

Congress on April 11, 2024, to provide a virtual reality experience for educational use by the public.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF BILL FOSTER

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of BILL FOSTER.

Bill was a longtime Savannah, Georgia, resident, having been born and raised in the area.

After graduating from Armstrong College Night School, Bill served our Nation as a member of the Georgia Army National Guard. During this time, he was a commissioned officer in the 118th Field Artillery Battalion.

Following service, Bill worked with Thomas and Hutton Engineering as a land surveyor. During his employment, he contributed to multiple landscape development projects. Noting his skills and strong work ethic, the company appointed Bill as chairman of the board of directors where he served until the time of his retirement in December of 1997.

Bill embodied the characteristics of a true community man, having raised a wonderful family with his wife, Peggy, while actively participating in local church operations and other community committees.

Bill will be remembered for his civic leadership, his community involvement, and his service to our Nation.

HAMAS IS RESPONSIBLE

(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, we need to be unequivocally clear about one thing: Hamas is responsible for every single loss of life in Israel and Gaza since their barbaric attack on October 7.

Hamas, conducting a war from beneath the homes and kitchens of citizens, is putting civilians in danger, not this ridiculous assertion made against Israel, which is merely defending itself against these sources of attack.

There can be no cease-fire until Hamas surrenders, releases every hostage, and ceases firing at Israel and its innocent citizens.

It is shameful that the Biden White House and Senate majority Leader SCHUMER are walking back support of one of our greatest allies.

Meanwhile, there are increasingly concerning pro-Iran/Muslim Brotherhood influences inside our own State Department.

Israel has an undeniable right to defend themselves from their attackers.

The U.S. must continue to support military armaments, including the Iron Dome missile defense system, and never encourage our ally to surrender to the terrorists who want them dead and to not exist.

ATTORNEY GENERAL MUST PROTECT THIS NATION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reinforce one of the most important positions that we have in the United States, and that is the Attorney General of the United States of America.

That officer of the Nation is to provide protection when it comes to fair voting laws, to structure a scheme of social justice and criminal justice interacting together where you have justice in the eyes of the citizen, and, of course, you have a response in the eyes of the person that is the perpetrator, that they are held accountable.

So I call upon the Attorney General of the United States to defend this Nation: Defend this Nation on the grounds of more women's rights; defend this Nation on a better social voting rights structure that is not being defended; and fight for a young boy that is sitting in a classroom isolated in Texas because he does not have the right hairstyle. He is suffering because the State of Texas is not abiding by the CROWN Act.

I want the Attorney General of the United States to do its job of defending the citizens of this country and to hold those responsible who have done wrong and to be able to protect those who have not done wrong. I will follow up in the days to come.

A SHAMEFUL DISPLAY

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

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks, we have seen a shameful display by Members of the Democratic Party, including the Senate majority leader, who attacked and undermined the State of Israel and the special relationship that we have.

The United States recognized Israel 11 minutes after its founding. They are our closest ally in the world, and at a time of war the Senate majority leader, the Senator from New York, took the opportunity to call for a regime change.

At a time when the Democratic Party talks about protecting democracy, rails against foreign interference in elections, the Senator from New York thought it was his opportunity and in his interest politically to undermine the State of Israel and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Hamas is a terrorist state. The fastest way for a cease-fire to occur is for Hamas to surrender and release the hostages. That is the only thing that members of the United States Government should be demanding from the President to the Senate majority leader to the former Speaker of the House.

It is shameful what is happening in the Democratic Party today.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUNN of Iowa). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to be very clear in the hearts and minds of Americans and the hearts and minds of Texans, the hearts and minds of the Democratic Caucus that no one in our Caucus condones the killing of innocent people no matter where we find ourselves.

So I rise today to take great issue with any suggestion that our Democratic Caucus would not fight for those who are the most vulnerable.

I recognize the Maryland delegation and the leader, Mr. MFUME, who comes to the floor to ensure that the voices of Marylanders are heard in helping to rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge but also to ensure the representation of the American people that we do not discard our friends.

What we will do is demand that our friends stand up for the vulnerable, that our friends love babies and women and children, and that we make sure that there is not an unequal mistreatment of individuals who are here in this country and who are overseas.

So I must challenge any interpretation of Democrats as being anything but supportive of the President's policies, which are policies that believe in protecting human rights workers, and again, as I started out, by protecting those vulnerable persons in the—how should I say it—in the very vigorous war that is going on and the loss of life that we see.

That is why you hear a difference of opinion in the Democratic Party. That is why you hear from the majority leader of the United States Senate a different voice because that voice has to speak for, again, the most vulnerable.

At the same time, would we not want to have the Nation acknowledge the tragedy that happened in Maryland in the Baltimore Harbor where so many detrimental disasters could be forthcoming because of the terrible tragedy of the bridge coming down, the lack of

money to be able to support a new system of construction, as well to be able to pay for it.

So here is the real story. Tragedy struck the Baltimore Harbor some weeks ago. We saw not only the Maryland delegation come together, but we saw the Nation come together.

The Nation has come together to be able to speak to the pain of the people that are in Maryland, that are in Baltimore, and in particular, in the city of Baltimore. That is what happened.

So I am standing with and supporting Mr. MFUME who comes to represent the Maryland delegation to ensure that those funds are forthcoming and that they are not dismissed. I think it is extremely important that we know to help our various communities that are suffering from hurricanes, suffering from a particular type of disaster that no one had ever heard, which is the disaster of the collision of a cargo carrier, if you will, going into the Francis Scott Key Bridge that many of us remember as the source of the Star Spangled Banner.

So I would not be here if I didn't think the value that I stand for is to stand alongside Mr. MFUME to recognize that we are Americans first and that we are here to help those who are in their time of need who cannot help themselves.

That is why the President immediately went to Maryland in terms of his voice, immediately spoke up on behalf of the people of Maryland and the people of Baltimore and immediately spoke up on behalf of the Maryland Congressional Delegation which Mr. MFUME now will continue to lead. He immediately stood up because he is going to be a man of his word. He stood up because he is a man of his word that he was going to be here to stand with the great people of Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to indicate my support for the funding efforts to help the great people of the great State of Maryland. Let's do it together. That is what Americans do. We help each other, and we work together.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Texas for her opening remarks of

this Special Order hour dedicated to make sure that we underscore the sense of tragedy, the sense of loss, and the sense of damage that has occurred as a result of the bridge collapse in Baltimore. I thank her again for sitting in and standing in. Your remarks were very well received. We appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today shortly to welcome other Members again who will be coming over to be a part of this Special Order. I want to call everyone's attention to the fact that somewhere around 1:30 a.m. on March 26, the Dali, a large 985-foot cargo ship weighing 95,000 tons when empty, collided, as we all know now, tragically with the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore.

□ 1445

The *Dali's* collision with the Key Bridge caused its fatal collapse into the Patapsco River and has forced the Port of Baltimore to suspend vessel traffic until further notice. All of the shipping lanes, with the exception of the ones that the Coast Guard was just recently able to open, have been closed, and we don't expect that to change until sometime around the end of May, if we are fortunate.

Aside from that, I think it is always important to recognize that it was not the collapse of the bridge alone that troubled us, but it is also the loss of human life. Our hearts continue to go out to the families who lost their loved ones on that bridge on that fateful evening.

This unimaginable disaster claimed the lives, as we know now, of six men: Alejandro Hernandez Fuentes, Maynor Yassir Suazo Sandoval, Miguel Luna, Dorlian Castillo Cabrera, Jose Mynor Lopez, and Carlos Hernandez.

Those stories and those lives have yet to be fully understood or told, but those men, most of whom had been in this country 16 or 17 years, working in most instances two jobs, married with children and raising families, paying taxes, and doing what a lot of people would not want to do at 1:30 in the morning that high up on a bridge, filling potholes.

We, in the State of Maryland, continue to mourn them, as do people all over the country, and we know that they were, indeed, as I said, husbands, somebody's father, somebody's brother. Their passing serves as a solemn reminder to cherish our own lives and the lives of those that we really deeply care about. These men gave their heart, they gave their sweat, and ultimately gave their souls.

They leave behind six grieving families and loved ones that will never see them again. So those families can never get enough of our condolences and our prayers and our sympathies. I thank the largest Latino and immigrant organization in the Mid-Atlantic, CASA de Maryland, its Executive Director Gustavo Torres, and all of those who worked so hard to support those grieving families the day of the col-

lapse and every day since then, both financially and emotionally. I ask that we continue to lift them in prayer in a time of great tragedy that all Americans, regardless of where they are, to some extent feel, understand, and grieve for.

I would be remiss if I did not thank President Joe Biden, who called the Governor and myself and other members of the delegation that morning to express his profound regret and his unflinching and unwavering support, to find a way to make things whole again, to rebuild that bridge, and to allow those shipping lanes of commerce to be open.

President Biden, since the beginning of this, has not wavered in his support of replacing that bridge, and not just for the sake of replacing a bridge, and to open, as I said before, the channels of commerce, but to also find a way to give hope to all of the many people who are affected, the thousands of long-shoremen, thousands of dock workers that do odd jobs, all of those in the communities of Turner Station and Dundalk, Maryland, who are right at the mouth of the bridge, as well as all those small businesses and businessowners, the truck drivers and others—everyone affected when all commerce came to a halt.

I thank President Biden. We have appreciated the simple eloquence of his example in this tragedy. We pledge to work with him and with the appropriate members of the Appropriations Committee here in the Congress.

In addition to the President, I thank Secretary Buttigieg, who also reached out early that morning as the sun rose and who was one of the first boots on the ground by noon.

Secretary Buttigieg was initially responsible in making sure that the cleanup funds, the initial dollars, got appropriated and let right away. They were sent and are being used now in cleanup of the massive amount of debris, which I am going to talk about, which is almost unthinkable when you consider a bridge of that size.

Administrator Guzman and the SBA, we thank you and we thank all those SBA officials who came over and who started working with small businesses who are severely impacted by this, as was the case with Acting Secretary Su of the Department of Labor.

Now, one of the things that we believe is very important, and I think it is important to mention right now, is that the United States Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers immediately stood up a command team on the scene, immediately began working with Governor Wes Moore of Maryland, who, by the way, has done an excellent job in marshaling all of the State's resources. That command team, made up of the Coast Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers, the State police, the FBI, and so many others that were involved from the start of this, really has made a difference in terms of the progress that has been made thus far.