

At a campaign rally this past weekend, the current standard-bearer of the Republican Party actually stated that if one of our 31 NATO allies did not meet their defense spending goals, he would not protect them as President of the United States in honoring our obligations to NATO.

In fact, he said he would encourage Russia “. . . to do whatever the hell they want.” He would treat the surrender of millions of Ukrainian people as a transaction.

We must instead be guided by our own founding Democratic principles, enduring defense of freedom and human rights around the world.

Indeed, the House Republican leadership would also be wise to recall their own longstanding commitment to a strong national defense and embrace American global leadership as a bulwark against expansionist schemes undertaken by brutal dictatorships.

The Ukrainian people deserve better. They are defending their country against a relentless campaign of state-sponsored terrorism that the United States reports has killed more than 10,000 people.

“. . . people are at last free to determine their own destiny,” said Ronald Reagan, who also demanded of Putin’s President, Mr. Gorbachev, “Tear down this wall.” He was a defender of a free and democratic Europe.

I recently returned from a bipartisan delegation to Ukraine where I met with President Zelenskyy and examined the security and humanitarian situation on the ground. There is zero evidence that the Government of Ukraine is directing resources anywhere but toward its singular goal of preserving Ukrainian sovereignty and independence.

I urge my colleagues to support additional aid for Ukraine.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 42 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Send, O Lord, Your spirit to move among us in this place. Guide us into Your truth, a truth that is not of our authority nor bound by our place in time.

Reveal to us a truth beyond our every memory, greater than our best

knowledge, deeper than we can possibly imagine. May our hearts, our heads, and our wills be open to that which is Your truth alone. May we let go of our own designs, loose our certain grip on our desires, and yield to Your righteous plan for us and for all creation.

Great Creator, use this day to give us a fresh anointing to serve Your people. Life bestower, give us, in this moment, a new awakening to lay hold of the hope You set before us.

Eternal advocate, equip and empower us with the truth You reveal and uphold us with the strength You supply this day and always.

In Your sovereign name we pray.  
Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### EXPOSING WOKE KINDERGARTEN

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, at a San Francisco Bay Area school, only 16 percent of students were reading at grade level and only 8 percent were proficient at math.

The school spent \$250,000 in taxpayer money on a group called Woke Kindergarten to help boost test scores for some of the country’s lowest performing schools.

However, after 2 years with Woke Kindergarten, student scores are worse. Now, only 12 percent are reading at grade level and fewer than 4 percent are proficient in math.

There is more. The head of Woke Kindergarten is on record wanting “a world free of the U.S. empire”; believing space aliens are oppressed; and supporting “a free Palestine from the river to the sea.”

A teacher who questioned the program has been put on leave.

I wish this were made up, but it is real and, sadly, encapsulates so much of what is wrong with our education system.

#### BRING OMER NEUTRA HOME

(Mr. MOLINARO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the story of Omer Neutra, a Binghamton University student.

Omer is 22 years old. Omer’s friends and family describe him as a true American kid whose fun-loving personality shines the brightest when he is cheering on his favorite team, the New York Knicks.

On October 7, Omer was one of more than 240 men, women, and children who were brutally kidnapped by Hamas terrorists. He and 133 hostages are still held captive today, enduring unthinkable torture and trauma.

I join my colleagues in demanding that Hamas release Omer immediately, along with the remaining hostages. Those who have been released have shared horror stories of sexual abuse, children being forced to take drugs, and inhumane and barbaric conditions.

I continue to stand with Israel as it works to eradicate Hamas and free the innocent people wrongfully held by this terrorist group. It is time to bring Omer home. It is time to bring them all home.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA LEADERSHIP CREATES JOBS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, families in South Carolina have been negatively affected by the failed policies of Biden, with the highest inflation in 40 years destroying jobs.

Gratefully, in South Carolina, with the leadership of Republican Governor Henry McMaster, all statewide officials, and supermajorities in the General Assembly, budget surpluses have been achieved with responsible spending creating jobs.

The South Carolina Department of Commerce, led by Secretary Harry Lightsey, announced \$9.2 billion in investments with 14,000 new jobs.

This is in the tradition of Governor Jim Edwards, recruiting the largest Michelin facilities in the world, and Governor Carroll Campbell groundbreaking the largest BMW assembly plant in the world. Governor Nikki Haley saved Boeing jobs, and Senator TIM SCOTT, with President Donald Trump, developed opportunity zones.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years as the global war on terrorism moves from the Afghanistan safe haven to America. Biden shamefully opens borders for dictators, failing to enforce laws. We don’t need new laws as more 9/11 attacks across America are imminent, as warned by the FBI.

CONGRATULATING COAST GUARD  
CAPTAIN ZEITA MERCHANT

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

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month, I rise today to recognize U.S. Coast Guard Captain Zeita Merchant, commander of the Port of New York, based in my district in Staten Island. With the announcement that she will be promoted to Rear Admiral in the Coast Guard, Captain Merchant is making history by becoming the highest ranking African-American woman in the U.S. Coast Guard's 233-year history.

Throughout her nearly 27-year career, she has commanded maritime operations in Chicago, Texas, Miami, New Orleans, and New York, many times being either the first minority or the first woman to hold her position. In many cases, she was both.

On top of her workplace accolades, she has also received more than a dozen academic, community service, and military honors.

On Staten Island, Captain Merchant has overseen the busiest port in our Nation to keep our maritime commerce moving, stop the flow of drugs coming over our borders, conduct search and rescue missions, and protect our national security at sea. She has managed more than 1,000 personnel in 12 commands over an area spanning more than 6,000 square miles.

On a personal note, I admire Captain Merchant's dedication and commitment to protecting New York City's waters. She will be truly missed by me and our entire community. We know that she will make us proud as she assumes her new role here in Washington, D.C.

SECRETARY MAYORKAS MUST BE  
REMOVED

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, the case for impeaching DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is even stronger today than it was last week.

In the last 7 days, there have been tens of thousands more illegal immigrant encounters at our southern border. That is not from Customs and Border Protection officials. They don't release daily or weekly numbers. This is just based on what we have come to expect every month, every week, under his and President Biden's leadership.

There were more than 302,000 encounters in December, more than 9,700 people a day, and more than 400 every hour.

The case is also stronger because we know we are on track to break another illegal immigration record this fiscal year. Fewer than 5 months into the year, encounters have already surpassed 1 million.

Secretary Mayorkas continues to subvert Federal immigration law and must be removed from office.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE  
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, February 12, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 12, 2024, at 12:30 p.m.

That the Senate passed S. 709.  
That the Senate passed S. 1147.  
That the Senate agreed to relative to the death of the Honorable Jean A. Carnahan former Senator from the State of Missouri, S. Res. 553.

Appointment:  
Board of Visitors of the U.S. Naval Academy.

Senate National Security Working Group for the 118th Congress.

With best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,  
*Acting Clerk.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE  
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, February 13, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 13, 2024, at 9:05 a.m.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 815.

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 29.  
Appointment:  
Member of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

With best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,  
*Acting Clerk.*

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROY). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER  
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

UYGHUR POLICY ACT OF 2023

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2766) to support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2766

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the "Uyghur Policy Act of 2023".

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

Congress finds the following:

(1) The People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to repress the distinct Islamic, Turkic identity of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in northwestern China and other areas of their habitual residence.

(2) Uyghurs, and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities historically making up the majority of the XUAR population, have maintained throughout their history a distinct religious and cultural identity.

(3) Human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, and respect for the Uyghurs' unique Muslim identity are legitimate interests of the international community.

(4) The People's Republic of China has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and has also signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

(5) An official campaign to encourage Han Chinese migration into the XUAR has placed immense pressure on those who seek to preserve the ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions of the Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups.

(6) PRC authorities have supported an influx of Han Chinese economic immigrants into the XUAR, implemented discrimination against Uyghurs and other minorities in hiring practices, and provided unequal access to healthcare services.

(7) The authorities of the People's Republic of China have manipulated the strategic objectives of the international war on terror to mask their increasing cultural and religious oppression of the Muslim population residing in the XUAR.

(8) Following unrest in the region, in 2014, Chinese authorities launched their "Strike Hard against Violent Extremism" campaign, in which dubious allegations of widespread extremist activity were used as justification for gross human rights violations committed