

Yemen, forcing Israel to defend its citizens and its sovereignty from these relentless threats. It is crucial to understand that these attacks are not random acts of violence but part of a larger, more sinister and coordinated plan.

In each of these regions, there exists a militia backed by Iran. In the Gaza Strip, it is Hamas; in Yemen, the Houthis; and in Lebanon, it is Hezbollah.

Recently, with the fall of Assad and the regime in Syria, this very much will disrupt some of those efforts that Iran and some of their backers in Russia have been able to do in there, but the United States and our diplomacy must pay very, very close attention to how this is handled because many times when there is a vacuum like this, there can be even worse results coming in, such as what happened in Libya and Iraq.

We will have to grade this by what we see as possible new leadership coming in, but, indeed, be on top of that so that Iran doesn't get a stronger foothold in Syria again.

It is exacerbated by the policies of previous U.S. administrations because of the overall outcome we are seeing. These people are funded, supplied, and directed by Iran as part of a calculated strategy to encircle and weaken Israel.

Indeed, they do not want Israel to exist, and it is pretty hard to sit down at a negotiation table to come up with peace when they don't even acknowledge your right to exist as a nation.

Unfortunately, the lenient stances taken by Presidents Obama and Biden have only encouraged Iran and others in the Middle East to keep Israel firmly in the target sights.

Secretary Blinken recently warned that Iran is potentially within weeks of nuclear capabilities. This is not hyperbole. It is a direct reality. We have been hearing that for some time, so we don't know what that really means, but Iran has been working ever since the JCPOA to become a nuclear nation.

We are witnessing a comprehensive and coordinated assault by Iranian militias aimed at Israel. The intent is to strain Israel's defenses from every direction. We must recognize and respond to the true nature of this threat.

The National Defense Authorization Act being brought to the floor this week in the House takes decisive steps to strengthen our partnership with Israel in the face of these ongoing threats. Our partnership with Israel is critical for their existence but also for us, as they have been a great partner in the Middle East and there are so many innovations and things that we do together as countries.

The NDAA authorizes full funding for joint U.S.-Israel missile defense programs, like the Iron Dome, a defensive mechanism. It allocates \$47 million for cutting-edge technologies, such as anti-missile laser defenses, and commits \$30 million to dismantling Hamas tunnel networks.

As Iran continues its aggression against Israel, these measures reaffirm

our unwavering support for Israel's right to defend itself and its future and to exist. Together, we must ensure that Israel has the tools it needs to stand strong.

Our partnership is ironclad. It is important to both of us. It is important to Israeli existence, and even other Arab countries nearby have acknowledged that Israel is an important partner due to the success of the Abraham Accords.

If my colleagues ask Arab Israelis who live in the country if they like it better in Israel or would rather go back to something else, they like it better in Israel.

There is a lot of good that comes from that nation being able to stand on its own, as it has always been a beacon of light and opportunity for people who just want to play by a good set of rules.

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BIDDING FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

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

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the people of north Texas for trusting me with the sacred responsibility and opportunity to represent them for the last 6 years. It has been an honor of my life to serve the great people of north Texas, who I was born and raised among, and to have done it with so many great colleagues.

I was born and raised in Dallas by a single mom who was a public schoolteacher. It wasn't always easy for us, but because of our community, because of my family, because of my teachers, my coaches, and the good folks at the YMCA, I was able to make it. I played Division 1 football at Baylor University. Afterwards, I made the team on the Tennessee Titans and spent 5 years as a linebacker. I eventually went to law school and became a voting rights attorney, and I proudly served the Obama administration at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For the last 6 years, it has been my greatest honor to represent my hometown of Dallas and all the communities across the 32nd District from Dallas to Richardson to Addison to Mesquite to Garland, communities big and small across the DFW area. The folks in north Texas have always been my inspiration to get things done.

I am so proud of all the things we have done together. Working with folks in both parties, we secured the Garland VA Medical Center. It took over a year, but after countless meetings, phone calls, letters, and false starts and stops, we got it done. Together, we created thousands of good-paying jobs in north Texas and are helping to better serve our veterans and get them the care they have earned. This is one of my proudest accomplishments, and I will continue to support local efforts to invest and expand the facility.

We passed historic legislation that will help north Texas and the country for years to come: the CHIPS Act, the bipartisan infrastructure law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the pandemic relief legislation that helped save our economy in a time of deep crisis.

We lowered the cost of healthcare and kept the cost of insulin for seniors at \$35 a month. We invested in high-tech manufacturing, job training, and clean energy that is helping Texas create thousands upon thousands of jobs.

Because of our efforts, more Texans will have access to economic opportunities to enter the middle class and to live their version of the American Dream.

During my time in office, I made a point to introduce legislation that was focused on helping people. From voting rights to ensuring veterans can access their benefits to cutting red tape and helping government work for people, I am so proud that together we worked to pass 50 of the bills I cosponsored into law. That doesn't include the dozens of amendments, committee work, or administrative actions that we had a hand in helping to get done.

We ran a constituent-first office that was focused on cutting red tape for people and helping them get the services and help they needed from their government. From helping folks with Social Security to assisting veterans to helping our businesses, big and small, keep people employed, I am proud that we closed over 4,300 cases and saved Texans more than \$57 million. I am also personally proud to be the first Member of Congress to ever take paternity leave and to hopefully set an example for all new dads who will follow me.

Though this is the end of a chapter for me, I am reminded that our democracy is great because it doesn't begin or end with one elected official. It is not about one person. It never has been.

We are caretakers. We are guardians of the great American experiment and protectors of this democracy.

I know that Congresswoman-elect Julie Johnson will serve the people of the 32nd District with honor. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked with me over the years, people who I know will keep working in a bipartisan way to represent and deliver for their constituents.

I remember the legends and icons I have had a chance to serve with, Members like Eddie Bernice Johnson to John Lewis.

I also could not have done this without my wife, Aly, and my two boys, Jordan and Cameron, who have helped me every step of the way.

I thank my staff, who have been on my team and on my side since the very beginning. I am so proud that we have had one of the lowest turnover rates of any office in Congress. My dedicated staff are public servants who have

helped us serve people here in Washington and in Dallas.

This was always personal for me, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't just another district; it was the place where I was born and raised, where I went to high school, where my family lives.

Mr. Speaker, we served during a time of great uncertainty: a pandemic and an insurrection. There is more uncertainty to come, but I believe in this country. I believe in the people of north Texas. I know that God will continue to bless Texas and our great country.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS for her 20 years of public service in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Not only is CATHY the first woman Congress Member in history to give birth three times while in office, she is also the first woman in history to become chairwoman of the powerful and influential Energy and Commerce Committee. In addition, CATHY served 6 years in leadership as the Republican Conference Chair.

CATHY and her husband, Brian, and their three children attended the same D.C. church that Joe and I attended. I remember going out to lunch after church with them and having fun throwing snowballs with their kids. I will always remember CATHY giving Bibles to every member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, inviting me and others to Bible studies, and walking around the U.S. Capitol after votes praying with other Congress Members.

Mr. Speaker, CATHY has made a difference in this world and in the people she has touched. May God continue to bless her and her family. She will be missed.

RECOGNIZING LOU HRKMAN

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a member of my staff, Lou Hrkman, for his dedication and service to me and the constituents of Arizona's Eighth Congressional District.

Lou joined my staff as my energy policy advisor and brought with him decades of experience in the energy space, including experience on the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis and at the Department of Energy under President Trump.

Lou's expertise was key to my work on the Energy and Commerce Committee and his commitment to advancing sound energy policy was critical in the passage of my legislation, Hands Off Our Home Appliances and Save Our Gas Stoves Act this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, as I leave Congress, I have no doubt Lou will go on to do great things as he continues his public service. I wish him nothing but the

best in all of his endeavors. I appreciate him.

RECOGNIZING DANIEL STEFANSKI

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a member of my staff, Daniel Stefanski, for his dedication and service to the constituents of Arizona's Eighth Congressional District.

As Members of Congress, we know the importance of communicating our work to our constituents, and communications staffers are essential to this endeavor.

Daniel joined my communications team after a career that included service to other Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the former Attorney General of Arizona. He is a dedicated professional who is committed to helping conservatives effectively communicate their policy priorities to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Daniel for his hard work and dedication to me and to our team. As I leave Congress, I have no doubt Daniel will go on to do great things. I wish him nothing but the best in all of his future endeavors. I greatly appreciate him.

RECOGNIZING BOBBY BRAVO

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize someone whose service and dedication to both myself and the State of Arizona are unmatched, Bobby Bravo.

Bobby first came to work for me when I was serving in the Arizona State Legislature, and I was honored when he joined me on my congressional staff in Washington, D.C.

My longest serving aide, Bobby is a hard worker with a commitment to advancing the policies and priorities that make our Nation and State great.

A native of Mesa, Arizona, and a graduate of Arizona State University, Bobby never meets a stranger. Bobby is kind to everyone and treats everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of their position or party affiliation. He always has a smile for anyone he comes in contact with.

When I look back at my time in elected office, Bobby was such an important part of my journey, and I thank him for his service and commitment to me, our State, and our Nation. I greatly appreciate him.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CAN'T PASS AN AUDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEAN of Florida). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my opposition to the National Defense Authorization Act.

First, let me be clear, I support any funding to keep Americans safe, protect and fairly compensate our troops for their sacrifices, and to improve our national security. I also support some of what is included in this act: pay

raises for our servicemembers, expanding access to contraceptives for female servicemembers under TRICARE, and properly funding the replacement of poor and failing military housing and barracks.

However, it is simply irresponsible to give more money to an agency that accounts for half of our discretionary spending but can't pass an audit. This is an agency that spends over half its budget on defense contractors who have no incentive against price gouging, some who overcharge the Department of Defense by 40 to 50 percent with no accountability and no consequences. Year after year, we dump money into defense contractors that grow fatter while our servicemembers and their families struggle to scrape by.

Since the election, we have heard a lot of talk about improving government efficiency and cutting waste, and I agree. It is incumbent upon us to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, but instead of proposing cuts to Social Security benefits for seniors or cutting veterans' benefits to our servicemembers, benefits that they have earned, let's start where there are clear savings to be had.

In this NDAA, the Pentagon would get \$10 billion more than last year. Simply put, the Pentagon just failed its seventh audit, and it is getting nearly \$900 billion already. Why should we keep writing blank checks and expecting things to change when there is no incentive to do so?

Without robust accountability, all this is, is a transfer of wealth from hardworking American taxpayers to private defense contractors in the military industrial complex. Without meaningful oversight for how my constituents' taxpayer dollars are spent, I plan on voting no.

CONFUSING ZIP CODES CAUSE UNNECESSARY DIFFICULTIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOLINARO). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, currently in the United States, some municipalities have ZIP Codes that don't match the municipal boundaries, and it is a real problem.

Communities across southeast Wisconsin, including Somers, Mount Pleasant, Caledonia, and Franklin have dealt with this unnecessary difficulty as a result, so I rise in support of H.R. 8753 to fix this problem.

H.R. 8753 will direct the United States Postal Service to designate single, unique ZIP Codes for certain communities.

When physical mailing addresses differ because multiple ZIP Codes converge within one municipality, it causes real confusion.

Besides mail delivery issues, inaccurate address listings can cause delays in service response times, higher