistant Sergeant at Arms.

She took her role very seriously. I know because I was one of the Members she reminded every so often of the rules of the House.

Ms. Joyce would even take out one of the laminated black and white articles in plastic. Check it out in the drawer right in front of her.

Ms. Joyce worked so hard for the last 35 years here in this Capitol. Her story is inspiring, Madam Speaker. She is not only the first Black woman to hold this post, but she also was so proud of growing up in the tobacco fields of Broadway, North Carolina, and to come here to make history in Congress. She never forgot her roots and the strong character that her grandparents instilled in her.

In a place that can sometimes be harsh, Madam Speaker, she always remained kind and fair to all. I will dearly miss Mother Joyce and never forget her hugs on some of the toughest days in this Chamber. She may be considered the Keeper of the Mace for many here in the House Chamber, but she will always be my khalto.

WE DESERVE A WATER BREAK

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

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the hard-working labor force across this country.

Today, on this hot and muggy Washington, D.C., day, a thirst strike and vigil was held on our House steps. I was proud to join my colleague from Texas, Congressman GREG CASAR, and the men and women highlighting the dangerous new policy in Texas as they held their thirst strike on the steps of the U.S. Capitol.

Madam Speaker, as a Representative for Nevada and the Las Vegas area, I can tell you that I know how dangerous the summer heat can be.

The Texas Governor's dangerous new policy eliminates water break protections while Texas, Nevada, and many other areas of our country are experiencing record-breaking heat.

Meanwhile, the brave men and women working in outdoor jobs like construction workers, mail carriers, and so many others continue working in the heat.

Madam Speaker, we need Federal action to protect these workers who are simply trying to provide for their families and to keep a roof over their heads.

I urge OSHA and the Biden administration to take action and protect our workers. We deserve a water break.

FUNDING PROJECTS IN NORTHWEST INDIANA

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

Mr. MRVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep appreciation for the inclusion of the community project funding request for Indiana's First Congressional District in the fiscal year 2024 appropriations measure.

I am grateful that a transparent process was established for all Members to include projects in these measures, and I believe that this process is an essential component to our ability to advocate for our districts.

Notably, I am proud that the funding is included to attract new jobs and economic activity in northwest Indiana through improvements to the Gary/Chicago International Airport, road construction for Central Avenue in Portage, and water infrastructure in the City of La Porte.

I also appreciate the action to support public safety and members of our law enforcement, including specific funds for the police departments of Gary, Hammond, Munster, and Michigan City.

I look forward to working with like-minded colleagues to move these measures forward and to complete this constitutional responsibility as soon as possible.

IMPACT OF GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield to the honorable gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to coanchor the CBC Special Order hour, along with my distinguished colleague, Representative JACKSON.

For the next 60 minutes, members of the CBC have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people on gun violence prevention and public safety,

an issue of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, Congress, constituents, and all Americans.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD).

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK for her tremendous leadership and also Congressman JONATHAN JACKSON. The two have been great co-chairs for our Special Order hour, a time when the Congressional Black Caucus comes to the floor to discuss important issues affecting all of America.

Today, my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus are here to recognize the impact that gun violence has on Black communities and communities all around our country.

In recent years, our Nation has bore witness to horrific acts of gun violence in our communities, from the racist murder of nine parishioners at the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, to the attack at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York, to police-involved shootings of unarmed Black men, women, and children.

Time and again, when these tragic events happen, we hear politicians in Washington offer their thoughts and prayers, but we know that thoughts and prayers are simply not enough. They are not enough to end the violence that traumatizes entire communities and rips family members and friends away from their loved ones. They are not enough to end the cycles of violence created by the systemic and structural disadvantages of generations of racism and disinvestment in our communities. We must do more than offer thoughts and prayers alone.

In order to solve this crisis, we must first understand the problem before us. Data shows that Black Americans are disproportionately impacted by gun violence in our country. Specifically, Black Americans experience 12 times the gun homicides, 18 times the gun assault injuries, and nearly 3 times the fatal police shootings of White Americans.

On top of this, we know that these guns are not manufactured in our communities, which is why we believe gun manufacturers should be held accountable, and those who allow access to guns should be held accountable.

Alarming, despite the fact that Black boys and men account for just 6 percent of the total population, they comprise more than half of all gun homicide victims in our Nation.

Madam Speaker, and to the chairs, I know personally the effects of losing a loved one to gun violence. My father was shot and killed when I was 19 years old, a freshman in college.

I remember getting the call that so many loved ones fear getting, and, in serving the district, the call that so many of my constituents tell me that they experience, the call that says that you don't get to say good-bye, that you