

pace, the high-speed rail project will not be completed in this century.

Last year, an investigation by The Times produced a story headlined: "How California's Bullet Train Went Off the Rails." The Times explained that the tortured effort to build the country's first high-speed rail system is a case study in how ambitious public works projects can become perilously encumbered by unrealistic cost estimates, flawed engineering, and a determination to persist on projects that have become too big to fail.

The Times reported how one of the early operators that actually knows how to build high-speed rail systems, SNCF, became so frustrated after their ideas and plans were repeatedly discarded that they pulled out in 2011 and decided to go to North Africa, where it was less politically dysfunctional. Indeed, they then helped Morocco bring a high-speed rail system online in 2018.

All the while, the condition of California's roads continues to deteriorate and are among the very worst in the country. They are unsafe. They cause needless wear and tear on vehicles. They cause Californians to be stuck in traffic for hours on end.

This is an area where my particular district has unique needs. The Third Congressional District is one of the few parts of California that is still growing. Cities like Roseville, Folsom, and Lincoln are growing as fast as anywhere. People want to come to our communities because of the high quality of life. We have eluded the downward spiral that has afflicted many other parts of California because we support small businesses, law enforcement, and public safety. We have local governments that are accountable to taxpayers.

Precisely because of this success, many people want to move into our communities, and it is creating major challenges when it comes to traffic. Because of that, I have made it a top priority to look for every possible opportunity to stop spending Federal dollars on wasteful projects like the high-speed rail boondoggle and instead direct those funds to needed local road projects that will alleviate traffic for my constituents.

I was very glad to participate earlier this year in the groundbreaking for the I-80 fifth lane project, which is going to improve travel times westbound on I-80 between Douglas Boulevard and Riverside Avenue.

In the Transportation appropriations bill, which will be voted on by the House today, I have secured funding for three important projects in our district.

The first is the U.S. 50/Empire Ranch Road Interchange Project, which would reduce traffic congestion and improve safety on adjacent interchanges, ultimately enhancing local and regional circulation and transportation infrastructure in Folsom and surrounding areas.

The second is the Blue Oaks Boulevard Roadway and Bridge Widening

Project, which is going to alleviate a critical transportation bottleneck.

The third is the Folsom Lake Crossing safety improvement phase two project, which would enhance road safety on Folsom Lake Crossing by adding a median barrier rail to minimize head-on collisions, injuries, and fatalities.

Mr. Speaker, this is the way that Federal funding should be directed toward infrastructure and projects that will improve the quality of life for our constituents.

I am glad in the bill that we will vote on today that is the priority and that we will be sending zero dollars to the failed California high-speed rail.

#### STOP THE FRENZY OF MOTIONS OF CENSURE

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, it was in this Chamber on January 6, 2021, that I came to realize relatively late in life how fragile our democracy is. I realize that the words of the Constitution, to which we all pledge an oath, are important, and so are the concepts underlying those words, the concepts of a peaceful transition of power, the concept of the separation of church and state, and the concept of freedom of expression.

These are concepts that are hundreds of years older than the Constitution, but they are critical to our democracy, which I think we would all agree is currently a bit fragile.

For this reason, I am profoundly disturbed that this House has gotten into a frenzy of censure resolutions to censure the speech of Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, it is the second clause of the First Amendment to our Constitution that says that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. Our Founders protected us, in particular, with another clause in the Constitution, the Speech and Debate Clause. Article I, Section 6, says that we will be protected: "For any speech or debate in either House, they shall not be questioned."

Our Founders decided that we would not be sanctioned for the things that we say, yet there are at least four resolutions before this House—one from Ms. JACOBS, one from Ms. GREENE, one from Ms. BALINT, one from Mr. MCCORMICK—seeking an official censure of Members of Congress for the things that they have said.

Mr. Speaker, this is what I mean by the erosion of the foundational principles on which our democracy exists.

I don't much like any of the speech that the Members who are accused of foul speech have engaged in, but the test of our commitment to freedom of expression is not how hard we fight in a moment for the rights of those that we agree with. The test is whether we are willing to stand up for freedom of

expression for somebody with whom we don't agree.

To my Republican friends, I would say they have quite rightly, in many instances, objected to the cancel culture, which is too rampant in our universities and elsewhere. Why now? Why in this institution?

To my Democratic friends, I would remind them that every progressive, going back to Galileo right up through Cesar Chavez to Martin Luther King, has been tolled and tortured and sanctioned for their expression.

It is time for this to stop in this Chamber. It is time for us to stop trying to punish each other for the things that we say, no matter how abhorrent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are more than just Representatives. If we were just Representatives, we would go back to our constituents and bring their ideas here. We are stewards of this institution, which is why we take an oath to the Constitution.

If you take seriously your role as a steward of this institution, vote to table every one of these obnoxious motions to censure. If they do come up and aren't tabled, vote against them. The freedom of expression upon which this institution is built demands nothing less.

#### CELEBRATING VETERANS DAY

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

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in 1919, President Woodrow Wilson declared November 11 as Armistice Day, a day in which to honor those who gave their all in World War I.

In 1954, Congress amended Armistice Day to be inclusive of all veterans who have fought for American freedom, effectively changing its name to Veterans Day. It is on this day that we salute our remarkable, brave patriots who keep America safe.

We the people enjoy the blessings of hard-earned peace, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness because of our warriors who answered the call to defend our Nation.

Our men and women in uniform are a constant reminder of the true source of our Nation's greatness, and many veterans have freely given the last full measure of their devotion for our Nation. Because of their defense, our Nation remains strong, and our children can pursue their dreams.

To our veterans, your loved ones have endured seasons without a parent, a child, a sibling. On Veterans Day, we also recognize your families and thank them for their sacrifice.

It is my greatest honor to represent so many heroes who have served our Nation or who are serving our Nation from the Fourth Congressional District of Florida. Just as they have fought for our country, I will always fight for them.

Mr. Speaker, here is the truth about Veterans Day. It is not just one day. It

is every day because every day America and her people cherish the sacrifice and the service of our Nation's veterans.

OCTOBER 7 IS DEADLIEST DAY IN JEWISH HISTORY SINCE THE HOLOCAUST

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on October 7, hearts, minds, and lives were forever changed. We believed hatred and murder of Jews to be a thing of the past, but we were heartbreakingly wrong.

October 7 will go down as the deadliest day in Jewish history since the Holocaust.

Today, our strongest ally in the Middle East, our friend, Israel, is at war after enduring a multipronged terror attack by Hamas.

Let me be clear: Hamas is not a militant group. They are terrorists.

The atrocities that took place on October 7 by Hamas against innocent Israelis were not the result of provocation. It was a massacre.

It was not in response to occupation of the Gaza Strip. It was a massacre.

It was not a flare-up. It was a massacre.

If you take elderly women, mothers, the disabled, and children hostage, or if you target families and slaughter and torture civilians indiscriminately, you do not get to claim the moral high ground.

There can be no confusion about the war between Israel and Hamas. It is good versus evil. It is civilization versus barbarism. It is self-defense against aggression.

We must be a voice for the truth, and here is the truth: At least 1,400 Israelis were murdered. More than 4,400 were severely injured. More than 200 hostages were taken to be used as human shields. Twenty-seven Americans are dead, and 10 remain unaccounted for.

Make no mistake, Israel is shaken but is not defeated. The United States must be bold and courageous in standing up for the nation of Israel and the right for her to defend itself.

When fighting evil, there can be no neutrality. We must send a clear message to Hamas and Hezbollah and those that fund them that the United States stands with Israel today, tomorrow, and always.

#### WORKING TO MAKE IT EASIER TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. NICKEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, we need to make it easier, not harder, for eligible voters to make their voices heard in our elections. We need to make sure that voting is accessible to everyone, whether they want to go to the polls, vote early, or vote by mail.

In Congress, there is so much we can do to make it easier for people to vote and participate in our democracy. It starts with passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and the Freedom to

Vote Act. These commonsense bills would end partisan gerrymandering, expand voting by mail, protect early voting, help get big money out of our elections, combat dark money, support election integrity, and make additional reforms to improve ballot access.

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It is time to put politics aside and get these commonsense bills across the finish line. I will continue to do everything I can to protect the right to vote and work to make it easier for people to vote and to participate in our democracy.

CONGRATULATING MAYOR KEN MARSHBURN ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and celebrate the exemplary service of Mayor Ken Marshburn, a distinguished leader and devoted public servant to the town of Garner.

During his time in office, Mayor Marshburn has worked tirelessly alongside council members, town staff, and community leaders to enhance the quality of life in Garner. He has an unwavering belief in Garner's potential and has always worked to make Garner a place where people can not only live but also thrive.

Mayor Marshburn's leadership is coming to an end today with our elections in Garner. He has steered Garner toward a positive and prosperous future. His commitment to fiscal responsibility has laid a solid foundation for the town's growth, attracting new businesses that enrich our economic diversity. His legacy is one of leadership, service, and unwavering dedication to our community.

I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding Mayor Ken Marshburn for his unwavering commitment and invaluable contributions to the town of Garner and extending our best wishes to him and his family as they embark on this well-deserved retirement.

Our community is richer and brighter due to his leadership and service. I again thank Mayor Marshburn for his service.

FIGHTING HATRED IN ALL FORMS

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, in North Carolina last year, anti-Semitic incidents increased by 30 percent. The ongoing conflict in Israel has led to even more anti-Semitic attacks both in the U.S. and around the world.

Just this week, the ADL's Center on Extremism reported a nearly 400 percent increase in anti-Semitic incidents compared to the same period last year. The situation has been even worse since Hamas launched a brutal and calculated attack against Jewish people and the State of Israel on October 7.

In New York, Jewish students at Cooper Union College were forced to shelter inside the school library on Wednesday for their own safety during a campus protest. In Indianapolis, a woman deliberately crashed her car into the building of what she believed was a pro-Jewish organization.

Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to remain vigilant against anti-Semi-

tism, discrimination, and prejudice. Let's work to fight hatred in all forms and ensure that the scourge of anti-Semitism does not rear its ugly head both at home and abroad.

AVOIDING A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss our core job here in Congress, funding the Federal Government. We have 10 days until a government shutdown. Mr. Speaker, I will say that again, 10 days, just over a week until the government runs out of money.

A government shutdown would hurt the economy, risk our national security, and would be a disaster for North Carolina. Hundreds of thousands of people would be put on temporary leave without pay or be forced to work without pay. Essential staff—like our TSA agents, air traffic controllers, and many others—would be required to work without pay through the duration of any shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, there is only one path forward, and that is bipartisanship. Republicans have a very narrow majority in the House. Democrats have a very narrow majority in the Senate. We have the White House, but we have to work together.

Right now there is no plan to fund our government, and we have to do it next week. This needs to be a priority for this body, for this institution, and we have to do our job. The American people expect us to fund the government, and right now there is no plan to do that.

A shutdown will cost taxpayers money. It will hit our economy hard. My constituents are hit hard right now with the rising cost of inflation, the high cost of mortgages, and the continuing costs that hit hard, whether it is childcare or healthcare. A shutdown would be an incredible unforced error at this time.

Mr. Speaker, we need to fund the government.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, Congress is considering a transportation appropriations bill right now as we speak. It is critical that we don't give another dime to California's failed high-speed rail project that has sought money year after year after year from the Federal level.

Indeed, this document does not provide any new money for the high-speed rail project, but they are certainly seeking it. There are reportedly proposals for \$3 billion requested by Governor Newsom and even reportedly asks of a possible \$28 billion, which is what they really seek.

Let's go back just a little bit to learn the history of this project. In 2008, a proposition was passed on California's ballot with the idea to build a high-