

ranking member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, Congress over the years has created Federal programs that help the housing insecure, particularly veterans. Of course, to qualify for these programs, you need to have income under a certain threshold.

However, we have to focus on how to calculate that income level. Particularly, do you include disability benefits in the income of those seeking this housing? It is usually homeless people seeking the housing. I think that you should not, especially when the effect of considering that disability payment is to deny housing to a homeless disabled veteran.

Our Internal Revenue Code already recognizes that disability benefits paid to veterans are not to be considered income. At our urging, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has reached the same conclusion, at least for now.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to have statutory provisions that make it clear that disability benefits paid by the VA should not be included in calculating eligibility for veterans housing.

The reason for that is that we cannot assume that two people with equivalent incomes are living at the same level because someone who is disabled has additional challenges. That is why they are receiving the disability benefits.

Being disabled is expensive. It requires aides. It means that you can't get across town or go even a few miles to take advantage of a store that is offering goods at a lower price. Disability benefits partially compensate for the disability. They should not have the effect of keeping a homeless person or a person close to homelessness out of housing.

That is why our committee passed two bills to deal with this issue. Today, we deal with Congresswoman DE LA CRUZ's bill, which I strongly support and which I hope will pass unanimously here today. I am the chief Democratic cosponsor on that bill. That bill excludes veterans' service-connected disability payments from eligibility under the HUD Community Development Block Grant program.

There is another program that is dealt with by separate legislation, for which Congresswoman DE LA CRUZ serves as the chief cosponsor. That bill, H.R. 8340, is the Housing Unhoused Disabled Veterans Act. That bill, which I am proud to have authored, passed our committee, the Financial Services Committee, unanimously 49-0 and has over 101 cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone here today to vote for the bill that is before us today. I will point out that both that bill and the other bill that I mentioned have a zero score.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I believe both bills I mentioned here have a zero score. Both are overwhelmingly supported by our veterans service organizations, including the VFW, Vietnam Veterans of America, The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, U.S. VETS, and Black Veterans Empowerment Council.

We have two bills. Let's pass one today. Let's persuade leadership to give us a few more minutes of floor time so we can pass the other bill next week. We will get them both over to the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to calling Senator SCOTT and Senator BROWN to say these bills deserve to be fast-tracked and passed through the Senate right away.

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers and am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Today, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant program helps local communities fund housing and economic development projects that primarily serve low-income and moderate-income households, including many veterans.

Like many civilians, countless veterans are struggling to make ends meet while housing costs continue to rise. It is thanks to Federal housing programs under the Biden-Harris administration that Democrats have successfully reduced homelessness among veterans to its lowest level ever. It is thanks to Federal investments in the housing supply that the Biden-Harris administration has helped build more homes and slowed the rate of housing inflation compared to the previous administration.

Last Congress, Democrats successfully passed four housing bills into law. Meanwhile, as of today, Republicans have passed zero housing bills into law and have passed just one housing bill on the House floor before today, which would hike up mortgage rates and make homeownership more expensive.

Today, the Disabled Veterans Housing Support Act finally represents a bipartisan commitment to the Federal Government's role in housing and supporting our Nation's veterans. Indeed, it is because of our duty to secure the well-being and dignity of those who have served that no one in this Chamber can rest easy if they care about veterans.

Co-president Elon Musk is already eyeing massive cuts to veteran benefits, up to \$120 billion. I hope we will similarly see strong bipartisanship as we oppose those efforts next Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would like to take a moment to say what a proud moment this is. In the

crazy Halls of Congress, we can actually get some commonsense legislation passed off the House floor. I am confident that the Senate will see how important this small change can be in making a big difference specifically with our veterans.

Our veterans give so much to this great country, and I am so proud that we came together. I thank my colleague, Congressman SHERMAN, for working in a bipartisan manner to get this bill done. I know how important his bill is, as well. Ultimately, it is about our veterans and making sure that our veterans are not homeless.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7480, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. DE LA CRUZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7480, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONGRATULATING NWSL CHAMPIONS ORLANDO PRIDE

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the recent victory of the 2024 National Women's Soccer League champions, the Orlando Pride.

This incredible team not only secured the NWSL championship but also claimed the NWSL Shield, the first time since 2019 a team has completed both accomplishments.

They are the first professional sports team from Orlando to win a major league trophy, making history for my hometown and my district.

This victory is more than just a trophy. It represents the talent, grit, and passion of this diverse team of amazing women who have brought our central Florida community together in celebration.

Thanks to the Orlando Pride's success, Orlando's reputation as a top sports destination grows even stronger.

I congratulate the team. They have always been the Pride of Orlando. They are now the champions of the Nation.

#### WORK STILL TO BE DONE IN THE 118TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in

which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, as we begin our brief Special Order tonight, just to kind of highlight some of the things going on, House Republicans are working very hard through the end of the 118th Congress to push several pieces of legislation that deliver results for Americans and reflect on our conservative agenda.

This week, we are championing bills that support our small businesses and protect our schools from communist propaganda. Across the country, small businesses are struggling with burdensome red tape and Federal regulations. This week, House Republicans are bringing to the floor Congressman FINSTAD's Prove It Act, which will support our small businesses by enhancing the integrity and transparency of our regulatory processes, reduce red tape, and drive our economy forward.

We have seen this over and over again. The American people decided in November that they wanted to push our economy toward the upward mobility that we need, and the key aspect of this is making sure that we have the proper regulatory reform in place.

This is one excessively burdensome area remaining from the current administration, and we look forward to taking a bill like this and driving it to its fate and getting things accomplished in the coming months.

We are also supporting Congresswoman SALAZAR's Crucial Communism Teaching Act to provide civic education curricula and educational materials for middle and high school students about the dangers of communism and totalitarianism.

I am grateful for my colleagues for joining me this evening to discuss these important measures.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Florida (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Florida's 15th District is home to thousands of small businesses that create jobs, spur economic growth, and contribute to the cultural fabric of our community.

There are few things more inspiring than when I get to meet people in our community who had an idea to start a business or saw a need to be met and worked hard to make it happen. That is the American spirit at work.

For the past 4 years, small businesses across the country have seen firsthand the increase in new and burdensome rules, regulations, and mandates being handed down by the Biden-Harris administration, making it harder for small businesses to thrive.

Congress must do all it can to ensure that Main Street has the tools it needs to succeed and continue to support the American Dream, and that starts with government getting out of the way.

That is why I am proud to support H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024. Too often, small businesses are overlooked when it comes to analyzing the impact of new government regulations and mandates. This bill will strengthen current requirements for government agencies to consider and account for the impact of proposed regulations on the small business community.

Additionally, this legislation will increase small business owners' engagement in the regulatory process preventing further executive overreach and holding government bureaucrats accountable.

Mr. Speaker, small business owners deserve a seat at the table, and the Prove It Act will do just that.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), to share with us some of the key things we are trying to accomplish here in the waning days of the 118th Congress.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, we cover a wide range of topics here, and it is important that we discuss many of them with the public. Something that is an interesting trend these days and is lost in the memory or never even learned about by newer generations is the topic of communism.

What? Yeah. It is something that needs to be understood better because when you see polls out there that 28 percent of Gen Z view communism favorably—which shows a very fundamental misunderstanding of its consequences and what it is about—it is very alarming.

You have 19 percent of Gen Z that believes a dictatorship would be the best political system. With the rhetoric flying these days, the word "fascism" is thrown around so loosely or calling politicians in this country "Nazis," this is all cut from a very similar cloth.

For people to believe that a dictatorship or these types of—it is not even government, it is just flat power over the people. What it really boils down to, these trends are the result of a failure to adequately educate our youth about that history, about how brutal that history is. How did it come on board?

When you think about in Russia, the Bolsheviks, murdering the powers that be back in the teens of the last century in order to gain power, that is being lost on people these days.

Oh, communism sounds good. Even the word "socialism," well that means you are social, right? No. Think of Communism as being rooted in a very dangerous, very centralized government and controlling the people.

For example, here in this country, there are approximately 500 U.S. schools from K-12 that will host what is called the Confucius classrooms funded by the Chinese Communist Party. These programs promote the Communist Party propaganda. They whitewash the atrocities of communism and distort history to undermine American values.

Again, look at the amount of murdering that has gone on in the Russian era of communism, in the Asian areas, South America, and just off the coast of Florida in Cuba.

These programs are a deliberate attempt to influence the minds of young Americans creating a dangerous foothold in our education system and softening the whole idea of what communism really did mean. Teaching the truth about communism is not just about history, it is about safeguarding the future of our own form of government.

Civic education must include an honest account of communism's failures—the failures. Where has it been tried that it has really worked and provided the people with more freedom, more prosperity, more choices, more options? It hasn't worked anywhere.

They become more and more oppressed, poorer, much worse off quality of life, and end up attacking other countries that still do love freedom. By failing to address these truths, we are raising a generation unprepared to defend our freedoms and even our homeland.

This week, House Republicans are considering legislation by our Florida colleague, Congresswoman SALAZAR. It is called the Crucial Communism Teaching Act. The bill directs the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation to develop and provide civic education materials for middle and high school students to understand.

These materials will highlight the devastating consequences of communism, the importance of standing against these totalitarian regimes. It is not just an education as mentioned a minute ago. It is a national security issue and a moral obligation to teach our kids properly. I appreciate Congresswoman SALAZAR making this effort as a Florida Member.

Right next door, prime example, Cuba is just 70, 80, 90 miles or so from Florida. Why do people take boats and they fashion rafts and whatever means they can to escape Cuba and try to come to the shores of the U.S.? It is not because communism is popular and is giving them more choices and more freedom, is it? In so many cases, people are desperately trying to break out.

When Ronald Reagan demanded Mr. Gorbachev to tear down that wall between East Germany and West Germany, there didn't used to be an East and West Germany before that timeline, but on the heels of World War II and the occupation of that.

It required the Berlin Airlift just a couple years after World War II to keep those people sustained because of the Russian bear having taken over that portion of Germany when they completely misread what the treaty at the time was to keep Germany in line after World War II.

Instead, Russia took it as an opportunity to take it over and so many other, what had been free states, free countries in the area, Poland. They imposed all that. It wasn't willful.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Indeed, communism might sneak in, but you have to shoot your way out of it is what people have learned. In the case of this issue with Cuba right next door, 50-plus years of Castro. I am glad my Florida colleague can point this out because her own State has been the recipient of many people escaping communism and trying to have the life that we all deserve as human beings.

If we fail to teach these horrors to these next generations, we will dishonor the millions of victims who suffered under the regimes and the many soldiers that died on the field to try and push back communism.

We had so many suffer, over 50,000 losses in this country to try at some level to beat communism in Vietnam. Why should we waste those lives? Why should we not learn? Why should the next generation not learn? It was a poorly run attempt by the government at the time, but that should not be lost as we honor those Vietnam veterans and welcome them home during a time of strife that they were not always properly welcomed or thanked for something they didn't create.

We owe it to future generations to have them recognize and reject these oppressive ideologies. We, as Members of Congress, have a duty to ensure the truth prevails in American classrooms and in the media, and even with it said here on this House floor so that next generation will understand, and current generations, that sometimes think they want to vote in this sort of thinking into our government, into those who rule us or would rule us.

Mr. Speaker, indeed, our freedom is at stake. We should not take it for granted.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I will close as I reiterate, at the close of the 118th Congress—and what a historic Congress it has been—we are trying to finish this out with doing some of the core things that are necessary.

We are working hard on making sure our defense capabilities are intact. That will be something that we are highlighting for the next coming weeks, ensuring that we have proper funding opportunities ahead as those deadlines loom.

This week, again, two very simple, pragmatic approaches—and these should be wildly bipartisan—to be able to create transparency into our regulatory process and make sure that we are teaching truth to our children of the history of what made our country so great and the enterprise that has been able to drive that upward mobility in our economy.

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

#### HONORING REPRESENTATIVE KELLY ARMSTRONG

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

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this Special Order hour.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, we are going to have some comments from some friends of Mr. KELLY ARMSTRONG who is leaving us to serve as the Governor of North Dakota. I suppose I will kick it off.

Harry Truman famously said: "You want a friend in Washington? Get a dog." I am a big fan of Mr. Truman, so I assume that he was telling the truth. When I first got to Washington, I assumed that it would be easier for me to find a pit of vipers in Washington than a true friend.

I will be clear: There are plenty of vipers in Washington, but I discovered that there was also KELLY ARMSTRONG.

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I did not want to like KELLY ARMSTRONG. It just seemed a little too cute to have the Dakota boys run together, yet somehow, we just clicked. From the very beginning, we have been fast friends.

We were almost inseparable at the start, so much so that people would confuse us. They would think that he was me or that I was him, despite the fact that we don't look anything alike. I am suave and sexy, and Mr. ARMSTRONG is something else, perhaps.

Anyway, there was indeed confusion about who we were. I remember one day at the back of this Chamber where a distracted and confused Mr. ARMSTRONG came in and put in his card. This was our first week in the House, Mr. Speaker. He hit red, a "no" vote, on a Republican motion to recommit. The senior Greg Walden came up and said: Young man, I don't know who you are, but you are accidentally the only Republican in the House who is voting with NANCY PELOSI and the Democrats to kill this Republican motion. If that is how you are going to do business here, you are going to ruin your reputation.

A somewhat chastened Mr. ARMSTRONG changed his vote and said: Mr. Walden, thank you so much for telling me how it is. I certainly hope I have not ruined my reputation. Let me introduce myself. I am DUSTY JOHNSON from South Dakota.

That was my first but certainly not my last exposure to the idea that KELLY ARMSTRONG is laugh-out-loud funny almost all the time.

So many other relationships we have here are work relationships, and work relationships have a tendency to be one-dimensional—that is the gal you grab coffee with, or that is the guy you talk sports with. It is sometimes special when you get a relationship that isn't just a work relationship.

As KELLY prepares to depart for the greener pastures of the Governor's mansion, I want to talk a little bit about what he has meant to me, not just as a D.C. friend or a work friend but as a real friend.

There are four things.

First, KELLY has been my coach. He has made me a better Member because of his counsel more than anybody else here. He has understood my weaknesses, and he has tried to coach me out of them. He has done it almost every week. He said: DUSTY, you don't have to participate in every fight that you are invited to.

Similarly, he said: DUSTY, that is fine, but remember, in a knife fight, everybody gets cut, even you.

He has made me a better person, which is what friends do.

Secondly, he has also been my policy adviser. He is a great policy mind. When we have had complex legal issues, from sentencing reform to understanding what these contempt of Congress votes really mean, he spent a lot of time, Mr. Speaker, in walking me through them. He didn't benefit from that. He did that because he knew that I cared about the votes and that I wanted to be ready to cast the right vote.

Number three, KELLY has been more supportive of me than I could ever ask for. Literally every single thing that I have done in this town has been done because he has been behind me. He has pushed me. He has encouraged me. Do you know how unusual it is in this town to have people who aren't jealous of your success, to have people who want to see you do things rather than have them do things?

Even a few days ago, as Governor-elect ARMSTRONG could have been forgiven for focusing on his State and his future, he called me to say: DUSTY, what can I do to help?

In the last 6 years, there has been no one on the planet who has asked me that question more often than KELLY has: DUSTY, what can I do to help?

Number four, Mr. Speaker, KELLY has been one of the very best operators in Congress, and I have learned from that. He knows how to get things done. He sees around corners. He is a grade-A expert at what he calls the wet work of Congress so that his friends don't have to be.

This House has functioned better because of KELLY ARMSTRONG.

Mr. ARMSTRONG, as you leave, we will still cut deals in your absence, but they will not be as good, and cutting them will not be as much fun.

The common thread running through all four of these thoughts, Mr. Speaker, is selflessness. In a political universe that is dominated, and I mean dominated, by self-centered egomaniacs, it is shocking how much KELLY ARMSTRONG cares about me, how much he cares about us.

Some of our colleagues have the impression that I am the nice one and that he is the mean one, and I don't