

ensures that in terms of having young children eager to read, there's "More Where That Came From". I am grateful for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and promise to continue doing "All I Can Do" to advance this noble cause—even if it means working past "9 to 5". After all, there is little else more important than instilling a love for reading within the minds of children.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the impact and service that Dolly Parton's Imagination Library will continue to have in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District and the rest of the "Show-Me" State. I speak with the voice of Missouri's entire Fifth Congressional District as we say a heartfelt "thank you" to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library as we celebrate and congratulate them on all their current achievements and those to come.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF HARRISON FREER

#### HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 27, 2024*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Harrison Freer, the Ward 2 Town of Queensbury Board Member, a retired Air Force Colonel and pilot, community activist, and avid environmentalist. Harrison Freer was a community leader known for his dedication and commitment to each endeavor he undertook.

Harrison served in the United States Air Force for 24 years, retiring as a Colonel. Following his distinguished military career, he began working for Northrop Grumman Integrated Systems in 2000 as a Systems Engineer and later served as the Director of Space and Intelligence Systems.

A passionate pilot, Harrison owned a Pipistrel Alpha Trainer and was a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. He was also active in the local chapter of the National Experimental Aircraft Association and the Glens Falls Pilot Club.

Harrison's passion for aviation extended beyond his personal interests, he worked with children at Warren County Airport through the Experimental Aircraft Association's (EAA) Young Eagles flying program where he inspired children's excitement about flying. Additionally, Harrison played a crucial role in the EAA's scholarship program, increasing access to pilot training for many aspiring aviators. Harrison's enthusiasm for teaching was evident in his work as an instructor where he was most proud to teach his granddaughter how to fly. He was also an innovative advocate for electric planes pushing the boundaries of sustainable aviation technology.

Harrison had been on the Queensbury Town Board since 2020, and his contributions to his community and country are truly remarkable. Harrison became the president of the Feeder Canal Alliance on July 1st of this year. His collaborative spirit and passion for environmental preservation were always evident in his work.

Harrison Freer passed away on August 1st, leaving behind his wife Tricia along with a legacy of service, leadership, and passion for the skies. His impact on his family, the commu-

nity, and the field of aviation, will be felt for generations to come. On behalf of New York's 21st District, I am honored to recognize his extraordinary life.

#### RETHINKING AMERICA'S NUCLEAR POSTURE: A QUESTION OF WHY

#### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 27, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to address the future of our nuclear posture.

In 1985, Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev, two cold warriors at the head of the world's largest nuclear arsenals, declared that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. That declaration was regularly repeated and reaffirmed by the leaders of all five Nuclear Weapon States in 2022. This recognition should be the start and end of every conversation on nuclear weapons.

Nevertheless, nuclear powers, since the advent of the Cold War, instead seem to have concluded that deterrence requires more nuclear weapons of every kind than the adversary. Today, because of this logic, we find ourselves engaged in a three-way nuclear arms race with Russia, China, and the U.S., each blaming the other for starting it and continuing it. Each nation, fearing an adversary may outflank them, continues to build nuclear infrastructure: nuclear silos in China's western deserts, nuclear weapons on satellites, and replacement ICBMs. As each nation seeks to strengthen its own hand, on and on it goes . . . a constant buildup where a country asks, "How can we build faster?" or "What can we target" but ignores the most important question: Why?

Leadership requires the rigorous use of that three-letter word, "Why." We must avoid blind adherence to yesterday's decisions. In today's discussion, that means asking what is sufficient for nuclear deterrence. Looking at past strategies and relying on past assumptions isn't enough. Old cold-war mentalities will create unacceptable costs, rob us of alternatives, and place us in even greater danger. Instead, we must think boldly and not repeat the problems of our history.

With this in mind, I bring this question of "why" to us all.

I know full well that we face a hostile world with numerous aggressive adversaries. We also know that we are now engaged in a nuclear arms race with China and Russia. Other nations are also known to have nuclear weapons, and others seek them. In this dangerous environment, deterrence must consider far more than just a great-power nuclear exchange.

We have also seen the threat to use nuclear weapons to deter non-nuclear aggression. Putin has used irresponsible nuclear threats to try and prevent our support for the Ukrainian people in the defense of their country.

Of course, no one has yet used these weapons, a fact that I know we are all grateful for, but with every threat comes the risk of use. No matter who has them, the prevalence of nuclear weapons places the world at risk. Today, we must think not just in terms of the threat but also in terms of the future.

So, let us ask a foundational question: Why does America need nuclear weapons? If it

does, how many and what kind? Proponents often justify nuclear weapons for two reasons: (1) to deter and fight a strategic nuclear exchange between major powers, and (2) to deter non-nuclear aggression.

Focusing on the first category, deterring an opponent from using strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, history would indicate that the strategy has worked for more than 70 years . . . but that record understates how close we came to causing our own destruction. Several near-disastrous incidents motivated leaders to back away and undertake several treaties to reduce weapons and risks. Leaders like Reagan, JFK, Eisenhower, Carter, and Obama knew that nuclear weapons could end civilization and, with those heavy moral and ethical considerations in mind, negotiated significant safety measures and a serious reduction in nuclear weapons.

These leaders demonstrated vision and commitment. They knew that war was not an option, so they had to create a vision for a safer future. Unfortunately, too many today shrug their shoulders and say the time for negotiations is not now. Which brings us to yet another question: Why not try? Over the next 30 years, we will spend almost 2 trillion dollars on our nuclear weapons. What if we spent just 1% on diplomatic and risk reduction efforts?

The second category of limiting non-nuclear aggression carries its own risks. Proponents of using nuclear weapons suggest that we could use "tactical weapons" in some limited way. However, once a nuclear option starts, when and how does a tactical exchange proceed? In the chaos and fog of war, would this tactical nuclear option just open the way to full-scale devastation? Many "think tanks" have studied this, and to this day, the result is "do not open Pandora's Box."

Despite their limitations, both categories are also how we continue to justify our spending on our massive nuclear arsenal. Some even use them to justify larger and larger expenses. But this brings us to another why question: Why have we chosen to spend our defense dollars on modernizing every element in the current nuclear systems?

This question will become increasingly important as timelines slip and costs grow in our nuclear modernization programs. For example, fresh off its first Nunn-McCurdy review, the Sentinel Program will now cost at least \$140 billion, not including a new bomb for another \$30 billion or the unknown costs of plutonium pit production.

We have an obligation to ask why. Not only 'why the extraordinary cost increases', but far more importantly, why are we doing the Sentinel program at all? Is there no alternative that would deter adversaries more effectively?

History is an important guide in this matter. In the 1950s and 1960s, our nuclear enterprise developed ground-based ICBMs, and we have continued them through the years. Today, members of Congress, without scrutiny, repeat a mantra that 400 ground-based ICBMs are necessary. But 40 years after the advent of the SSBNs and 20 years after stealth bombers, why are these ground-based ICBMs necessary? These missiles sit in their silos, not too far from you, in the heart of America, whose locations are known to cow hands, sheepherders, and targeting personnel in the bunkers of our adversaries.

If, in a nuclear crisis, adversaries chose to target out missile fields, they will launch early

to destroy those missiles whose locations are known. Thus, the MMIII and the Sentinel create an extraordinarily dangerous situation. In the event of a perceived attack, there would be immense pressure on the President to make the decision to launch within minutes or risk losing the missiles.

With all this in mind, why spend such a massive amount of money on a system that is so vulnerable and so extraordinarily dangerous? In defense policy, nothing should be sacred or untouchable, and everything should require frequent re-evaluation. So, let us not be afraid to ask yet another question: why a triad? Strategy cannot afford to be stagnant. It cannot afford to complacently accept the assumptions of the past.

We must ask why we need the ground leg of the Triad. If the nuclear program is for deterrence, is the firepower of the submarines, airplanes, and their missiles sufficient to dissuade an adversary? These systems have the benefit of stealth, and the President has the time to gather all information and then decide whether to use the nuclear response. If that were not enough, we also have conventional weapons that can deter adversaries.

But even if we do retain each leg, we must reevaluate what's truly necessary within each. We do not have infinite resources and must make difficult choices about where we allocate our national resources. As we rethink whether we can achieve deterrence with different mixes, let's prioritize safety and effectiveness over fulfilling antiquated assumptions or requirements. Remember, this is not just a matter of matching our capability to their capability. This is about what will ensure our future survival.

Too often, debates on deterrence do not consider the rapidly changing security environment; cyber warfare, uncertainty, confusion, and misunderstanding could be greater risks than aggression. We are heavily dependent on our space observation and communication systems, and now we know that space war is real and routinely discussed. How do we weigh those risks when we decide to continue to keep 400 Sentinel or MMIII missiles, each prepared to kill millions, on constant alert, ready for immediate launch in just a few moments when there will certainly be chaos and uncertainty?

Surely, more destructive capability is not always better. So why do we need so many? Considering how many weapons will deter conflict is not just a military problem of tit-for-tat calculations. What national victory could we, or just as important our adversaries, ever hope to achieve at the end of a nuclear war that inevitably kills hundreds of millions of people, including tens of millions of Americans, destroys entire cities, and endangers the environment of the planet?

As we think about deterrence in the modern era, it is clear from rising costs and the existential dangers that we cannot afford a new arms race. Of course, we must grapple with hard questions about how to deter dangerous adversaries. Still, we must answer an even harder question: how do we deter in a way that ensures there is a tomorrow worth protecting? Must we continue a 50-year-old triad strategy without considering the alternatives? Why, why are we stuck in a logic silo with the blast door closed?

I want to end this with a discussion I had with the captain of a United Kingdom nuclear-

armed submarine. After touring his ship, I stopped at the foot of the ladder to thank him for the discussion. I said "I appreciate the enormous responsibility and difficult task that you have. If you receive a message to launch your missiles, and you do, what do you do next? Go home?" I'll never forget the look on his face. I don't know if he had ever contemplated that question, but that's a question that we must all ask today.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE CONGRESS LEADS BY EXAMPLE ACT OF 2024

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 27, 2024*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Congress Leads by Example Act of 2024, which would apply to the legislative branch many of the laws that protect employees in the private sector and the executive branch. Congress should abide by the laws it imposes on others.

In 1995, Congress passed the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA), which applied 13 existing civil rights, labor and workplace safety and health laws to the legislative branch. In 2018, after reports of sexual harassment in Congress and in light of the #MeToo movement, Congress passed the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 Reform Act (Reform Act), which changed the name of the Office of Compliance to the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR), revised the process to resolve workplace claims and extended CAA protections to unpaid staff, interns, and fellows. It also made Members of Congress personally liable for their own violations of workplace harassment and retaliation laws.

The CAA and the Reform Act were important steps in making the legislative branch accountable for its employment practices, but they did not finish the job. As noted, the CAA brought the legislative branch under 13 existing civil rights, labor and workplace safety and health laws but it omitted important substantive and procedural protections. In its three most recent Section 102(b) biennial reports to Congress, OCWR identified additional federal workplace laws and procedures that should apply to the legislative branch. This bill takes into account OCWR's recommendations, and seeks both to apply the standard of fairness for employees of the legislative branch that Congress requires for other employees and provide a safer work environment for the legislative branch and visitors by bringing the legislative branch obligations in line with the legal requirements for the private sector and the executive branch.

This bill provides general whistleblower protections and anti-retaliation measures and makes additional Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) retaliation provisions applicable to the legislative branch. This bill also provides subpoena authority to OCWR to conduct inspections and investigations into OSHA violations. It also provides extended paid parental bereavement leave to legislative branch employees.

This bill also furthers the CAA's goal of preventing workplace discrimination in the legislative branch by prohibiting the legislative

branch from making adverse employment decisions based on an employee's wage garnishment or involvement in bankruptcy proceedings pursuant to the Consumer Credit Protection Act or Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code.

Finally, this bill bolsters the CAA's record-keeping requirements. It applies to the legislative branch the obligation to maintain accurate records of safety information and employee injuries, as otherwise required by OSHA, as well as employee records necessary to administer anti-discrimination laws.

This bill would help restore the public's trust in Congress by redoubling our efforts to exercise leadership by example. I urge support for this bill.

#### HONORING THE LEGACY OF SERVICE OF CHARLIE COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 108TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

**HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 27, 2024*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, of the New York Army National Guard.

Charlie Company's historic record began on April 27, 1898, when the 108th Infantry Regiment was constituted in the New York National Guard as the 3d New York Volunteer Infantry. The regiment was organized from existing companies in Northern and Central New York. The unit first began federal service on May 17, 1898, at Camp Black, New York, serving with distinction during the Spanish-American War. On December 22, 1898, the regiment was reorganized into the 1st Infantry Battalion in Niagara Falls, the 2nd Infantry Battalion in Geneva, and the 3rd Infantry Battalion in Oswego.

Charlie Company 2-108 served honorably in many of the defining conflicts of the twentieth century. During World War I, the regiment was reorganized and redesignated on October 1, 1917, as the 108th Infantry Regiment and assigned to the 27th Division. The 108th Infantry Regiment aided allied forces in the Somme Offensive in France and at Ypres-Lys and Flanders Field in Belgium. In World War II, Charlie Company saw action throughout the Pacific Theater, fighting on the Bismarck Archipelago, Leyte, Luzon, and across the Southern Philippines and the Ryukyu Islands. For their service in the Philippines, the Company was awarded the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation in July 1945.

For many years, Charlie Company 2-108 has been deployed to critical missions in the Middle East. The unit was deployed to Iraq in 2004 as part of the 1st Infantry Division and played a pivotal role in securing the city of Samarra. They were later recognized with the Valorous Unit Award for their accomplishments. In 2012, Charlie Company was deployed to Afghanistan as part of Task Force Iron. In 2024, Charlie Company participated in African Lion, U.S. Africa Command's largest joint exercise on the continent.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I am proud to recognize the distinguished service of the men and women of Charlie Company, 2nd