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No. 152

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
September 20, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GLENN THOMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

KEVIN MCCARTHY,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2023, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### RECOGNIZING THE DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY

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

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation for the men and women at the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

These Americans work tirelessly to provide the fullest possible accounting for the 81,000 servicemembers who remain missing from past conflicts.

Earlier this year, scientists from the DPAA used dental and anthropological

analysis, as well as chest radiograph comparisons, to positively identify the remains of United States Army Air Forces Staff Sergeant Wesley "Bub" Leon Jones.

Staff Sergeant Jones was killed in action during Operation Tidal Wave when his B-24 bomber was shot down by enemy forces over Romania in 1943. His remains have been unidentified for more than 80 years.

Thanks to the DPAA, World War II veteran and proud Kansan Wesley Jones has finally returned home to Wichita and was laid to rest on Saturday.

I am grateful for the historians, anthropologists, technicians, doctors, and scientists at the DPAA who are fighting every day to bring our heroes home.

### LEADING WITH STRENGTH

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the greatest threat currently facing the United States of America: the Chinese Communist Party.

Communist China, led by President Xi, is buying up American farmland, stealing our intellectual property, investing in our educational institutions, and spying on our most critical military installations. Make no mistake, the time of trusting and welcoming China into the global system is over.

Pushing back against CCP aggression is not partisan. I am proud that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle came together to create the bipartisan Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party to counter President Xi's efforts to undermine American leadership.

It is vital that we put forward solutions to end our economic dependence on China, bring our jobs and supply chains back home to the United States, and make certain that our military is equipped to defend American interests and sovereignty.

The Chinese Communist Party is knocking at our doorstep, and this threat is becoming more urgent every single day.

It is crucial that President Biden starts leading with strength on the world stage to ensure the United States of America remains a beacon of freedom and hope for millions of people around the world.

### PAYING TRIBUTE TO KANSAN MINERS AND BIG BRUTUS

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of southeast Kansas' most treasured monuments, Big Brutus.

Standing 16 stories tall and weighing 11 million pounds, Big Brutus is the largest electric shovel of its kind. The colossal machine is a towering landmark on the otherwise flatland of West Mineral, Kansas. Here is a handmade wooden replica constructed by John Johnson.

From 1963 to 1974, Big Brutus was in use for coal strip mining. In a day's work, Big Brutus could work at a speed of 0.22 miles per hour and lift 150 tons of coal in a bucket. This efficiency was revolutionary for its time and dramatically increased the success of coal mining in the region.

The immortalization of this monument emphasizes the significance of Big Brutus in the development of engineering, but most importantly, it stands as a testament to southeast Kansas and the strength and fortitude of the people who live there.

As Big Brutus celebrates its 60th year, I commemorate the generations of miners in southeast Kansas for their hard work and dedication.

### CELEBRATING THE CHASE COUNTY COURTHOUSE SESQUICENTENNIAL

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the sesquicentennial year of the Chase County Courthouse, the oldest operational courthouse in Kansas.

The courthouse's construction began in 1871 and was completed in 1873. Each

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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year, visitors from across the country visit the Chase County Courthouse to admire its architectural design, stonework, and spiral staircase.

Standing 113 feet tall, this iconic structure can be seen from many vantage points across the county and most prominently in the heart of downtown Cottonwood Falls.

Unmatched in durability and design, the courthouse remains a living tribute to its builders and the Flint Hills pioneers who envisioned a courthouse that would stand and be of service to its residents for well over a century.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the county commissioners, members of the committee, and the entire Chase County community as they prepare to celebrate 150 years of their historic courthouse.

#### SUPPORTING UKRAINE

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, when Vladimir Putin and his autocratic regime launched their brutal criminal invasion of Ukraine in February of last year, many people predicted that the Ukrainians would throw down their arms and surrender within days.

Mr. Speaker, 18 months later, however, burnt-out husks of Russian tanks litter the Ukrainian countryside. Blue and gold flags fly proudly over Kyiv, Kherson, Lyman, and other towns held or liberated by Ukrainian forces. Russian soldiers surrender, desert, and dodge conscription in droves.

Meanwhile, defenders of democracy stand firm with Ukrainian courage in their hearts and Western weapons in their hands. Ukrainians stand strong because Americans and Brits and Danes and Germans and French and other freedom-loving peoples around the world stand united behind them. That unity is crucial now more than ever as the warmongering dictators of the world—Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong-un, and Xi Jinping—have all come together.

We are locked in a struggle between freedom and fascism, democracy and despotism, might and right. The war in Ukraine is that struggle manifest.

President Zelenskyy returns to our Capitol this week, tomorrow, to remind us that the fate not only of this sovereign, democratic nation but of the free world hinges on this conflict. He recognizes that our international cooperation to preserve democracy depends on our cooperation here in the Congress of the United States.

Democrats and Republicans have found consensus on the issue in the past, securing vital military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. We must keep working in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that Ukrainians receive whatever tools and resources they need to succeed on the battlefield because only the great arsenal of democracy, as we said during World War II, can vanquish an axis of evil.

I echo what President Truman said to the Congress in 1952 when trying to secure further aid for war-torn Europe. He said this: "If through inaction we desert the cause of democracy, the democratic hope may be exterminated in broad areas of the Earth." We must not let that happen.

President Truman called on Congress, as I urge you now, to add powerful momentum to the democratic counteroffensive, which inspires in the people of the world a sense of their own destiny as free men and women.

We have built up that momentum steadily over the last year and a half. Imagine how much more it will grow in the months ahead if the free world maintains its resolve, if this Congress maintains its resolve.

When President Zelenskyy arrives in our Capitol corridors tomorrow, he should not have to plead for more support. Instead, we ought to show him that we are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that action prevails over inaction, that democracy triumphs over autocracy, and that Ukraine emerges victorious over Russia.

Like the martyrs who gave their lives on the Lexington Common in 1775 and Kyiv's Maidan in 2014, we will show the world that we will do everything to protect our democratic principles.

If we are to defend democracy at home and around the world, if we are to defeat the despots, dictators, and dealers of destruction, then we, Ukraine, and the free world must stand as one.

Our words supporting freedom will ring very hollow if not coupled with our actions to defend freedom, as President Kennedy said, "here and around the world." Let us defend the democracy that we hold so dear.

#### HONORING GOLD STAR FAMILY REMEMBRANCE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this week is Gold Star Family Remembrance Week. Every September, Gold Star Family Remembrance Week takes place on the week leading up to Gold Star Mother's Day, which has been observed by Presidential proclamation since 1936 on the last Sunday of September.

The Gold Star symbol first originated in 1917 when the United States began its involvement in World War I. Families would hang banners to represent a family member in the armed services. If the family member died in combat, the family would change the banner from a blue star to a gold star.

We will never know the exact number of Gold Star families. However, accordingly to the National Gold Star Family Registry, at least 472,251 fallen military members are registered by loved ones. At least 36,548 of those service-

members have been registered in my home State of Pennsylvania.

As an Army dad, I am blessed my son returned home. I am aware that this is not the case for all families, and we must take the time to remember, respect, and honor the families of our fallen servicemembers.

To honor and remember our fallen servicemembers and their families, I look forward to supporting efforts such as the Gold Star Family Remembrance Week. This week recognizes the loss and sacrifices of families in support of fallen members of the Armed Forces, as well as veterans.

I look forward to supporting legislative efforts to honor this occasion and encourage fellow Americans to perform acts of community service and goodwill to honor these families.

Our servicemembers are the bravest among us. They answer the call to protect and defend our Nation in times of war and in times of peace.

This important week is a time to remember the families of the brave men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our freedom.

Madam Speaker, let us take a moment to remember that our freedom is not free. We cannot begin to imagine the loss and pain that these families have experienced.

Gold Star families have lost a loved one in the name of protecting our freedom, and they deserve our gratitude every day.

#### RECOGNIZING DAVID HECKER

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

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, in his 22 years of service as the president of the American Federation of Teachers of Michigan, David Hecker has been consistent in his commitment to working families, our teachers, and our education system, especially public education.

Mr. Hecker became a member of AFT in 1977 and has served as the AFT president in Michigan since 2001. AFT Michigan, Madam Speaker, has 35,000 members who are educators and healthcare providers working in K-12 as well as intermediate schools, community colleges, universities, and hospitals across the State of Michigan.

During his tenure, AFT Michigan has organized many new locals representing thousands of new members, particularly in higher education and healthcare.

Mr. HECKER is a lifelong labor leader committed to working families and worker rights and building a stronger labor movement. For many years, David has been a member of the Michigan State AFL-CIO and Metro Detroit's AFL-CIO executive committees.

I am blessed to call David a friend. Please join me in recognizing his 22 years of public service and commitment to improving the lives of teachers across Michigan as we wish him well in his retirement.