

and only use the phrase “hardcore conservative” to describe people who are voting for hardcore conservative bills.

The next thing that I think we should point out here today and the importance of having that large reduction in spending—and I don’t mean to bore you with numbers—is the degree to which, on a daily basis, our country gets in worse and worse shape. That is because the interest rates go up. That is no vote that we take here in Congress. I mean, we fight trench warfare here on a variety of bills. Sometimes the bills are just minor bills that have a few million dollars in them. In the last 2 days, because of an increase in interest rates, the amount of money we are going to have to spend on interest, just interest in the next year, went up \$12 billion.

Since April, when interest rates were like 3½ percent, the cost in interest has gone up over \$100 billion. We have serious problems here, and the costs in interest should also be reported by the press.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o’clock and 14 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

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

O God, You desire not the strength of our arguments, nor the vigor of our opinions, but the gravity of our humble sacrifice.

On this day, may we sacrifice our inclination for contempt and instead initiate kindness; loosen our grip on judgment and instead may we grab hold of a generosity of spirit; may we forswear our grudges and commit instead to exercise forbearance.

Hold us accountable that our arguments will support Your righteousness and not ring hollow in the defense of our rightness.

May our struggles serve to preserve the dignity of this body and not erode our commitment to its noble purpose. May our words underscore our devotion to the common good and not undermine our ability to see, even in our adversary, the image of God common to all.

Open us to Your inspiration, for only in You can we aspire to an attitude of sacrifice. With You upholding us, we can be strengthened in our every effort

to do what leads to peace and mutual edification.

We pray unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, hoping that You in Your mercy will receive our prayers and this body into Your keeping.

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 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. LAMALFA 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY WEEK

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, National Clean Energy week just passed by. It should be a time to recognize the various forms of clean energy available to all of us.

Unfortunately, one form continues to be taken not as seriously and, in many cases, undermined, and that would be hydroelectric power, which has so many benefits. Yet hydroelectric dams across this country, including one in the Klamath area of my district, are being torn out because of an environmental agenda that isn’t even true.

Others are on the hit list, like up in the State of Washington, by their environmental extremists. As policy leaders and consumers push for a more green future, hydropower should be part of that solution as a lot of the needed infrastructure already exists, as well as nuclear power.

Why are we seeing dams that supply low-cost renewable energy that have already existed for over a century being decommissioned?

Because here is the trick: You make it where it is almost impossible to do the maintenance and upgrades to that infrastructure so that over time it becomes too expensive now to continue to have those dams and they are old relics that need to be taken out. That is the trick.

Indeed, had we maintained them and kept them in place, we wouldn’t have

this economic crossroads to deal with. We need to preserve our dams and keep hydroelectric power as a cornerstone of our power grid.

MERIT-BASED EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR ALL PROFESSIONS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, medical education based on competency and merit is necessary to lead the world in healthcare and medical innovation.

Americans sign up for a healthcare system free of racial discrimination. Medical schools must instill this fundamental precept in our country’s future healthcare professionals.

That is why the Education and the Workforce Committee pressed the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the medical school accreditor, on its diversity, equity, and inclusion standards for applicants and its mandate for diversity.

LCME responded to the committee inquiry and publicly clarified that accredited medical schools will not treat applicants differently on the basis of race. With lives on the line, racial discrimination must play no part in our Nation’s healthcare system.

The committee will continue to push for merit-based education standards for all professions in the American workforce.

THE DEDICATION AND PASSION OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

(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 today to recognize the Alpha Fire Company of Centre County.

Recently, the Alpha Fire Company made history when an all-women crew took on the initial attack line in a three-alarm fire. Lieutenant Claudia Rudisill, firefighter Talia Chlach, and firefighter Kara Stover answered the call to protect and serve.

Claudia is a recent Penn State graduate, and Talia and Kara are current students at the university. All three come from a long line of firefighters.

Madam Speaker, they made history and they made a difference. They have put in the time and dedication to train, so when the call for help comes, they are able to respond and perform professionally. I know firsthand the dedication and passion volunteer firefighters have when it comes to protecting their communities.

Madam Speaker, I thank Claudia, Talia, and Kara for their bravery and dedication to the State College community.

AMERICANS ARE POORER UNDER PRESIDENT BIDEN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, yesterday, Arthur Laffer and Stephen Moore of the Committee to Unleash Prosperity, revealed that Biden was accelerating poverty.

The recent Census Bureau report on income and poverty in 2022 was god-awful. The supplemental poverty rate rose in 1 year by nearly a record amount. The child poverty rate doubled. Almost every income group—old people, young people, males, females, and residents of our region of the country—lost ground.

Meanwhile, median income fell by 2.2 percent. The average family is roughly \$2,000 poorer than when Biden entered office, following more than a \$6,000 raise in the middle-class incomes under Trump.

Instead of the JFK aspiration of the rising tide lifting all boats, we now have a falling tide that is capsizing all boats. Biden's failures are a useful reminder that putting equity over prosperity leads inevitably to equal misery.

I am very grateful for the leadership of Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY promoting border security as national security.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism continues, moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with Biden open borders.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF ALAN BERNIKOW

(Ms. MALLIOTAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Alan Bernikow, whose generosity impacted thousands of Staten Islanders.

Alan was a mentor and a dear friend of mine. He was a compassionate community leader, entrepreneur, and philanthropist looking to make a difference in the lives of those around him.

He climbed to the top of the corporate ladder. He was the inaugural chairman of the Heart Institute at Staten Island University Hospital; he served on the board of directors of the Richmond University Medical Center; and he was the former President of the Richmond County Country Club and the Jewish Community Center. He also founded the JCC's annual golf and bocce classic which funds scholarships for local children.

He and his wife, Joan, were married for over 50 years and they donated their time, their energy, and their resources to Staten Island's flagship JCC, which bears their name.

Today, on Staten Island, there is a celebration of Alan's life, and I send

my deepest condolences to his family and friends and our community during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, I offer this tribute of Alan's life for the official CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

RECOGNIZING AIMEE BEFORT

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Aimee Befort for her tireless efforts to place children in reliable, safe, and loving homes.

In 2013, Aimee started her career in child welfare as a dependency case manager for the St. Johns County Family Integrity Program, which works with State and local partners to find safe homes for abused and neglected children.

After 2 years as a dependency case manager, Aimee transitioned into the role of adoption coordinator, where she works closely with case management staff to avoid prolonged foster care and expedite permanency through adoption.

Thanks to her determination and ongoing efforts to place children in secure homes, she has played a role in finalizing over 250 adoptions for more than 100 families.

Throughout my 40-year career in law enforcement, I have seen the difference individuals like Aimee can make in our community. Without Aimee's heart for our youth, these children would have lost the opportunity for a safe and joyful childhood.

For this reason, I was proud to nominate Aimee for this year's Congressional Angels in Adoption award. On behalf of Florida's Fifth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, I extend a heartfelt congratulations to Aimee Befort.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless her and this calling, and may God bless the families that she serves.

FOCUS ON THE PRIORITIES FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I just spent time with my constituents over the weekend, and everywhere I went and announced that the government was going to remain open because of the advocacy of Democrats, there was applause. No matter what party, what affiliation they had, there was applause to recognize that law enforcement would be paid, those at the border would be paid, the supplemental nutrition program that families so desperately need would be provided for, and the women and children program would be provided for.

However, at the same time, it is important to take note that we have

passed draconian appropriation bills that sizably cut what working families need—the supplemental nutrition program, the WIC program, housing.

We cannot continue on this route. We must find a bipartisan pathway to fund this government, recognizing that we do have a deficit created by the past administration and that we have been dug out of poverty because of Biden's American Rescue Plan Act that cities have depended on. These cities relied on large Federal dollars that helped them bridge the gap during the pandemic for rural communities, as well.

Madam Speaker, we are getting ready to take a monumental step today. Let's focus on the priorities for the American people.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4394, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4364, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 756 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 756

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4394) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived.

SEC. 2. (a) No further amendment to H.R. 4394, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution, and pro forma amendments described in section 4 of this resolution.

(b) Each further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment except as provided by section 4 of this resolution, and shall not be subject to a demand