

in Nicaragua with the government's approval. Throughout eight separate gatherings, more than 1 million people attended.

The Nicaraguan Government began arresting Mountain Gateway affiliated personnel shortly after their most recent service in Managua on false claims of money laundering. Thirteen Mountain Gateway officials are currently being held in prison with no access to legal counsel, no visits from their relatives, and no access to the allegations against them.

Beside me are pictures of a family that has been separated because of this catastrophe. The children, who are also U.S. citizens, are currently separated from their family due to the wrongful imprisonment of their parents.

The response of the Nicaraguan Government is unacceptable. While the current U.S. open border has allowed over 300,000 Nicaraguans to access America since 2021, the Nicaraguan Government has targeted numerous U.S. citizens to be arrested and extradited to Nicaragua and separated two U.S. children under the age of 3 from their parents.

As an American and a strong supporter of religious freedom, it is hard to grasp the reality that other nations do not have the freedom to worship in peace. I condemn the actions by Nicaraguan authorities against both Nicaraguan and American citizens for worshipping the God who created them, and I will be praying for peace and comfort for the individuals and their families until they are safely united.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FFA WEEK

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize February 17 through 24 as National FFA Week. President George Washington once said: "Agriculture is the most healthy, the most useful, and the most noble employment of man."

FFA members and alumni nationwide continue to look up to President Washington as a model of leadership and a champion for agriculture. For the past 76 years, we have celebrated National FFA Week during the week of Washington's birthday, February 22.

My roots in FFA run deep. The organization played a role in shaping me into the man I am today. I was a member of the Fountain Lake FFA chapter in high school and went on to serve as the Arkansas FFA State president. I now have the opportunity to serve on the bipartisan Congressional FFA Caucus, and many of my staff members are previous FFA members, State officers, and even a national officer.

At a time when the average age of a U.S. farmer is nearly 60 years old, agriculturists are looking to the next generation to fill their shoes. It has never been more important to give youth a seat at the table and enhance the agricultural talent pipeline, and that is where FFA excels.

I am proud to recognize National FFA Week to celebrate this incredible organization. May it be a reminder of

the great strides FFA makes in contributing to the future of agriculture.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BOB R. BROOKS, JR.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bob R. Brooks, Jr.

Bob was loved by many, a true family man. He was proud to be known as Uncle Bob to the light of his life, Ryan, as well as to Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin's children. He was deeply involved in the lives of his friends and colleagues, and many considered him a member of their family.

He graduated from the University of Arkansas and was a dedicated Razorback fan, rooting for the Hogs in every sport. Bob served as chief of staff for former Congressman Jay Dickey before returning to Arkansas to serve the Natural State in several ways, in both the public and private sectors. Bob was named chief deputy attorney general by Attorney General Tim Griffin in 2023. He deeply enjoyed golfing, horse racing, and traveling.

Bob was loyal to those around him and the State of Arkansas. I am thankful for his contributions to our State; but furthermore, I am thankful for his friendship. Bob's legacy will be felt by many for years to come.

#### INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I have a strong belief in the power of international trade agreements to make a profound difference. It is not just because 95 percent of the global economy is outside the United States. These agreements are necessary to raise standards, protect the environment, and to avoid the tragedy of the commons.

I have seen the global economy raise living standards in China, Africa, and India, Singapore being the most powerful example. However, there were decidedly mixed results with Mexico. The gap between theory and practice showed that the promise of NAFTA was overblown and that the critics were right.

Poor Mexican farmers could not compete against massively subsidized American corn, and U.S. workers could not compete against \$3 an hour Mexican factory workers.

Too much of American business was focused on financial and tax engineering, not actually engineering better products. They were gaming the tax system and extending patent protection, not winning new patents. The worst example was GE's downward spiral under Jack Welch's ruthless capitalism. However, I have been encouraged with the Biden administration's worker-centered trade policy.

I am proud of my work as the lead Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee dealing with international

trade, working to level the playing field, fighting to improve trade agreements.

We made major advances, for example, reducing illegal logging by more than 40 percent and providing legislation that was a model for other countries to help stem this damaging practice. Our May 10th Agreement provided enforceable labor and environmental standards.

I was pleased to help lead the effort to revise NAFTA to strengthen its environmental protections, worker protections, and the enforcement of agreements to protect these advances. I hope these NAFTA revisions will start a new era of trade policy, but it is time to push back against the Chinese.

I am tired of their two-tiered system where they claim to be a developing country when it works to their advantage while being an economic powerhouse, one of the largest and most powerful in the world.

We must fight to protect and strengthen the WTO. There is no substitute for our being engaged in Geneva along with 163 other countries. It is hard work, but it is worth it.

Finally, we must battle to have China honor their WTO commitments made three decades ago. I have a special concern about the de minimis loophole, a provision in our tax code that allows China to ship directly to American consumers \$800 or less in terms of product value. It is going to allow a billion packages into the United States economy untaxed, uninspected. We have 15 Republican attorneys general who have raised the alarm about this provision. We are seeing shoddy products made with slave labor. They are shipping fentanyl precursors directly to American drug dealers. It is time to stop that practice.

I have legislation that would close the de minimis loophole. I strongly urge my colleagues to cosponsor my Import Security and Fairness Act, which would stop these products flowing from a nonmarket economy on the watch list. Currently, that is just China, but they are the source of 60 percent of these 1 billion de minimis products. Doing so will protect American business, American consumers, public safety, and human rights. We can usher in a new era of worker-centered sustainable trade. The world is depending on us.

#### QUESTIONING PRESIDENT BIDEN'S MENTAL FITNESS

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

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, President Biden may have broken the law when he willfully retained and disclosed classified materials, according to Special Counsel Robert Hur's recent report.

However, Special Counsel Hur chose not to prosecute President Biden because the President's memory has such

"significant limitations" that could hinder the ability to convince a jury that President Biden held a mental state of willfulness that a serious felony requires.

Despite the special counsel reaching this alarming conclusion, Senate Majority Leader SCHUMER has said: "His mental acuity is great. It's fine. It's as good as it's been over the years," which has been echoed by other allies of the President.

Thankfully, the American people aren't buying it. Shortly after the findings of the special counsel were released, President Biden held an embarrassing press conference where he mistakenly referred to the Egyptian President as the President of Mexico. The President's mental acuity was on full display.

This is just another reason out of the many why House Republicans are demanding answers and accountability. The Tennesseans I represent deserve to know whether or not the President is mentally fit to serve in the highest office of the land. They also deserve to know whether or not President Biden and his family may have sold their influence and position in our government to the highest bidder, even to our adversaries.

That is why House Republicans have requested multiple documents and information from Special Counsel Hur's report to get to the bottom of these important questions. This information could potentially be a smoking gun in the impeachment inquiry investigation into President Biden, Hunter Biden, and the Biden family. It may also answer questions about President Biden's mental acuity. However, many of these questions have already been answered through the President's rare press conferences and media interviews.

Since being sworn in, President Biden has done just 86 interviews versus 300 for President Trump and 422 for President Obama at this point in their respective Presidencies, according to data collected by the White House Transition Project. Even worse, he has done just 33 press conferences compared to 54 by President Trump and 65 by President Obama. He even bucked national tradition by skipping out on a Super Bowl interview by CBS.

Madam Speaker, I may not agree with the President or those on the other side of the aisle on a whole lot of issues, but I hope we can all agree on how concerning this situation could be. If the President can't be held responsible for potentially breaking the law by mishandling classified information, then he has no business occupying the Oval Office.

Tennesseans can rest assured House Republicans will do everything in our power to conduct oversight of this administration, including the President's mental fitness for office because the American people deserve to have a President who is up to the task.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from en-

gaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1030

#### FUNDING FOR UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Madam Speaker, the time has come for the Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON, to make a decision.

Madam Speaker, 2 years ago, the Russian Army, at the direction of Vladimir Putin, invaded Ukraine, a peaceful Nation, a democratic Nation, an ally of the United States.

Putin's missiles rained down on schools and hospitals. His bullets took the lives of children and the elderly.

This is not the first time Vladimir Putin has invaded another country, slaughtering thousands of innocent people for no purpose other than his own selfish ambition. If he is allowed to succeed in Ukraine, he will not stop there.

We must continue to support Ukraine, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because if the United States abandons Ukraine, we endanger our own national security.

After the attacks on this country on September 11, more than 50 nations, including Ukraine and all of our NATO allies, came to America's defense in the war on terror.

The strength of our military is multiplied by the strength of our alliances, and if we turn our backs on our ally, we weaken ourselves.

This week, the Senate passed a bill that will give Ukraine the supplies and ammunition it needs to win the war.

Now, the decision and the fate of millions rests with just one man, the Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON. We know what will happen if Speaker MIKE JOHNSON calls a vote on Ukraine funding.

The bill will pass the House by an overwhelming margin. This is undisputed. It will pass the House by an overwhelming margin, and then the President will sign it.

American factories and workers will produce the ammunition and supplies the Ukrainians desperately need. Once again, America's industrial might will arm the cause of freedom, as we have so many times before.

When the Ukrainians receive that ammunition and those supplies, they will continue to use them to great effect and fight bravely as they have for the last 2 years.

We know all of this will happen if Speaker JOHNSON allows us to vote on the bill. If we do not vote on the bill, if Ukraine falls and millions of people have their freedom violently ripped away from them, and the light of democracy in the world glows a little less bright, and Vladimir Putin turns his menacing gaze to the democracies of

Europe, and dictators around the world rejoice that the United States has retreated from its position of global leadership, it will be because one man, just one man, Speaker MIKE JOHNSON, had the power to call a vote and didn't.

Madam Speaker, 77 years ago a young veteran named John F. Kennedy entered this Chamber for the first time as a newly elected Member of the House of Representatives.

In his book "Profiles in Courage," Kennedy predicted: "... in the days ahead, only the very courageous will be able to take the hard and unpopular decisions necessary for our survival in the struggle with a powerful enemy ..."

Now is the time for courage. History is watching. The cause of freedom and the hopes of millions are on the line. What will MIKE JOHNSON do?

#### VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA) FUNDING

Mr. MAGAZINER. Madam Speaker, we have a moral duty to help survivors of violent crime by ensuring that they have access to the care and support they need. That is why I rise today in support of robust funding for the Victims of Crime Act, also known as VOCA.

VOCA is one of the most important sources of funding for victims of crime and particularly survivors of sexual assault.

VOCA funds rape crisis centers, emergency shelters, mental health services, and forensic labs to process DNA casework and help law enforcement bring criminals to justice.

During my time as Rhode Island's general treasurer, I managed our State's crime victims compensation fund, which is funded, in part, by VOCA.

During those years, we helped thousands of Rhode Islanders recovering from violent incidents with healthcare, counseling, reimbursements for lost wages, and other expenses.

I am particularly proud that we helped more than 300 survivors of domestic violence relocate to new housing away from their abusers, no doubt saving lives in the process.

All of this was made possible by VOCA funding. Without VOCA, a survivor of domestic abuse may be turned away from emergency care and shelter because there aren't enough beds. These are necessary services.

As Congress prepares to consider the FY24 appropriations bills in just a few weeks, we must fully fund VOCA at the administration's recommended levels.

I urge my colleagues to stand with survivors, stand with children, and support robust funding for VOCA.

#### CONGRATULATING MADISON JENNINGS ON HER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate