

family members who lost their sons and daughters, look them in the eye, and apologize for the mistake they made.

You see, Mr. Speaker, true leadership recognizes when mistakes are made. True leadership stands tall and makes sure that it never happens again. However, silence leaves everyone wondering: What will they do the next time that situation arises?

I hope that should there ever be another time, that we will have a different Commander in Chief, someone who truly understands how to protect, how to defend, and how to make America proud again when we send our sons and daughters into the battlefield.

Those mistakes will make America look weak on the world stage, and we know that they have. Our credibility with our allies and everyone we have ever made promises to has been severely damaged, emboldening our adversaries around the globe. Shamefully, our chaotic withdrawal has weakened the morale of our servicemembers and rightfully so.

When I served, I wore my uniform with honor. I wore it proudly because I believed in America, and I believed that the Commander in Chief would always have my back.

Today, I question that. I question where the loyalty is of those individuals who made those decisions on that day. You see, Mr. Speaker, those perilous days in August in 2021 will always remain a stain on that administration's legacy for the lack of leadership.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker. It is a stain on our flag. It is a stain that we must all endure only because they didn't have the courage and the understanding to do the right thing.

How do you explain to the family members that they lost their loved ones for no real reason?

How do you explain that?

This is why they refuse to even acknowledge the family members, because there is no explanation. President Biden and Vice President HARRIS cannot undo the damage and the pain that they caused, but they could speak honestly to the American people about the facts of this failure.

I urge them in the strongest terms to do that because the American people deserve the real truth.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for his remarks. He is an individual who has had a short time here and is respected in just a few short months. He has been one of the most studious and one of the most thoughtful Members that I have seen in my 3½ years, and I hope to be able to continue to find a way to serve with him. I am sincere about that, and I appreciate his heartfelt comments here tonight.

Again, I thank my colleagues for being here and taking time to speak on some of the most pressing issues facing our Nation.

Yesterday, Speaker Johnson posthumously awarded the Congressional

Gold Medal to the families of the servicemembers killed in a barbaric act of terrorism at the Kabul Airport in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021, including Staff Sergeant Taylor Hoover from Utah.

President Biden's decision to abandon Bagram Air Base and its equipment forced our troops into the impossible task of securing an urban airport while also conducting an impossibly complex humanitarian operation, all under an unreasonable timeframe and without coordination from our allies. The aftermath gave our enemies a window of opportunity of which they took full advantage. Three years later, the Taliban are in control of Afghanistan and are building stronger diplomatic ties to China, making deeper overtures to Iran, and they have enabled the resurgence of ISIS-K in their backyard.

I may be accused of regurgitating this information too much or we need to move on, and I still remember committing to a memorial service that a marine was lost from Utah to never forget and to always remember. That wasn't just a bad mistake. It had second, third, and fourth order consequences that we are going to be facing for decades to come.

President Biden has often said that our number one priority was to make sure that Afghanistan could never again be used as an operating base from which to plan terrorist attacks on the American homeland. The current situation, however, heavily indicates that we are failing in this objective.

I commend Chairman MCCAUL and his committee for their work on the report released this week that details key failures of the Biden-Harris administration during and after the catastrophic withdrawal from Afghanistan and its aftermath. Americans deserve answers for how this administration mishandled this crisis, and I am grateful for the committee's diligent work.

Additionally, we should all agree that the China challenge is not a partisan issue. Ensuring our competitiveness with China should unite lawmakers from both sides of aisle. This is the all-encompassing policy fight of our generation. It is not just a faraway foreign policy issue, but rather is one that directly impacts our economic prosperity and shapes the livelihoods of every American.

To that end, yesterday I joined Congressman WENSTRUP, Congressman PFLUGER, and Chairman GREEN in releasing a request for information to solicit feedback on policy solutions to strengthen and enhance domestic medical supply chains.

Congress has the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of our Nation and ensure our medical supply chains are free from dependency on foreign adversaries.

I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue and supporting my colleagues who have been sitting on the Select Committee on China and advancing

valuable legislation out of this Chamber.

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

THE PASSING OF SHELDON "SHELLY" GUREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great respect and admiration remembering the life and works of Sheldon "Shelly" Guren, a remarkable man whose legacy will forever be woven into the fabric of our northern Ohio community.

Shelly Guren's 99 years of life were a brilliant tapestry of excellence and service. Using the GI Bill, he had a distinguished career, but that followed his work in law school at Harvard University. He was an esteemed leader in the Cleveland area, and his contributions have been extraordinary.

He was brilliant. His investments in iconic sports franchises and his stewardship of the Great Lakes Towing Company demonstrate his far-reaching impact and deep commitment to his community. Most important, his word was his bond.

Beyond his professional achievements, Shelly was known for his integrity, generosity, and unwavering love for his family and friends. It was a joy to know him. When you met Shelly, Mr. Speaker, you knew you had met someone extraordinary. He taught Sunday school and was an outstanding leader in Cleveland's Jewish community.

His passing leaves a void in the hearts of everyone who knew him, but his legacy of leadership and dedication will continue to inspire us all.

To his beloved wife, Bonnie; his son, Michael; and his entire family, please accept our heartfelt condolences. Shelly's remarkable life and enduring accomplishments will remain a beacon of inspiration for years to come.

May he rest in peace.

SHELDON GUREN OBITUARY

Sheldon "Shelly" Guren, 99, died Aug. 16, 2024. He was born to Nate and Rose Guren on Oct. 25, 1924.

Shelly grew up in Cleveland Heights where he excelled in school and athletics. He graduated high school at age 16 and went on to Western Reserve University, now Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. After World War II, he used the G.I. Bill to go to Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Mass.,

where he met his wife Faith Golden, a student at Emerson College in Boston. He and Faith started their life in Cleveland when Shelly joined his uncle Henry Gottfried's law firm.

He practiced law the remainder of his life while also starting a real estate investment trust, investing in several businesses, teaching Sunday school and being a leader in the Cleveland Jewish community.

Shelly was intrigued by the state of Israel, with its "can do" spirit that in some ways matched his energy and optimism. He and his family spent months on a kibbutz where he helped to focus some of its business practices. He remained connected to that experience both emotionally and philanthropically.

He was generous, magnetic, bright and fun. He began a boating life with a 34' boat at Lakeside Yacht Club in Cleveland and parlayed that into a yachting life, mostly in the Bahamas. He thrived on hosting his friends for weekends living his dream.

He moved to Miami in the 1970s and spent the next 45 years commuting back to Cleveland to oversee The Great Lakes Towing Company. He loved the opportunity to be home and spend time with his best friend (his brother Homer), his sister-in-law Lois and the many other friends he cherished. He loved Cleveland.

Shelly leaves behind his wife, Bonnie, and her son Michael (Adrianna) Stein; children, Jon (Mary) Guren, Pam (Ron, deceased) Korotky, Timmy (Michael, deceased) Burnes and Laura (Sylvio) Rodriguez; grandchildren, Sara Burnes (Michael Sanky), Mike (Lauren) Burnes, Leanna and Jacque Rodriguez, Cylena Morse and Josh, Rachel, Skylar and Luna Stein; his five great-grandchildren; and nephews, Marc (Aliza) Guren and Clifford (Deena) Guren.

TOLEDO POLISH CULTURAL CENTER

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this evening I wish to highlight the noble efforts of northwest Ohio's Polish Cultural Center to preserve and celebrate Polish-American heritage in Toledo.

As Mr. Tom Pruss, an advisory board member, wisely observed: Every day that goes by, we lose more and more generations of people who know the reason for certain traditions and the reason why they celebrate their heritage.

Family ancestry deepens the meaning of liberty itself.

The center is working diligently to raise funds for a new building in east Toledo to serve as a cultural hub for the community. I know how hard Tom Sorosiak, a professor, has been working on that. As of July, members had already raised over one-half of the funds needed for the project, and former councilman in Toledo, Tom Waniewski, has been absolutely indefatigable in this quest.

In that same spirit of honoring our Polish cultural heritage, today I introduced a resolution alongside my Congressional Poland Caucus co-chairs recognizing this year's 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising.

This fierce struggle in Poland in the last century serves forever as a cold reminder of the savagery of Nazi and Russian attempts to annihilate Poland's very existence. In the end, at the cost of tens of thousands of lives, Poland lives.

Let us join together from Toledo, Ohio, to the Halls of Congress to ensure

that future generations can connect with their Polish immigrant roots, their struggles and triumphs over travesty, and never forget history. Celebrate our rich heritage at home and back in our native land.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the anticipated departure of Norfolk Southern Railway's chief executive officer, reportedly related to an alleged inappropriate relationship with a subordinate.

One could ask oneself: When did he have time for all of that?

This is just the latest evidence of poor decision making at the highest levels of one of our Nation's largest railroads that has a lot of problems that impact every community through which it travels. Frankly, giant railroad magnates need to be corralled in the public interest. Congress already knows that we cannot trust rail corporate leadership to exercise good judgment and take care of failing overpasses and underpasses in our communities. Particularly when it comes to rail safety, they fail.

In October of 2022, a Norfolk Southern train derailed in my district in Sandusky, Ohio. That is the photo there that I am pointing to. I have been privileged to represent it, but over one dozen cars were left hanging for months over an overpass on the main entry into a town that gets over 5 million visitors a year, spilling paraffin wax all over the roadway dripping down and damaging infrastructure.

Guess what, Mr. Speaker?

Norfolk Southern, despite endless pleas from the local mayor and government officials did nothing for months. They did nothing to clean up the mess until 4 months after that mess happened, when a Norfolk Southern train that also passed through our district derailed one dozen cars in East Palestine, Ohio. That triggered a massive explosion and fire which contaminated the air, soil, and water with toxic chemicals.

Rail safety bills were swiftly introduced in both Chambers in the wake of this latter disaster, but Congress has yet to pass the legislation.

Where are the committees in this place?

Are there all asleep?

The residents of East Palestine will live with questions about the disaster's effects on their health for the rest of their lives.

For their sakes and for the sake of all the communities in our Nation with freight rail tracks running through them, Congress must act now.

Railroads are not getting safer on their own. According to the Federal Railway Administration, the latest annual rail safety data reflect troubling trends, including a 41.1 percent increase, a nearly 50 percent increase in the rate for the human factor that caused accidents between 2013 and 2022. That is because the railroads aren't hiring enough people to do the job.

It is past time for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to mark up the bipartisan Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2024 and for Congress to make real commitments to rail safety.

It was only after East Palestine happened and we raised questions in the national press that Norfolk Southern sent two people back to the original site of the accident in Sandusky—two people—to begin cleaning up the streets and scrape up all that paraffin and try to prevent it from going into the city sewers and so forth.

I think there are real problems at these railroads, and I can't imagine why the committees of jurisdiction are waiting so long. Frankly, those people in East Palestine deserve a new town. Companies used to build new towns for people, and that is one place in America that deserves it.

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STRENGTHENING DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I now will turn to an important topic: strengthening domestic manufacturing of medical supplies. This poignant true story from my district illustrates the declining quality and access to USA-made medical supplies.

A female patient who is a senior citizen in my district has had to endure a permanent ileostomy for many years. The lifesaving procedure, a very difficult one, requires her to use ostomy supplies daily.

For years, she has had access to high-quality bags made of thin plastic material prescribed by her physician. These original bags were comfortable and suited to her critical medical needs.

She reached out to me with a distressing situation. As the months of her dependence on these critical supplies wore on, she faced a harsh new reality. Her physician informed her that because the new manufacturers had changed the product design, high-quality bags were no longer available. She had to accept less, but what we found out is ownership of the company had changed. A private equity fund sold the product to an offshore foreign investor that changed the design and quality. Indeed, the new bags were cheapened and very harsh for a patient to endure.

The new bags utilized a cheaper, thicker, and stiffer plastic. This design and fabric irritate the patient's skin and, at over 80 years of age, makes it difficult to cut each bag without causing sharp or ragged edges. This has led to more skin irritation, infections, bag leaks, burns, and skin rashes from the astringent she must use to avoid infection.

What about pain to the patient? All caused by the bags' unevenly cut opening and poor quality that damaged her skin. Imagine the discomfort each day and night, dealing with the pain as these bags fail through daily wear.

Unsatisfied, she went to several pharmacies to find the well-made original

thinner bags from a different manufacturer, but her insurance said no. Medicare said no. She could not access the bag most effective for her medical needs. She even wondered if they were still manufactured.

Refusing to accept this painful decline in care, I personally intervened. I found the original thin, flexible bags available, but only online. I ordered a case for her, but this only solves the problem for so long. Eventually, supplies for the preferred bags will run out entirely, and Medicare is not paying attention.

There are thousands and thousands of people like her across this country. This raises a pressing question: If these superior products are available online, why can't they be accessed through the insurance of an American?

This woman is a Medicare recipient. It is imperative that our system supports her and all our seniors who need proper, safe medical care.

This incident underscores the broader issues of our healthcare supply chain. We depend too heavily on foreign manufacturing where these medical products now come from. This exposes our citizens to vulnerabilities in quality and supply. This not only compromises the care of our citizens but also our national preparedness and health security.

In Congress, I have been a staunch advocate for onshoring and reshoring domestic manufacturing, including that of medical products and pharmaceuticals. Why should our citizens be forced to accept inferior, foreign-made knock-offs? It is cruel and, frankly, un-American.

Relying on foreign sources for medical supplies is also stupid, dangerous, and poses a danger if supply is interrupted, as we learned from the pandemic. America must regain our national security by reducing reliance on foreign manufacturers, and we must stimulate our economy by creating high-skill, high-wage jobs and reliable medical products.

Initiatives like those undertaken the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, BARDA, and the Defense Procurement Act are not merely temporary solutions. Overall, our Nation must launch a sustained effort to strengthen our domestic manufacturing capabilities.

Congress must prioritize legislation to empower agencies like Medicare and private insurers to prioritize quality in their coverage policies. We need to ensure that no patient is forced to settle for inferior care due to bureaucratic oversight or inertia, supply chain vulnerabilities, or selfish private equity companies. Our Nation must reshore medical supplies.

Statistics reveal that the use of inferior medical products significantly increases patients' risk of infections and complications. For example, studies have shown that substandard surgical supplies can increase infection rates by 25 percent. This is unacceptable, and I

say to those folks over at Medicare and Medicaid: Check out ileostomy bags. I bet the infection rates are really high.

As citizens become sicker—and lots more are, too—we continue to use inferior products. May the story I shared today serve as a manufacturing and medical call to action. We need a concerted effort to reclaim our independence in manufacturing critical health products and pharmaceuticals.

America must guarantee that every American has access to the best quality medical supplies and medicines without exception. The reputation and capability of our Nation surely depend on it.

COMPLETE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the 2025 Federal fiscal year is supposed to begin October 1, 2024, 20 days from today. Responsible Republicans and responsible Democrats are trying hard to complete the necessary 12 fiscal year 2025 appropriations bills on time as the deadline looms.

Our Nation needs regular order, not more delays, chaos, and goofy legislative tricks. Without reasonable action, uncertainty will prevail at the highest level of institutions on which our Nation depends for security and progress: Defense, Energy, Agriculture, Treasury, Transportation, infrastructure, healthcare, housing, Homeland Security, the Social Security Administration, and so many more, all jeopardized.

Delay jeopardizes funding America's promises to our veterans, our farmers, our first responders, and our teachers as basic functions of our government. All will be crippled across the board.

What hangs in the lurch is support for the American people, from kids in Head Start to wounded veterans trying to make appointments for their orthopedic exams.

Delay here in Congress cripples our economy. More needless shenanigans in Congress throw a monkey wrench into every Federal instrumentality created to serve the people of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us ask certain Members of Congress who cannot compromise in this Nation that leads the free world: Why do you choose to be obstructionists? Follow the simple rules of orderly government, and get the appropriations bills done on time. Do your job.

Post-COVID, our economy has been improving consistently. Interest rates dropped again today. Jobs are increasing. Wall Street is doing well. Inflation is being reduced. Debt as a share of GDP—hello—is shrinking.

So why would a handful of discontented Members choose harm when a vast majority of people in this Chamber want to make progress for the country? We need steady hands on the wheel. Let us do what our constituents sent us here to do: Govern.

The ramifications of a poisoned, partisan appropriations bill will halt hiring of Border Patrol officers, prevent contracting for Army Corps of Engi-

neers' dredging, close our parks, and stall emergency relief to communities devastated by recent natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, I say to some of my friends who can't seem to reach compromise: Do you really realize what you are doing?

Here we are, on the brink of another lapse in funding caused by political brinkmanship and shortsighted partisan antics unworthy of this institution's responsibilities. This is a time for leadership, not mischief. This is a time for succeeding, not retreating. This is a time for unity, not division.

Let us do our work. Let us pass our appropriations bills on time and with dispatch.

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

BORDER CRISES FROM SEPTEMBER 11 TO TODAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, as I come here to the floor tonight, we all recognize that today is September 11, a date that will never sound the same, a date that now means something totally different than it did prior to 2001.

We have seen the continued recognition of those lives lost. We saw it in New York today. We saw it in Pennsylvania. We saw it at the Pentagon. We saw the flag unfurled.

I give special recognition to my good friend, Senator Brian Birdwell, a State Senator from the State of Texas. A dear friend, Senator Birdwell was perhaps the individual closest to where the airplane hit the Pentagon in 2001, and he survived.

Senator Birdwell was burned across every part of his body. He was hauled out, taken to the hospital. He didn't think he was going to make it. He was praying. Assuming that he was leaving, he was saying good-bye to his family. He survived. He is a great patriot.

Mr. Speaker, if you have a chance, look up his video called "I Am Second." Senator Brian Birdwell tells the story—it is about 7 to 10 minutes, I think—and it is well worth your time.

It is a testament to his faith, and it is a testament to his patriotism. It is a testament to all those who went through those terrible attacks that day.

Those of us who remember them, we remember them personally, closely. We had friends who were affected, and it reminds us, of course, of what happens when we leave our country wide open for attack.

We look back at September 11, and we tend to get wrapped up in the horrors of the collapsing buildings, the horrors of a plane flying into the Pentagon, but we don't spend a whole lot of time talking about the fact that the individuals who carried out that attack overstayed visas to stay in our country