

nature's benefits directly to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the coalition of environmental groups, outdoor recreation advocates, businesses, and local governments that have worked day in and day out to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank Natural Resources Chairman WESTERMAN and my friend, Ranking Member Raul Grijalva, who have worked together on today's bipartisan outdoor recreation package.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the EXPLORE Act and to work with the Senate to get a strong outdoor recreation bill passed this Congress.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Auburn University's men's basketball team as the 2024 SEC Tournament champions.

It is my honor to congratulate Coach Bruce Pearl, the players, and staff on an outstanding season once again. The Auburn Tigers won their third SEC championship in program history as they fought to the finish line, beating the University of Florida 86-67.

As 1 Peter 4:10 says: "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Winning this championship is not just about the celebration on the court, but it is a testament to the Tigers' character, dedication, and efforts for Christ.

Through the leadership of Coach Pearl, this program has embodied the Auburn creed by believing in a sound mind, a sound body, and a spirit that is not afraid. As they have developed these qualities, they have worked heartily and confidently to achieve their worldly and eternal goals.

The Auburn men's basketball team, under the leadership of Coach Bruce Pearl, has set a standard of excellence that will be remembered for years to come, not just in athletics, but in every aspect of life.

The State of Alabama is blessed to have men like them, and it is great to be an Auburn Tiger. "War Eagle."

#### SECOND CHANCE MONTH

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, April is Second Chance Month, a time to raise awareness of the challenges people face when attempting to return to life after time behind bars.

Securing a steady job, housing, and reintegrating into a community can be tough when you have a criminal record. This is a challenge that more than 70 million Americans face.

However, America is built on the principles of God and His grace. It has always been a land of new beginnings and second chances.

I am proud Alabama's Second Congressional District is home to J.F. Ingram State Technical College, which helps provide many of these second chances through education.

J.F. Ingram State offers 20 technical training programs for incarcerated adults, including automotive repair, construction, cosmetics, and logistics. I can vouch for the extensive training, as I visited last year and got a wonderful haircut.

In 2022, they placed nearly 250 formerly incarcerated adults in jobs. Those who participate in these correctional programs through education are 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who do not.

Lamentations 3:21-23 King James version says: "This, I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness."

May we all be reminded of God's compassion towards us as we consider supporting those who are committed to rectifying their mistakes. Getting back on track and making meaningful contributions to society can reduce recidivism and make our communities a better place.

#### STREETCARS: THE FOUNDATION OF CITIES AND SUBURBAN AREAS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, streetcars are still the foundation of cities and suburban areas across the country, establishing a pattern that guided development for over a century.

By 1910, you could travel from Boston to Chicago entirely on streetcar lines, just transferring from one to another. Sadly, 60 years later, the streetcar had largely disappeared. Only the St. Charles Streetcar Line in New Orleans remained of this vast network.

We had a different vision in the city of Portland. In 1987, I called for the development of a circulator system in the central city that built around the streetcar.

I worked with the late Bill Naito, a visionary Portland businessman and developer, who bought old streetcars from Portugal. He brought them to town, thinking that if people actually saw them, it would help promote his concept of their reintroduction.

I worked with a gentleman named Rick Gustafson to bring this to fruition. We had a 10-member citizen steering committee, who worked with the city to fashion an approach going forward, and it worked. Within a decade, we had a loop in downtown Portland connecting it.

That loop of streetcars was the focus for much of our affordable housing. It changed the dimensions of downtown, where people used the streetcar for short trips rather than vehicles. It

guided development in modern Portland.

This is part of a national movement reintroducing streetcars. I am proud to have helped lead that with the Portland model. We now have streetcars in over two dozen cities across the country, with more on the way. There is hard work in Omaha, Nebraska, which might be the next major development.

This is human-scale technology. It is proven. It is cost effective. People love streetcars. They are energy efficient and help promote a development pattern that is human oriented.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to be able to continue this effort at mobilizing efforts to promote livable communities, another transportation alternative, and guide development.

I was pleased to, 10 years ago, be in Tucson, Arizona, for the opening of their streetcar. Before it even opened, the streetcar redefined its downtown development, relationship to the university, and promoted additional housing opportunities.

The streetcar is a chance for us to be able to use this proven technology and mobilize patterns of growth and development in a low-cost, high-energy initiative. The modern streetcar has the opportunity to help communities across the country.

I was pleased to be at the Streetcar Summit in Charlotte, North Carolina, this last week. People from around the country gathered to share their stories of streetcar development. This is a new wave of urban development, proven transportation technology, and an opportunity to reshape our central cities.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to look at these examples in so many of our communities. The streetcar is making a difference in a way that saves money, saves time, improves the planet, and makes people feel good about their urban environment.

#### HONORING WEGAYEWU FARIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a local hero, whose selfless act exemplifies the very essence of courage and sacrifice.

Wegayewu Faris, an immigrant from Ethiopia who settled in Coralville, Iowa, displayed remarkable bravery when he risked his life to save an 8-year-old boy from drowning back in 2022. Without hesitation, Faris, who worked as a custodial worker at City High School in Iowa City for 17 years, leaped into action when he saw the boy in danger, struggling in the Iowa River. He jumped into the river, and his quick and decisive response underscores the true nature of heroism.

Tragically, Faris lost his life in the process, but his heroism did not go unnoticed. Recently, he was posthumously awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism, the highest civilian honor

for bravery in North America. This recognition serves as a testament to his extraordinary courage and selflessness.

Faris' legacy reminds us of the profound impact one individual can have on their community. May his bravery inspire us all to act with courage and compassion in the face of adversity.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE IOWA HAWKEYES AND SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Iowa Hawkeyes women's basketball team's incredible season.

I also commend the South Carolina Gamecocks women's basketball team. Their incredible performance led to the national title in the NCAA championship game. They played a great game. Despite their dominance in the first quarter, the University of Iowa Hawkeyes had a heart-wrenching loss.

Having lost three congressional races, I think I can say with all sincerity that I know how they feel. However, to the Hawkeye Nation and beyond, you are champions, regardless of the title.

What you have done to elevate women's basketball as a sport goes beyond titles. Take me, for example. I probably watched one pro basketball game and one college basketball game in person. I never watch it on TV, and I know nothing about basketball.

However, like millions of other people, I was drawn in by your incredible playing, demeanor, excitement, joy, inspiration, and enthusiasm that you displayed on and off the court, not to mention your academic achievements.

You created an opportunity for me and my son to talk together and to bond. Caitlin Clark and the team are such incredible players and people, both on and off the court, that they commanded attention.

Kate Martin, what an incredible player you are. I loved seeing you drive down the court and do a three-point shot.

Hannah Stuelke came through in a clutch against UConn.

Sydney Affolter, it was joyful watching you being able to guard and being able to do that layup underhanded.

Sharon Goodman, I think they said at the championship you had a 4.0 academic average as well as being a phenomenal athlete.

Molly Davis, we were heartbroken, but delighted to see you on the court in the final minute.

Gabbie Marshall, I am just going to say the words of a more famous coach: "Pretty eyes. Defender. Sniper."

Caitlin Clark, the records that you have broken, the elevation that you play in women's sports, I heard Coach Lisa Bluder say that when they recruited you to Iowa, you could have gone to any of those titled universities. You came to Iowa, walked into the locker room as a freshman, and said: We are going to the Final Four.

That vision, that drive, that enthusiasm, that goal, that command for excellence carried you through. Your legacy is beyond a national title.

This is your legacy: 18,300 in attendance at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse, and I was one of them; 18.7 million viewership, 24 million at its peak.

Those other elite teams had all won national titles before, every one of them—LSU, UConn, South Carolina—but they did not do this. You did this, the University of Iowa women's basketball team.

You did so much to generate enthusiasm and excitement among millions of young girls and young boys, who now want to participate to be their best, which is the best of Iowa and the best of America.

You brought countless hours of joy, excitement, heartache, and camaraderie to the Hawkeye Nation and millions across this country, and even Cyclone fans. You became a national sensation, and we will remember not just the results, but we will remember the feelings and the joy that you gave us.

Champions are leaders, but leaders aren't titles. It was a high school student who asked me that. You are a doctor, a lieutenant colonel, a director, a Congresswoman. What does it take to be a leader?

Leaders inspire.

□ 1230

Mr. Speaker, Caitlin is the GOAT and the rest of the team are GOAT goddesses, and I suppose Coach Bluder is a GOAT herder. They don't need a national title. They are national heroes.

Forever, Go Hawks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

#### WE NEED PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I have been attending town halls and meetings across my district for the last 2 weeks in smaller communities in Wisconsin like Edgerton, Sauk City, Monroe, Mazomanie, and Darlington. These are communities with hardworking people that have a strong work ethic and upper Midwestern values like fairness and compassion.

At those meetings, Mr. Speaker, I have heard a common thread: They don't like what they are seeing in Gaza and Israel. The vast majority recognize that the attack on October 7 was horrific and Israel had a right to respond, but they didn't have a right to collectively punish 2.3 million people stuck in Gaza.

They know that 1,200 people are dead in Israel from the attack and over 130 people are still being held by Hamas. However, they also know that nearly 34,000 people are dead in Gaza, 70 percent of which are women and children, clearly not members of Hamas.

They know that 2 million people have been displaced in Gaza and the major-

ity of the buildings and infrastructure have been demolished or damaged by Israeli bombs. They know that the people are dying of starvation because almost every entry point to Gaza is through Israel and not enough supplies and aid are getting through.

They understand that the United States is trying to help with aid, but we have to drop it from the air or bring it in by sea because our friend Israel won't allow us to bring it in through easier, safer ways like by truck and transport.

They know that aid workers are being killed, 200 plus to date, including some from Chef Jose Andres' World Central Kitchen. The limited food, water, and supplies that are being let in have to be distributed, but aid workers are too often killed in the process of delivering humanitarian aid, making alleviating suffering even more difficult.

They don't understand how we can provide both armaments and aid to the same area, as that doesn't make sense to people with Midwestern sensibilities.

They tell me it looks like punishment for being Palestinian. They tell me it appears Benjamin Netanyahu wants people to leave Gaza for good. They tell me it looks too much like what genocide would look like, and that concerns them greatly.

The bombings of the World Central Kitchen workers, the seemingly targeted and repeated bombings, despite the Israeli military knowing their location and purpose, has been one more step too far by the Netanyahu government's handling of this war.

Enough is enough.

The indiscriminate killing must stop. The aid must flow. The hostages must be released and a cease-fire must hold to protect every child in Gaza and Israel.

The devastation has been severe, far more severe than it ever needed to be. The world would have understood a response going after Hamas killers, but the Netanyahu government has gone too far, way too far in its response.

That is why I helped lead a letter signed by 56 Members of Congress to the President to stop any additional offensive arms transfers to Israel without a thorough investigation of the World Central Kitchen killings and a plan for aid and assistance to get to starving Palestinians.

The United States has long supported two nations existing side by side in peace, a two-state solution, but Benjamin Netanyahu doesn't support that reasoned path to peace. And that, along with his punishing innocent Palestinians while allegedly going after Hamas, has made it time to get a divorce from Benjamin Netanyahu.

I support the overwhelming majority of Israelis who want peace. They want to live safely without bombs raining on them from extremists in Gaza. They too don't like the direction and mistakes of the Netanyahu administration, and they want the hostages returned immediately.