

BUDDY CARTER is a healthcare professional as a former pharmacist, and I welcome him to share his thoughts.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mr. LAMBORN, for hosting this tonight. I also want to pay tribute to him for his years of service as a Member of Congress and let him know that he has been an inspiration to many of us here, and we wish him well in his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Bible Week and to share with you that I am actually reading through the Bible this year. I am almost finished. We only have a few more days left this year. I am almost there. I am in Revelation, Micah. One of my favorite verses is Micah 6:8. It is very special reading through it.

I think it is important to note that the study that I am using was given to me, the book was given to me, by the chair of Energy and Commerce this year, CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS. She gave it to us. I really appreciate her doing that. She, too, is retiring this year. I certainly wish her well. She has done an outstanding job as a Member of Congress.

I want to rise today in celebration of what is one of my favorite times of the year for several different reasons: Christmastime, a time that brings family, friends, food, fun, and football, all of those things, but it is important that we remember during this time the reason that we are celebrating this holiday, and that is the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is easy to get wrapped up in the hustle and bustle of Christmastime and to forget about what is most important. I am certainly as guilty of that as I am sure all of us are. The Christmas season is a great opportunity for us to remind ourselves and each other that no matter what happens or what we do, we are surrounded by the love of God. There is no better exhibition of this than the Christmas story.

We are all familiar with the Gospel of John, chapter 3:16, that tells us: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." This is one of the most popular verses in the Bible, and for good reason. It paints a clear picture of God's never-ending love for His creation, us.

No matter the sins that we commit—and we do—or how often we neglect the meaning of Christmas, God still loves us so much that He offers each of us a chance at eternal life. That is certainly a gift none of us deserve but all of us can have.

I hope everyone will join me in rejoicing in the love of God this Christmas season. I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Again, I thank Mr. LAMBORN for hosting this tonight.

God bless you, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2120

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his gracious words. He will be one

of the people I miss when I retire in January after 18 years of being here. There are so many great people I will miss, and there are things I won't miss, but there are some people I truly will miss.

Representative ALLEN mentioned Biblical prophecies being fulfilled, and there are hundreds of very specific prophecies that you can find in the Bible that were fulfilled exactly as foretold. It may have taken years for it to happen, but they were fulfilled exactly.

If you were to put odds on that, it would become astronomical that all of that could be the case as opposed to something that are legends and fairy tales that were just made up by human invention.

Another source of verification, validation of the Bible, is archaeology. Every time there is an archaeological discovery in the Holy Land, it validates the Biblical accounts. It never contradicts the Biblical accounts.

One example from a few decades ago was the Dead Sea Scrolls. Those were exactly word for word what other sources had said was the book of Isaiah, the Book of Psalms, other Old Testament Scriptures, and they were exactly the same. There was a validation there.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude. It has been an honor to present this National Bible Week this week, and for so many years in the past.

I thank my colleagues who were here. I am thankful for the word of God in my own life and in the life of this country, and in the life of my wife and children and grandchildren as well.

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

HONORING THE SERVICE OF REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER WEXTON

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

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to help manage the Special Order hour to recognize our wonderful friend who is now leaving us in the U.S. House, Ms. JENNIFER WEXTON. I rise with respect and admiration and love for JENNIFER.

Mr. Speaker, I first became aware of JENNIFER in December of 2013 when she won a crowded primary to succeed a State senator who had just been elected attorney general. I mostly saw her on local TV, these ads that showed up again and again.

That was a very cold month and a very special election. When she won, I was just starting this race for U.S. Congress, and she was a real inspiration to me at that very time.

A couple years later, GERRY CONNOLLY and I served with Barbara Comstock. We were a sometimes good, sometimes tense team from northern

Virginia, but we really wanted to take back the House, and we thought the best possible candidate to take on Barbara Comstock was this wonderful State senator from Loudoun County. I remember calling JENNIFER and saying, why don't you—not give up your senate seat, but jump into this race and take on Barbara, she has only been in for 2 years.

JENNIFER has the wisdom of a great politician and knows that timing is everything in politics. She said, no, absolutely not. Donald Trump went on to win that election.

Barbara Comstock went on to win it easily. Maybe a bunch of us got something started in her mind because 2 years later, there was a tough, six-way primary, with a number of very good women in that race, and JENNIFER prevailed in that primary, went on to beat Barbara with 56 percent, a two-term incumbent. JENNIFER has just been a delight and a great resource for Virginia ever since.

Mr. Speaker, she actually went to the University of Maryland, but we forgive her because she went to law school at William & Mary. She redeemed herself. I am very proud to represent her parents that live in Alexandria, Virginia.

She has a great husband, two sons. Somehow, contrary to the two-parent working families that we have everywhere in America, she was able to work it out with Andrew so that he would be the full-time caretaker at home for the kids, which is relatively unique in current American culture, but it worked beautifully. They got the right people in the right jobs.

I am also thrilled that for many, many years, I worked on campaigns against Frank Wolf who actually was a distinguished Member of this House, but I started in 1982 and Frank served for 34 years.

All that just goes to say that this district was founded in 1952 at the post-war expansion. Joel Broyhill won in 1952 and held the seat for 22 years. For 66 years, only 6 of those 66 years was that seat held by a Democrat; Joe Fisher was only elected in the Watergate landslide of 1974 and ousted in the Reagan landslide of 1980.

Then, after 66 years, finally, we get JENNIFER WEXTON who comes back, turns the seat blue, gives us great representation, and I believe she is the first Loudoun County Member in the history of the country ever to represent Loudoun County in the U.S. Congress.

I have loved working with her, as has ABIGAIL SPANBERGER, TIM KAINE, MARK WARNER, GERRY CONNOLLY, all of us have come together on northern Virginia issues, and on Virginia issues, to make enormous progress.

She is tough, but kind, and the toughness has really come out in the last year when JENNIFER first believed

that she had been diagnosed with Parkinson's. We saw a toughness and a resoluteness, but then when that diagnosis turned out to be much more serious, she called all of us to let us know that she wasn't quitting, that despite the, at least short-term, deterioration in her physical condition, she was resolute.

She was full of courage. She was full of commitment, and through these long difficult days, she has been here every single day, cast every single vote, been here patiently listening, contributing whatever she could, using the latest technology to speak up. With her aide at her side, she has been a vital part of this Congress through the super nuclear policy.

We hate to see her go. It is a great loss to this institution. It is a loss to Virginia not to have her in this body.

She wisely looked at the next primary, the primary to succeed her, looked at all the different candidates and chose one that she thought would best represent her, and I think most people would believe that he only won that primary because he was blessed by JENNIFER WEXTON.

We will all have more to say, but I yield to our dear friend and colleague from across the aisle, our just newly reelected Member from Virginia Beach, Congresswoman KIGGANS.

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of my colleague and friend, Congresswoman JENNIFER WEXTON of Virginia's Tenth District.

I first met Congresswoman WEXTON not here in the Halls of Congress, but when I was elected to the Virginia State Senate in 2019. I remember the day that she first came and visited us on the floor and how she went around the room, and shook hands with every member, all 40 of us that day.

While our time in the Virginia General Assembly did not overlap, her legacy of serving her constituents lived on in the chamber. When I entered Congress, I was elected as the second of three Jennifers to be elected to the 118th Congress from Virginia.

I have enjoyed serving alongside these other two Jens as a member of the bipartisan Jennifer caucus. Like so many in Virginia and across the country, I was saddened by the announcement of Congresswoman WEXTON's diagnosis in September of 2023.

While she announced that she would not be running for reelection in 2024, she fought against the odds to fulfill her commitment to her constituents and serve for the remainder of the 118th Congress.

She also became an advocate for her disease process and a loud voice, she brought awareness to so many of us here in the House of Representatives.

Members of Congress will oftentimes stand here on the House floor and talk of the sacrifices they make to serve their districts, but Mr. Speaker, you would be hard-pressed to find someone who has sacrificed more for her con-

stituents than Congresswoman WEXTON has over the past year and a half.

□ 2130

Rather than leave Congress to spend time with her family and friends in northern Virginia, she has remained here working every day.

Even when her physical voice left her, she got very creative, and with the help of technology, has continued to be a strong advocate for the residents of Virginia's 10th District with distinction.

The impact she left in Richmond and will leave in Washington is truly impressive and will be remembered by the citizens of Virginia for years to come.

I thank my friend for her eagerness to continue serving against all odds and for her years of selfless sacrifice to our Commonwealth and to the United States of America.

She will be missed by our entire Virginia congressional delegation, and I know that the Commonwealth of Virginia will be thinking of her and will be supporting her in the future.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for staying late and for her thoughtful remarks.

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the dean of the Virginia delegation, recently reelected by the steering committee this afternoon, and hopefully to be the next ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for organizing this Special Order hour and giving us an opportunity to say some nice things about our good friend JENNIFER WEXTON. She is retiring after many years of dedicated service to the Commonwealth of Virginia and our Nation.

Since joining the House in 2019, JENNIFER has been a relentless advocate for her constituents and a champion for equality, justice, and fairness.

Before serving in Congress, she was a leader in the Virginia State Senate where she led gun safety initiatives, expanded access to healthcare, and supported public education. Her legal background as both a prosecutor and an advocate for survivors of domestic violence still provides an important perspective to her service.

During her time here in Congress, she has fought for working families, reproductive rights, and transportation improvements. She has worked to expand broadband access, protect voting rights, and advance climate initiatives. During a time of bitter partisanship, JENNIFER has also focused on bipartisan cooperation in working across the aisle to bring people together.

Beyond her legislative accomplishments, her courage and resilience in facing her personal health challenges while continuing to serve her constituents exemplifies her strength, character, and grace. She is an inspiration to everyone who serves in this Chamber and many others across the country.

She has also placed a much-needed spotlight on the need for Congress to invest more resources in combating Parkinson's and other related neurodegenerative diseases.

As the dean of the delegation, I know as the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS) has just said, I know we will all miss her here in Congress, and I join a chorus of voices thanking her for her service, determination, and dedication to the Commonwealth of Virginia and to our Nation. Thank you, JENNIFER, for your dedication.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman once again for staying late and for his 32 years of service just in this institution not counting all the others.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), a force of nature and who many of us hope will be the first woman Governor in Virginia's history.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for the opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary work and the extraordinary example of our dear Congresswoman JENNIFER WEXTON.

I first had the experience of seeing JENNIFER when she was a State senator at an equal rights amendment event. I was a mom, a former public servant. I had just moved back home to Virginia, and I was at this advocacy day to see what was happening at the general assembly to see the good work of so many people who have become friends of mine.

I saw this woman with this beautiful, long hair and this effusive control of the room. She was talking about Virginia's role, and ultimately the goal that would be achieved, the goal of ensuring that Virginia became one of the States—at that time one of the final three required States—to ratify the equal rights amendment. Ultimately, Virginia became the last, the necessary.

I remember watching her speak full of vibrance and joy and humanity and humility, and I thought she is amazing. Little did I know that not only would she continue to be an example for me but that she would be a friend and someone who I would look up to throughout my time here in Congress.

What I know to be true about JENNIFER is she is an extraordinarily witty, sometimes sassy, and devoted colleague. For those who have the pleasure of knowing JENNIFER, you better know your facts, your details, your information, and be ready because just when you think you are having a serious-minded conversation about a serious topic she will come right into the conversation with her perspective. She is whip smart, and she is funny.

Even as this disease, this PSP, has taken her voice, for anybody on a text chain or anyone who is next to her and her technological devices, her wit is there, her wit is fierce, and it is extraordinary to see how she continues both to do the work for the people of

Virginia's 10th District but also to be a caring, focused peer and mentor to so many of us.

I am wearing this scarf today because while I met her many years ago when she was in the State senate, where we really became friends was when we were both running for Congress in 2018. This scarf shows so many of us who were on the ballot that year. There is a picture of JENNIFER right here with her gorgeous, long hair and bright smile that shows her as I know her to be right focused, thoughtful, and peering straight forward even in this drawing that is on a silk scarf. Her stare and her focus is clear.

Since the first day that we all arrived here, so many in our class didn't come from state legislatures, they came from a variety of backgrounds bringing different expertise, different types of passion to our work in the Halls of Congress, and at times it was JENNIFER who chose to kind of herd the cats of the class of 2018, making sure that we were getting some of the procedural language correct, making sure that we were kind of seeing the forest through the trees.

For me as a mother with three young daughters, our friendship grew as I have watched her navigate being a mother to two teenage boys, as we talked about the types of television commercials to do along the way. I saw her, I would say, essential minivan commercial which is like everything you ever want to see or need to see about moms and politics just getting it all done. I have been grateful for her friendship. It has been amazing to see you lead by example.

It has been amazing to see you fight for what you believe in. It has been amazing to see you live every single day full of vim, full of vigor and with deep, deep humility and a focus on serving others.

I want to continue focusing on all of your extraordinary bright spots, but I do think it is important to note that so many other people in your shoes, so many other people were they facing any type of challenge, let alone the health challenge that you face, would have made different decisions, would have stepped away. The fact that while you are in the fight of your life you have continued to fight for others, you have continued to be here day in and day out, you have continued to vote for your constituents, to work for your constituents, and lead by your extraordinary example, it means a lot to all of us. I know it means a lot to your constituents. I think you are teaching us all a lesson every single day that you show up and that you do the good work.

The team you have built and the extraordinary people who spend their days learning from you and learning with you will continue forward to do right hopefully by the Commonwealth of Virginia or in whatever other paths of public service they may pursue.

JENNIFER, as a friend, I am grateful for you. As a colleague, I have learned

so much from you. As a woman in politics and as a mom you have been an extraordinary example for so many of us. I love you so, so very much. I look forward to continuing to celebrate you into the future, and I hope that by the end of this week we actually get a CR done on time so you can begin enjoying your retirement, my darling friend.

□ 2140

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SPANBERGER very much for speaking from the heart, as she always does.

I want to put just a little more context into Ms. WEXTON also because Congressman SCOTT mentioned that she had been a prosecutor. She was actually deputy Commonwealth attorney for 4 or 5 years in the early 2000s, with a number of major cases to her credit that she had prosecuted.

When she got to the Virginia Senate, she was one of the real champions for the Medicaid expansion because we had made that possible, but it had to be adopted State by State. It was JENNIFER's leadership in the State Senate that made that huge difference. She especially fought for people with disabilities.

Interestingly, when she was elected in 2018, we are very proud that was the day that JENNIFER WEXTON, ABIGAIL SPANBERGER, and Ms. Luria, three Virginia women, took back the U.S. House.

She was the first Member ever to put a transgender flag on the door of her office. This is a difficult thing even today, but then it was spectacular.

Most of us here have been involved in suicide prevention for a long time. When you realize that perhaps 75 to 80 percent of transgender teenagers have major suicide ideation, this was a bold and very loving thing to do.

I am particularly impressed because JENNIFER came with Abby, her chief of staff, the only chief of staff. This is an office famous for very low turnover because they all are dedicated and devoted to JENNIFER. JENNIFER even graciously has given Abby to her successor. She will be here to keep the 10th District running well.

Most people don't know this, but she is a proud citizen, an American of Italian heritage. She was born Jennifer Tosini. In a place run by NANCY PELOSI for all those decades, this was a very smart thing to be an Italian American here.

Her birthday is May 27, which means probably once every 6 years, her birthday is on Memorial Day, which is a very good thing, a time when we memorialize everyone who sacrificed for our country.

JENNIFER, I don't want to give away your birth year.

She was born in those tragic weeks between the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy.

I know that you were just a baby, but I sometimes think that, on some level, that notion of being born into the her-

itage of two of the great public servants, the great martyrs, the great people who lived their lives to serve others became part of who you are all your life.

I think that BOBBY SCOTT probably said it best. You are a woman of strength, character, and grace. I think I speak for all Virginians, maybe all Americans, in thanking you for your wonderful, grateful years of service for the people of Virginia and for all Americans.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, before yielding back, I would like to point out that JENNIFER WEXTON did an eloquent, beautiful speech today in the Virginia House. It is available on her Twitter account or her X account, @RepWexton.

To all of you watching, please look at this speech. That will be so much better than anything that we would have said tonight.

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

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ON THE INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025, SUBMITTED BY MR. TURNER, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The following is the Explanatory Statement to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 ("the Act"), which has been included as Division F of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. The Explanatory Statement reflects the result of negotiations between the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (together, "the Committees"). The Explanatory Statement shall have the same effect with respect to the implementation of the Act as if it were a joint explanatory statement of a conference committee.

The classified nature of U.S. intelligence activities prevents the Committees from publicly disclosing many details concerning their final decisions regarding funding levels and policy direction. Therefore, the Committees have prepared a classified annex—referred to here and within the annex itself as "the Agreement"—that contains a classified Schedule of Authorizations and describes in detail the scope and intent of the Committees' actions.

The Agreement authorizes the Intelligence Community to obligate and expend funds as requested in the President's budget and as modified by the classified Schedule of Authorizations, subject to applicable reprogramming procedures.

The classified Schedule of Authorizations is incorporated into the Act pursuant to Section 6102 of the Act. It has the status of law. The Agreement supplements and adds detail to clarify the authorization levels found in the Act and in the classified Schedule of Authorizations.

This Explanatory Statement incorporates by reference, and the Executive Branch shall comply with, all direction contained in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (S. Rept. 118-181) and in the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Report to accompany the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal