

If Congress fails to act, it will go down as one of the greatest foreign policy failures in our Nation's history.

Let's be clear about where history will place the blame. If Congress fails to act, history won't be kind in the judgment that House Republicans surrendered Ukraine to Russia.

In the past, House Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. Congress have united and come together in opposition to Vladimir Putin's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. We have just seen 22 Republicans in the Senate willing to vote country over party on this issue. I believe there are Republicans in the House willing to do the same.

As we look ahead, House Republicans have a choice. Are they prodemocracy or are they pro-Putin?

House Republicans can choose country over party or Russia over the United States.

House Republicans can stand with our allies, or they can stand with Donald Trump and the pro-Putin wing of the Republican Conference.

House Republicans can either stand with democratic nations like Ukraine, Israel, and Taiwan, or they can bend the knee to authoritarian regimes like Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea.

The longer we delay sending aid to Ukraine, the more powerful Putin and other authoritarian regimes become. We can't abandon them in their fight for freedom.

That is why I am calling on the Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON, to bring the bipartisan, Senate-passed security package to the floor of the House for an immediate vote.

Now, many of my constituents rightly question the high cost of this aid package. Support for Ukraine and our allies is in our national interest. It is a national security issue for the American people. While the costs are high, we will spend a hundred times more money containing an aggressive Russia around the globe if we do nothing. We must stand with our allies. This will be a vote where Members will be forced to choose between democracy and authoritarianism.

As I have voted now for Speaker of the House 19 times, I have learned how incredibly fragile our democracy is. We must act now to pass a supplemental aid package and stand with Ukraine.

We can either stand with democracies like Israel and Ukraine, or we can bend the knee to Putin and other authoritarian regimes around the globe. Democracy should never be taken for granted. We must be vigilant and proactive to protect it here and around the world.

History is watching what happens next. Let's come together, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans, and stand with our ally Ukraine.

STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS SCHEME

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, we recently learned that the Department of Education would be shifting another \$1.2 billion in student loan debt from borrowers to the taxpayers of this country. This is yet another example of President Biden's administration abusing whatever regulatory lever they can find, every executive action he can think up to usurp Congress and continue this unjust bailout scheme.

Unfortunately, the scheme is working. In recent months, tens of billions of dollars in borrowed money are no longer due for repayment. Let's be clear. Student loan debt can't be forgiven. It is simply being transferred to hardworking American taxpayers, most of whom never went to college or took out student loans.

These tactics come despite what happened last summer when the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the Biden administration's previous student loan handout plan totaling more than \$400 billion. The High Court found, in laymen's terms, that a President cannot spend hundreds of billions of dollars with the stroke of a pen.

This is one of the most regressive ideas that I have seen in my time in Congress. It does nothing to solve the ballooning cost of a college education in this country. It simply adds to our national debt, which already, of course, sits at more than \$34.2 trillion.

We know that 43 million out of 255 million adults in the United States have some kind of student loan debt. We also know that \$1.7 trillion in outstanding college debt is disproportionately held by those earning the highest incomes in this country. It makes no sense for a blue-collar worker in Tennessee to be forced to pay off the college debt of a Harvard-educated doctor or lawyer.

We have the freedom to choose whether to pursue higher education in this country. You can choose to forgo a 4-year degree, as millions of successful Americans have done, but this administration would have you pay for the 4-year degrees of others regardless of your choice.

More than 100 million Americans have built a life without taking on debt. In fact, I represent thousands of Tennesseans who earn a good living without having borrowed money to do so. Why should they foot the bill for those who chose to go to college? This sends a terrible message to an entire generation of undergraduates and soon-to-be undergraduates. Perhaps more importantly, this unjust and wrong-headed action on the part of President Biden incentivizes universities to continue raising tuition with impunity because students can now borrow the money to pay these outrageous tuitions without having to pay it back.

Furthermore, possibly the worst aspect of all of this is that every college graduate and every parent of a college graduate who did the honorable thing by paying off their student loans, often at great sacrifice, is now being harshly

punished for having done so. It is also an ugly affront to the families across this country struggling to stay afloat amid record-high consumer prices as a result of Bidenflation.

There are already programs on the books to help those struggling to repay their student loans, like income-driven repayment plans, in which roughly 40 percent of borrowers are already enrolled. I urge the White House to end this cycle of adding billions to our debt with the stroke of a pen. Just as the Supreme Court determined last June, this kind of policy must be approved by Congress before it can be implemented.

WE MUST NOT ABANDON OUR ALLIES

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, for more than 2 years, the world has watched as Ukraine defends freedom and democracy and international law.

Disgracefully, this House has failed to pass additional supplemental aid to that effort for 427 days, more than half the length of this war.

Our inaction is an abandonment not only of our allies but of our values of liberty, democracy, and international law. We are the leaders of the free world, not by choice, but by necessity. We ought to be ashamed. We ought to be disgusted. Indeed, most of us are.

As our Congress sleeps, the enemies of freedom rain hell down upon the defenders of democracy. They do so with greater fury, thinking that this Congress will do nothing to stop them.

Recently, we watched Russian forces take back the city of Avdiivka. Putin's regime killed Russian opposition leader Navalny, silencing a heroic, principled voice against Putin and his criminal invasion of Ukraine. Yet Speaker JOHNSON brings no bill to this floor.

Ukrainian soldiers now face a 10-1 disadvantage in artillery. They report watching Russian forces approach and having to decide in the moment how many grenades they can afford to launch, how many shells can they afford to fire, and how many bullets can they afford to shoot.

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That calculation ought to be self-evident—as many as it takes—but it is not. The world is watching what is happening in the trenches of eastern Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine are watching what is happening on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. How can we rationalize that, that we stand silent without action?

The first question Ukrainian troops ask journalists who visit the front line is: What is happening in Washington? What is happening in the House? What is happening when the Speaker does not bring to the floor a bill to respond to the threats to us, to democracy, to freedom?

Ukrainians know that only America can provide them with the aid on the scale and timeline necessary to achieve a victory.

Elsewhere on the front lines, other soldiers told a reporter: You Americans have to decide whether you want to remain a global power.

Think in your heads as to whether we want to do that, for not doing so will cause great danger to the global community and ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, bring this bill to the floor. Let us act. The votes are here to pass that bill in a bipartisan fashion.

For the majority of Members, that decision is clear. We must help Ukraine, as well as our allies in Israel and beyond.

As I said, over 300 votes are on this floor to do just that—a bill to defend democracy, a bill to strike fear into the hearts of Putin and the axis of evil, a bill to restore America's reputation.

Speaker JOHNSON has been unable to handle this issue and fund our government simultaneously, but managing multiple priorities is the most basic part of his job.

It is disgraceful that the speakers from 23 parliaments, our allies, our friends, have written to us and said: America, America, America, respond as you have in the past to defend democracy, defend freedom, and defend the fighters for freedom.

It is disgraceful that they had to write us, but perhaps the Speaker needs that reminder. Leaders ought to lead, Speakers ought to speak up, and the United States Congress ought to stand united in its defense of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, history is watching at this pivotal moment. America ought not to be absent without leave. This is not a partisan issue. This is an issue for the leader of the free world—America. Let's act.

Mr. Speaker, bring the bill to the floor.

FAILED BORDER POLICY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am fascinated by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle being so fixated on Ukraine when our porous southern border, our U.S. borders, are causing so much harm to our American economy and losing American lives such as Laken Riley here most recently.

We have been fairly generous to Ukraine since their problems have started with Russia. Indeed, the amount of money they received is at least 20-fold more than what we are even talking about that would secure our own southern border.

Now we see President Biden will be chasing former President Trump down to the border—in reality, a desperate attempt to stabilize his plummeting poll numbers on the issue, but let's not be kidded by that.

Today's visit, much like Biden's first and only other visit to our southern border, will be basically a photo op.

He will be visiting Brownsville, Texas, an area of the southern border that, according to reports, has had virtually nonexistent activity in recent days, weeks, and months compared to all the other places along the border where you can see plenty of footage of tens of thousands of people coming across. Create a distraction here by going over there.

This is nothing more than a smoke-screen and an attempt to distract American people from his disastrous policies and the chaos he has unleashed at our southern border.

For the past 3 years, President Biden has not only ignored the crisis at the southern border, he is directly responsible for it.

Since his first day in office, he has worked to implement his own far-left failed policies which have basically turned every town in the whole country into a border town and destroyed countless American families. We then talk about this issue here on the floor since the media doesn't seem to want to cover that very well.

There are over 60 instances of President Biden and his administration taking actions that undermine our Nation's border security.

The first thing he did when he came into office was to get rid of the procedures and the policies that President Trump had put into place.

Yet, recently in the press, he is yelling at Republicans, saying: You need to back some of our border policies we are working on. Really? Put back in place the policies that already worked.

These eight items, he could do all of these without having Congress fund or come to agreement on a bipartisan fashion on any of them: end catch and release, reinstate the remain in Mexico policy, enter into an asylum cooperation agreement, end parole abuses, detain inadmissible aliens—wow, wouldn't that be something—use expedited removal process, rein in taxpayer-funded benefits for all illegal aliens—wouldn't that be a relief for families who are struggling—issue a proclamation to suspend or restrict entry in the United States.

Those are actions he could take on his own without having to battle through both sides of the aisle in both the House and Senate.

We would be happy to do that as Republicans. Republicans have been standing for these types of policies all along.

It all changed under the Biden administration. That is why we have suffered these last 3 years with the mass amounts of people coming across our border illegally and invading our country.

We know border security is national security. That is why the bill we passed, H.R. 2, earlier on is the right policy.

Yet, it is sitting there languishing under Senator SCHUMER and the Senate Democrats who won't bring it up for a vote or discussion.

Instead, they gave us a watered-down immigration bill that would allow 1.8 million illegal immigrants a year into our country with immediate work permits, benefits, and the ability to stay even longer, thereby codifying illegal immigration.

We are going to automatically concede 1.8 million can come in illegally without process, and we are going to give you stuff. Calling that a border security package and then reaming Republicans for not being for that, it is not even a funny joke.

Let's look at the numbers. Since Biden took office, there have been 7.2 million illegal crossings of our southern border; 8.7 million entries nationwide.

The total number of illegal immigrants who have entered through our southern border is greater than the population of 36 of our individual States.

Let's not forget about the terrorists. Mr. Speaker, 340 individuals whose names appear on the terrorist watch list have been stopped trying to cross the southern border.

So far in 2024, there have been 58 individuals whose names appear on the list who have been stopped trying to enter the border. How many haven't been stopped?

The total is more than the encounters in all fiscal years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 combined. That is how bad it has gotten to this point.

It is not just terrorists crossing our border. It is also Chinese Communist Party nationals. Mr. Speaker, 20,000 Chinese nationals have illegally crossed the southern border since fiscal year 2024 began in October.

Just last week, 22-year-old Georgia nursing student Laken Riley's life was taken. How many more examples like that have to happen because of Biden's wide-open policy and today's photo op? We must do better.

SUPPORTING A NATIONAL SECURITY SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on National Security, I rise to remind the House Republican leadership that actions speak louder than words when it comes to national security and America's defense of democracy and human rights worldwide.

In reference to the current migrant crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border, Speaker JOHNSON has repeatedly stated that "our national security begins at our border."

He has indicated that border policy would be the Republican hill to die on. He even insisted that the House would