

improve the makeup of a decision by having people who are one-quarter from different parts of the world.

#### RECOGNIZING GENERAL LLOYD AUSTIN

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay acknowledgment and have my colleagues recognize a medaled combat veteran in the name of our Secretary of Defense, and that is General Lloyd Austin.

Over the last couple of weeks, there have been enormous criticism of the nature of his health condition and the alleged communication or noncommunication in the chain of command.

I rise today only to be able to acknowledge the work of a soldier and one who has, through his years of service, continued to act excellently and with excellence.

With that in mind, I hope that all Members of this body will allow the process to proceed, will allow a person to achieve the health services that they need, and will allow respect to be given to a medaled combat officer who now serves this Nation as the Secretary of Defense. Let us do that for his family, for the Secretary, for the men and women of the military, and for this Nation.

#### APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST DECLASSIFICATION BOARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRECHEEN). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 703(c) of the Public Interest Declassification Act of 2000 (50 U.S.C. 3161 note), and the order of the House of January 9, 2023, of the following individual on the part of the House to the Public Interest Declassification Board for a term of 3 years:

Mr. Ezra Cohen, Chevy Chase, Maryland.

#### HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. CROCKETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, for the past 12 days, the people of Texas and those serving in this Chamber have been mourning the loss of a leader, a colleague, and an advocate for change—the late Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

She was a leader who never let political differences come at the expense of public service and regularly reached across the aisle to promote policies that advanced access to healthcare and helped our Nation dominate in technological and scientific innovation.

Chairwoman Johnson was a champion of bipartisanship, and from the Texas delegation to her colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, there are many people in this building that have benefited from her wisdom, experience, generosity, and mentorship.

I can personally say that the Texas delegation has a well-earned reputation for bipartisanship, and we continue to honor the chairwoman's legacy by finding areas where we can meet each other halfway to get things done for the 30 million Texans we are blessed to represent.

While I never served with her, I was humbled to be tapped by her as her hand-picked successor. This honor is and will continually be a reminder that I have big shoes—or in the case of the great EBBJ, a fancy pair of St. John's—to fill. She believed I could; therefore, I will. Her legacy will continually be held up by me all the days that I serve in this Chamber.

There is no better way to give tribute to the chairwoman than by giving space to some of her colleagues to speak about her life and legacy in the many ways she impacted the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Speaker Emerita.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for calling this Special Order in honor of the very special person that many of us have had the privilege to serve with—in my case for over three decades. She was so proud that Congresswoman CROCKETT would be following in her footsteps, so it is so appropriate that she is bringing us together now for this formidable force in public service.

Eddie Bernice Johnson sat in that chair reigning for the whole time. She reigned. We always went to her for guidance and advice. Not only did Eddie Bernice make history, Mr. Speaker, she did make a difference as the first African American and the first woman to wield the gavel of the powerful Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Not only did she make history and make a difference, she enabled our country to make progress. We marveled at the respect that she commanded in the scientific community, the academic community, in industry, from her constituents, and from her colleagues on Capitol Hill. The capstone of her career, our Chips and Science Act in her last term in Congress, will drive decades of scientific discovery while recruiting a diverse, inclusive workforce for the industries of tomorrow.

Indeed, she insisted on it. She insisted on investing in STEM education so American minds of all kinds could solve our greatest challenges, the challenges of our time.

Eddie Bernice was always talking about taking our Nation into the future. We chatted quite a bit—she was

soft-spoken toward the end but with great force. And we chatted and laughed about and admired what is written on the walls of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, a quote from the poet Tennyson, and it is so much about Eddie Bernice:

For I dipt into the future,  
far as human eye could see,  
Saw a vision of the world,  
and all the wonder that would be

She understood that wonder. May it be a comfort to her beloved son, Kirk; dear grandchildren Kirk, II, David, and James and her entire family that we mourn their loss. We pray for them during this sad time. We thank them for sharing Eddie Bernice Johnson with us in this Congress, but, more importantly, with our country. May our darling Eddie Bernice Johnson, whom we all loved so dearly, rest in peace.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our late former colleague, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson. I am honored to have served with and to have been able to learn from such a legend in our Congress.

She was a true trailblazer, becoming the first registered nurse to serve in this body. She was the first Black woman ever elected to public office from the city of Dallas when she was elected to the Texas State House and the first woman to ever lead a committee in the Texas chamber. She was also a Presidential appointee appointed by then-President Jimmy Carter as a regional director of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

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She then returned to the Texas Legislature as a State senator, becoming the first Black senator from the Dallas area since Reconstruction.

Mr. Speaker, she acknowledged the challenges of being both Black and a woman, once telling a reporter: "Being a woman and being Black is perhaps a double handicap. When you see who is in the important huddles, who is making the important decisions, it is men." That drove her to fight for equity and to give women and people of color more opportunity and access.

She came to Congress in 1993 and would later serve as the 17th chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. During her tenure, one of the things that she helped establish is the Tri-Caucus, represented through the coalitions of the Congressional Black, Hispanic, and Asian Pacific American Caucuses that exist to this day.

She became the first African American and the first woman to be the ranking member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and subsequently became the chairwoman of that committee.

Mr. Speaker, Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson helped many of us. As a young freshman, it was Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson who encouraged and pushed for people like me and Leader JEFFRIES to pursue leadership roles.

Today, I am honored to serve as chair of the CBC, and Leader JEFFRIES is our Democratic leader. It is that type of mentorship, that type of encouragement, that I will always hold dear. Like Representative CROCKETT, we will do our part to live out her legacy.

We truly miss Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, but she will be proud of the legacy she blazed, and we will honor her memory for generations to come.

Rest in power, Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman not only for taking the time to initiate this important discussion about our former colleague, the gentlewoman, Eddie Bernice Johnson, but also thank her for gathering together what I think is evidence of a solid performance that Eddie Bernice Johnson gave not just to the people of Texas, not just to the people of the United States Congress, but really to the people who all across the country benefited from Eddie Bernice Johnson's character, her desire to be friendly, her desire to work across the aisle, and her desire to make sure that she led a life that she would be proud of. I can attest to each of those in a strong way.

I had an opportunity to work with Eddie Bernice Johnson, the Congresswoman from the 30th District of Texas, for some 22 years. During those 22 years, we had an opportunity to fly back and forth. We would meet at DFW Airport and get on the airplane and come up. She did not offer small talk. She offered talk of things that she saw. She would offer talk and discussions about things that she would hope that we would become, and not just Texas, but people.

It was really an amazing opportunity for us, whether we were sitting, waiting for a plane, or on a plane and attempting to move back and forth, to hear not just the benefit of what I believe was an outward view of very positive things but really how she wanted to work together and do her part in that process.

She knew and I knew that I was born in Waco, Texas, and she was born in Waco, Texas. Another Member of Congress, Joe Barton, was also born and raised in Waco, Texas. I think she held that certainly in not just her mind but in her heart because she knew where she had come from and where I had come from, and we both knew where we were trying to head.

I thank the gentlewoman, Congresswoman CROCKETT, for bringing together Eddie Bernice Johnson's friends, who will all speak not just about her

authorship of good things but how we will miss her very much. I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me time to be on the floor tonight to say: Job well done, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson. You not only are but you will be missed.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the gentleman from Waco emphasized Waco, Texas, and I thank Congresswoman CROCKETT for bringing us together.

Our friend, our colleague, was mighty proud of being born in Waco, Texas. For that reason, I want to take note of her loving parents, Edward Johnson, a tailor, and Lillie Mae White Johnson, a stay-at-home mother. They, of course, instilled in our friend, our sister, the love of this country and that you could do anything you wanted to do. She was surrounded by their love and the love of her siblings. She had in her the gifts of faith and charity and the importance of education.

As a child, she knew she wanted to be a doctor, but how many have heard the word "no" from those who were part of her educational journey? Some said it was because she was a woman. Others knew it was because of her race.

Eddie Bernice Johnson was not to be denied. She left the State of Texas ultimately and went to St. Mary's College in Notre Dame. We have heard some stories about how even the veterans hospital thought they were hiring a man when she finally came back and became chief of psychiatric medicine as it relates to the Veterans Administration.

As I speak about her today, I simply want to say that she elevated the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. I remember staying on that committee for a while before going to the Homeland Security Committee, and she would always say that she will continue to invest in that committee so that she could lead, for she was science and technology.

She loved diversity. That is why the Taiwanese community loved her. The LGBTQ+ community loved her because, before anyone else would recognize their diversity and their humanity, she did. They loved her in Dallas.

No matter what walk of life you may have had, what faith you may have had, what walk of life you may have had, or the neighborhoods you came from, Eddie Bernice Johnson was there to be a fighter for your rights, to be a spokesperson, and to be one of strength when you needed it.

She knew the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Yes, she was a friend of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, President Jimmy Carter, and all those who came after.

I am glad to stand here today to be able to honor her parents, her siblings, and her wonderful son, Kirk, and the beautiful grandchildren and great-grandchildren that she loved.

Her homegoing service was simply that, a homegoing celebration. I remember saying that night that she was truly a yellow rose. To fellow Texans, she loved Texas. A yellow rose she was, and she was a strong Texas woman.

She will be strongly missed. The Congressional Black Caucus will miss her. Our colleagues will miss her. I will tell you, Texas and the Nation will miss our iconic friend, the Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson. EBJ is what we called her. The 30th District of Texas will never be the same, but she has given her successor the tools to carry on.

God bless you. May you rest in peace and rest in power.

Mr. Speaker, we have come together on this day to celebrate, cherish, and honor the extraordinary life of Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, for a life well lived.

Eddie Bernice Johnson was born in Waco, Texas to her proud and loving parents Edward Johnson, a tailor, and Lillie Mae White Johnson, a stay-at-home mother.

She was surrounded by the love of three siblings who grew up attending Toliver Chapel Baptist Church, where her mother instilled in her children the gifts of faith, charity, and the importance of education.

Eddie Bernice Johnson as a child knew she wanted to become a doctor but was told by a High School guidance counselor that it would be impossible for her to be a doctor because of her gender.

This attempt to crush her spirit was not successful—she graduated high school at 16, with a determination to pursue a career in medicine.

Eddie Bernice Johnson moved to Indiana to attend Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame, where she earned her nursing certificate. She then transferred to Texas Christian University, to successfully pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing.

She later attended Southern Methodist University and earned a Master of Public Administration in 1976.

Eddie Bernice Johnson with passion and determination used her nursing education to enter a career in medicine; and broke barriers to become the first African American to serve as Chief Psychiatric Nurse at the Dallas Veterans Administration Hospital, where she worked for 16 years.

Eddie Bernice Johnson has amassed a legacy of being—the first—to accomplish many goals during and following her medical career.

She entered public service following the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, because these laws enabled African Americans in the South to register and vote for the first time since Reconstruction.

Eddie Bernice Johnson in 1972, during her first race for public office won a landslide victory to serve in the Texas State House, where she became the first black woman to be appointed to Chair the Labor Committee.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed her regional head of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, making her the first African American woman in that position.

In 1986, she returned to elected office as a member of the Texas State Senate.

And, in 1993 was sworn into the House of Representatives as the Member serving the 30th District of Texas.

During her time in Washington, DC she served as ranking member and chair of the House Committee on Science and Technology; and sat on the influential Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

She also served on many Caucuses including the influential Congressional Black Caucus and served as its 17th chair from 2001 to 2003.

Rep. Johnson was a dear friend and will be truly missed by all who knew her.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to join my colleagues in paying tribute to the incredible life and career of our friend and colleague, Eddie Bernice Johnson.

When I walked into Congress as a freshman, Eddie was already here. When I walked into the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology as a freshman, Eddie was already there.

Those of us who worked with her know what an unstoppable force she was. She worked hard for her constituents, and she worked hard to advance American science.

One of her focuses was on building a better future for everyone, where everyone could pursue STEM, no matter their race, gender, background, or ZIP Code. That was not just because of fairness for those individuals but because our country, unless we are able to get all the smart young people into STEM, is going to lose out. She made a difference there.

There are countless rising generations who will see doors opened because of Eddie Bernice Johnson, even though they may not know that she did that for them.

She always referred to the Science Committee as the committee of the future. It was also the committee of an island of bipartisanship. I am now the ranking member of the Science Committee, and I can see the tremendous work she did with our current chairman to make sure that the committee was focused on our mission, just to get the work done.

I know the job she did was excellent because of the excellent staff that she built to carry forward her legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I miss EBJ. We can all think of her as someone who helped America have a brighter future. She was one of a kind. I miss her greatly, and I honor her.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I rise to celebrate the extraordinary life of our friend, our Texan, our true public servant, and as has been pointed out here, a trailblazer, the much respected and much loved Eddie Bernice Johnson, or EBJ, as my friend from Texas pointed out.

I had the honor of serving with her in the Texas delegation and on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, where she served as the chair-

woman. Before then, we went over to Europe on a T&I codel with her and her son, Kirk. I got to know her quite well.

Let me tell you, when you spend time, you eat and drink, you laugh and cry, and you see other places, you get to know people really quickly. It was an absolute pleasure to know her and her son, Kirk, an absolute pleasure, with the southern charm and the intellect that she had.

There was nothing that she loved more than her family, and she let that show.

Mr. Speaker, we lost one heck of a lady, a wonderful lady. My prayers are with her and her family, especially her son, Kirk. We are forever grateful to the trailblazer that she was—quite frankly, the trailblazer that she is and will be for a long time, never forgotten. We are grateful for her service to the United States and grateful for her service to the 30th District in Texas.

Eddie Bernice, you will be missed but not forgotten.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative CROCKETT for organizing this Special Order.

I am grateful to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to remember our esteemed former colleague, the late Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson. I expect to see her sitting over there, where she always sat.

Affectionately known as EBJ, Congresswoman Johnson showed tremendous leadership, and that is especially true on the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

I have been on the Science Committee since I first joined Congress about a dozen years ago. I learned a lot from her example of hard work, civility, and perseverance.

EBJ was a civil rights trailblazer, as we heard from Mr. HORSFORD.

She led with the philosophy that building compassionate relationships, fostering curiosity, and working in good faith can yield successful, long-term policies.

Her leadership left a lasting, positive influence on the Science Committee, which continues to shine as a refreshingly bipartisan body in this Congress today and should continue to serve as an example of collaborative work for years to come.

In the last Congress, as the committee chair, she oversaw the passage of the bipartisan Chips and Science Act, some of the most significant scientific research and manufacturing legislation the committee has ever passed.

I will be forever grateful for her support of several issues I brought to the committee, issues important to the district I represent, including ocean health, conservation of marine life, and investing in clean energy technologies that will protect our planet and address the climate crisis.

I share in mourning Congresswoman Johnson passing. I send condolences to

her family and friends. I know her legacy will live on through the many people she inspired and mentored throughout her storied career and through the legislation and policies she helped craft to help improve our country.

Colleagues, please remember, with open hearts and fond memories, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

□ 1730

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS).

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, during my first term in Congress as a freshman member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, we had a hearing at which we heard from a young woman researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who had taken the very first image ever of a black hole.

Congresswoman JOHNSON, my chair, Chairwoman Johnson, took us to places that no one has been. She was constantly reaching and asking for more.

In this term of Congress, I can't think of a time in which we have had a special order that has been bipartisan, but, for EBJ, we do, because that is who she was. When people were glad-handing and taking photos, she was cutting deals.

The Chips and Science bill that got done under her leadership—and I spent a lot of hours on the phone with EBJ on that one—I watched her mastery on how that was going to get cooked up, because we are the House, and we think it starts with us, but the Senate had their vision.

She changed my life. Her story is an American story, and it is an America-at-its-best story. Her legacy is profound, her friendships were enormous, and I will always remember what she taught me.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, a true American trailblazer, patriot, and real friend.

I am wearing the red, white, and blue heart pin she kindly presented me over 15 years ago. Her kindness was legendary. Her keen political judgment allowed her to cut to the quick.

She scaled above the walls of discrimination in her region, State, and Nation, devoting her lifetime to racial justice, advanced education, high science, and healing. An adopted daughter of our region, when southern schools refused her admission to study due to discrimination, she was accepted to seek a nursing degree at Saint Mary's in South Bend, Indiana.

She would become the first registered nurse in congressional history and the first Black woman to represent Dallas, Texas, serving ably for three decades and retiring as dean of the Texas delegation. She rose to chair the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, where she championed NASA,

as others have referenced, and issues of import for the health, safety, and well-being for all Americans.

May the angels carry her softly to her homegoing. May her loved ones and associates know they have been blessed by her life, as have we been, a life of fierce devotion to a more beloved nation and people.

Ms. CROCKETT. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma, Congressman LUCAS.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the opportunity to speak this evening on my dear friend.

Chairwoman Johnson came to Congress in the regular election cycle of 1992, and I joined her 15 months later in a special election, so for 28.5 years we worked together, most of that on the Science Committee.

After I finished my time as chairman of the Ag Committee, I went over to be vice chairman of the Science Committee, and then ultimately ranking member for the 4 years that EBJ, as I lovingly called her, was the chairwoman of the committee.

Eddie Bernice Johnson was an exceptional human being. She was, yes, a good Liberal. Yes, she was a good steward of her constituents. Yes, she was a great member of the CBC. Yes, she was an outstanding legislator and a member of Presidential administrations. But the thing that I admired the most was the fact that she was willing to give anyone the benefit of the doubt.

It took me a little while to convince her of our commonality, our common spirit, and our common goals, but then she worked with me hand in glove. She treated me and my side of the Science Committee as decently as any chairperson could.

Was she goal-oriented? Absolutely. Was she a great human being? Without a doubt. However, the one thing that would stress, in my opinion, the key to the intensity of that personality, after she had gone to Indiana for her advanced training, wherein after she developed that skill set, she could have stayed anywhere in any part of the country that at that time would have treated her dramatically better.

In spite of that, she went home to make a difference, to make changes, to do and enable the next generation. That is so admirable, and, yes, EBJ, my dear, wherever you are, you are looking down on us, and we miss you.

Ms. CROCKETT. Thank you so much, Congressman LUCAS.

I can recall when she first introduced me to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), and she had a genuine affection for their relationship, so I thank the gentleman for his kind words.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Houston, Texas (Mr. GREEN of Texas).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. I thank the gentlewoman.

And still I rise, Mr. Speaker. And still I rise to pay tribute to the Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, the first lady of Texas politics.

Yes, she has given new meaning to the name first lady, as the gentlewoman from Texas was the first Black woman ever elected to public office from Dallas.

She was the first woman in Texas history to chair a major Texas House committee, the Labor Committee.

Yes, she was the first African-American woman to hold the position of regional director for the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

She was the first registered nurse elected to the United States Congress.

She was the first Black person from Dallas to serve in Congress.

Yes, she was a first. She was the first woman to chair the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Mr. Speaker.

She was a history-making, glass-ceiling-breaking first lady who blazed huge trails in the sands of time, such that those who may traverse later will know that, where she was the first, she will not be the last.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman for her hospitality while we were in Texas for this funeral.

Today, I rise to honor the extraordinary legacy of Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, a trailblazer, a public servant, and a tireless advocate for her constituents. Congresswoman JOHNSON leaves behind a legacy that will inspire generations to come.

However, for those of you who may not know, EBJ did not die of natural causes. She died of poisoning after neglect by workers at a Texas rehab facility, resulted in her lying in her own feces and urine, which resulted in infection setting up in the back-surgery incision she was recovering from.

This was malpractice, but HB4, passed by the Texas legislature, limits damages in medical negligence cases to \$250,000. HB4, pushed by the giant U.S. Chamber of Commerce lobby, was passed to protect corporations from so-called junk lawsuits.

EBJ's life is worth more than \$250,000. Her pain and suffering alone was worth more than that. Her grieving family has more than a junk lawsuit. That is why the so-called tort reform that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce lobbies for is bad for consumers and good for corporate wrongdoers who put their patients at risk by cutting costs and failing to properly staff their facilities.

I thank EBJ for telling her lawyer to use her misfortune to help make things better for medical negligence victims by advocating for repeal on damage caps for wrongful death and pain and suffering.

Rest in peace, EBJ.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for giving

me the opportunity to speak on my mentor, my hero, EBJ, who, you see, when I arrived in Congress 11 years ago after the death of my father, the late Donald Payne, Sr., EBJ put her arm around me and said, everything is going to be all right, and whatever you need, I will be there for you.

So I rise today to honor a mentor, a trailblazer, and an esteemed former Member of Congress, Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Representative Johnson served the 30th Congressional District in Texas with distinction for 30 years, and she was the first registered nurse ever elected to Congress.

We hear of all the firsts, that our honored colleague was able to break through those ceilings. In the 1960s, Representative Johnson fought for minority women's rights, and her work inspired her to start a long and distinguished career in politics.

As we have heard, she was first elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1972. I have a picture that hangs in my office of my father on the rostrum, as freshman Members are allowed to take their picture there when they arrive here in Congress. My father is standing there at the podium, and right next to him is EBJ. So I am fortunate that I will have a memory of her every time I enter my office in New Jersey.

She really, on the personal side, looked out for us, gave us guidance, very quiet, but when she told you something, you understood that she was not playing around—that is for sure—and it was always to your benefit. You may not have appreciated it at the time or felt it was a little terse, but, in the long run, it was always right.

So I am here just to pay honor and homage to a great woman—a great woman, a woman that defied odds that were surmountable and was able to accomplish so much with everything stacked against her. She still was able to accomplish incredible things, and so I am grateful for my colleague—and I am not surprised—the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON, for keeping it real.

We need to understand what did happen to her, because it is a crime and a tragedy. After serving this country all these years and, in her retirement, having to suffer like that is wrong.

We will remember the good things. We will remember the parts about her that we loved.

□ 1745

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), who is from the other part of Dallas.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to sort of paint a picture for everybody about what Dallas, Texas, was like. Like most other cities in Texas, when Eddie Bernice Johnson came from Waco and decided to settle in Dallas, it was not a great place for Black people

to grow and prosper. It was very segregated, so much to the point to where if you were Black and you went into clothing stores in downtown Dallas, Mr. Speaker, you couldn't even try the clothes on.

Nonetheless, that didn't stop Eddie Bernice Johnson. When she had the opportunity from Stanley Marcus to go and work at Neiman Marcus, instead of being happy and content to have an opportunity to work at what at the time was one of the premiere retail centers in the entire world, Eddie Bernice Johnson decided that she was going to shake some trees to make sure that no one else had to live through that indignity.

She made changes when it came to retail in Dallas that led to the integration of stores and retail establishments in the city of Dallas.

She did the same thing in nursing where there were not any nurses of color who worked at the VA. So every step of the way when Eddie Bernice Johnson went into a room, she always made sure that not only did she break glass ceilings, but she blazed trails for others who were going to follow behind her.

She did the same thing in the Texas Senate. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, because so much has been said about the feats that she accomplished when it came to transportation, a lot of people don't realize this, but Dallas, Texas, has probably the premiere light rail commuter rail system in the entire South. Had it not been for Eddie Bernice Johnson who had the vision that, hey, this DART system can actually work and be something, it is hard to imagine that DART would be what it is today. I can remember when I was a small child, a lot of people thought that there was no way that you could connect Dallas County and the surrounding counties by light rail. They said that it was too spread out.

Nonetheless, Eddie Bernice Johnson knew better, and she became a champion for DART. That is why the downtown station is named after her.

We had regional disputes between our two airports, and Eddie Bernice Johnson played a very key role and ultimately helped work out a decision that has helped both DFW and Love Field grow and prosper and become two of the busiest airports in the entire country. That was Eddie Bernice Johnson who played a role in that.

When you think about where transportation is going tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, and where it currently is today, so much of the technology that is going to be needed to power the next generation of technology and the next generation of transportation, it was the Chips and Science Act and it was Eddie Bernice Johnson on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee who really put all that together.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to think about her career when she first got into politics working on the more traditional means of transportation and

the more traditional modes that we are all familiar with; and think about this new technology and how the new chips are going to tie in the old ways of how we move around and bring the new ways and empower America to a cleaner and better future of being able to move people. That was Eddie Bernice Johnson who played a huge role in that.

We can't say enough about this woman and what she did to overcome, stay focused, and blaze trails for so many other people. Her legacy will live on forever, and the people of Dallas will always hold on to her legacy and her memories because what she did was just absolutely amazing and worthy of all of the great things that you will hear about her this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Dallas for putting this hour together.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor the life and legacy of our dear friend and former colleague, the extraordinary and the honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson.

First, let me just send my deepest condolences to her loved ones. This Nation has lost a powerful force for good.

When I was first elected, I served on the Science and Technology Committee with Eddie Bernice Johnson, and one of my very first congressional delegations, of course, led by Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson was to visit technology companies in her district.

She was adamant about making sure that I, as a new member, focused on the inclusion of women and people of color in all aspects of science and technology which led to my forming the Congressional Black Caucus' Tech 2020 and now Tech 2025 initiative.

Nevertheless, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice insisted. She told me, as you probably have heard tonight and as she had always said: You have got to do the work. You have got to do the work.

Now, the global HIV/AIDS initiative, PEPFAR, which has saved over 25 million lives, was actually talked about and begun when Congresswoman and then-Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson was chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. She organized the first meeting with President George Bush. I will never forget. She asked me what I wanted to talk about at the meeting. I said that I want to talk about all these people in Africa and throughout the world dying of AIDS.

She looked at me, she smiled, and she said: That is what you want to talk to President Bush about?

I said, Yes, ma'am.

She said: Okay, talk to him and tell him what you think we should do.

The rest is history. That was the beginning of our discussions about the global AIDS initiative, but had she not

allowed me to raise that with President Bush, then who knows where we would be?

Again, the rest is history.

Her mark is on so much of what has been good, and that has been moved forward through this House of Representatives. She cared about all people. She cared about people of color, which was so important to her because she talked about our common humanity. That led her to forming the Tri-Caucus which consists of today the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. The Tri-Caucus has been a powerful force for good not only for communities of color but for our entire country.

Congresswoman and Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson's life was remarkable. I have had the privilege to travel with her all over the world, and she was greeted as royalty in many countries. I will never forget her forming her organization, A World of Women for World Peace. She would invite all of us to meet with these phenomenal women from all around the world. She wanted to connect women because she knew that we would fight for peace and security together throughout the world. That was her idea. That was her idea.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, we are going to miss her. Her legacy will endure in the lives of those she touched, but also her legacy will endure right here in Washington, D.C., throughout our country, and throughout the entire world.

As the Scriptures remind us, she fought the good fight, she finished the race, and, yes, she kept the faith. May her soul rest in peace and in power.

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks.

Mr. Speaker, she is a living legend. We lost her, but she will always live on in the Halls of Congress.

Leader JEFFRIES is unable to be here, but he tells a story that always makes me laugh. He talks about the fact that he and Chairman HORSFORD as freshmen were called in by Eddie Bernice. She told them: One of you all is going to lead the Special Order hour.

So they said: Okay. Yes, ma'am.

Of course, they did that. They did whatever she asked of them because she saw leadership in them probably before they saw leadership in themselves.

He tells the story about how they led a Special Order hour at the behest of Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Leader JEFFRIES always says that he could count on three people who would be watching: Steven's mom, his mom, and Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude this Special Order hour, I know that if there is one person who is watching as a freshman who had to do this job and lead her first Special Order hour, I know it is Eddie Bernice Johnson.

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

#### ISSUES OF THE DAY

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, in Washington, every time that you think you have seen it all and heard it all, you couldn't be surprised, amazed, disappointed, what have you, more than you already are, but it never fails to deliver.

I am going to talk about a few things this evening. I am going to start with this. I am a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I just attended a hearing on the Afghan reconstruction after withdrawal, so to speak.

So we left, as you know, Mr. Speaker, Afghanistan. Our Nation left there in a bit of a hurry. We won't get into that much, but what I do want to talk about is where we stand at this point because whether or not the American people know it, we are still spending billions of dollars in Afghanistan. So we had a hearing today to talk about that.

We have spent a couple of billion dollars. Now, at the same time we are spending billions of dollars in aid in Afghanistan where the Taliban rules, we have got a guy named Ryan Corbett who has been detained and held in Afghanistan wrongly by the Taliban. They are holding him hostage apparently among other Americans and Westerners who are being held hostage in Afghanistan. In spite of this, we are giving them billions of dollars in aid.

Now, the gentleman who came to talk to us is the Special Representative for Afghanistan and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs at the U.S. State Department. His name is Thomas West. He came to speak to us and answer questions about that.

I asked him: Well, how are we leveraging these billions of dollars to get Ryan Corbett out? Why would we give billions of dollars to this country?

We just had a 20-year war with them, and, unfortunately, the United States left without winning the war because the Taliban is now in charge.

I said: We give them a couple billion dollars a year here.

He said: Well, it doesn't go through the Taliban, it goes through non-governmental organizations.

That is a whole other story that we will get into, but the point is that we have American hostages in Iran—correction—Afghanistan. That is a Freudian slip because Iran is on my mind, too. That is another problem. However, we will stick to Afghanistan for a minute.

It seems to me that if they want a couple of billion dollars—let's be clear. We are \$34 trillion in debt right now. We just went to 34, and by May of this

year, we will be at 35. We are going to pay \$1 trillion in interest this year. That is no new tanks, that is no new social programs, and that is no new missiles. That is just interest. That is paying for money that has already been spent, and now that you have borrowed it, you get nothing for the \$1 trillion.

So it is a long way from \$1 trillion to a couple of billion dollars in Afghanistan, but those couple of billion over time add up, and the people whom I am representing are paying for that.

First of all, they paid a couple of trillion dollars for the war in Afghanistan for 20 years, and now we are paying billions more for what?

I said: When are you going to use your leverage to get this guy, Ryan Corbett, out?

In the course of the hearing, we learned about Afghan women and children, little girls, who can't go to school. They are oppressed, and the women can't leave their house, they can't get an education, and they can't work. They are being oppressed as we knew the Taliban was going to do. We told everybody that that is what is going to happen if you leave the Taliban in charge.

□ 1800

One of the folks on the dais asked one of these poor panelists: What are you doing about the mental health state of these Afghan women? They are depressed because of the circumstances they are in.

There was a lot of conversations about, well, we talk to them, and we are trying to work with them, and so on and so forth. I am listening to this like my head is going to explode.

When it was my turn to ask questions, I said: This poor woman here can't help these people, these women and children in Afghanistan, the lady that was sitting there testifying.

Afghanistan is a terrorist superstate, Mr. Speaker. It is a terrorist superstate with multiple terrorist organizations operating in the country with impunity.

We are spending a couple billion dollars there, and we are asking people who we are paying what they are doing about the mental health and depression standards of Afghanistan women and children. How absurd can this be?

I asked Mr. West if he could talk to me about the open-source reporting. Open source is not classified. That is what you can read in the newspaper, see on the TV, hear on the radio about this guy, Abdul Rasheed Munib, who reportedly traveled to North Korea to obtain nuclear weapons technology and collaborate with North Korea. What can he tell me about that?

He couldn't tell me anything about that because he didn't know anything about that. He had never heard of that, yet I see it on open-source reporting.

Shouldn't he know about that? He is the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Deputy Assistant Secretary. He should know.

I asked him about open-source reporting about the Taliban trying to take Pakistan's nuclear weapons. I would think that nuclear weapons in the Middle East with a rogue regime like the Taliban would be a security concern for the United States of America. I asked: What is the endgame to this billions of dollars going to Afghanistan? What is the mission? When does it end? Does it ever end?

Of course, I got some kind of long-winded answer that is circular and never gets anywhere. I asked: What is our national security interest in Afghanistan at this point?

He said: We have spent \$2 trillion there over the last 20 years.

I said: Stop. Please don't tell me we are spending billions of dollars to secure the \$2 trillion that we spent during our 20 years in Afghanistan because—I have bad news for everybody—it is gone. The money is gone.

Mr. Speaker, this is just another example of the fantasy land that is Washington, D.C., because the Taliban is in charge in Afghanistan after kicking the United States of America out after America spent \$2 trillion there—forget the \$2 trillion, a couple thousand lives in Afghanistan. Here today, in 2024, you are going to be expected to spend a couple billion dollars more in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, this can't continue. I will bet one thing, though. I will bet the Taliban controls Afghanistan's border. I bet they do. I will bet if somebody tries to get into Afghanistan that doesn't belong there, I bet the Taliban doesn't allow that.

I will move on to the next subject, which I think we are going to spend the bulk of the time on, which is the southern border of the United States of America.

Now, I am not advocating to hire the Taliban to come patrol the southwestern border of the United States of America, but it seems to me that we could certainly do a better job.

We just recently took a trip—and I say "we," Members of Congress, only on this side of the aisle. The other side of the aisle doesn't care to see what is happening on the border. I know some of them go as a token trip so they can act like they care about it.

While I am on that subject about caring about it, we are hearing today, in the last couple of days, about people here illegally in the United States of America residing in the State of New York. They moved them into a school and kicked the kids out of the school. The people in New York and the leadership of New York are saying this has to end. This is a crisis.

One of the States, I think, just declared an emergency. This is a crisis. We need resources. We need to deal with all these people who are here illegally. They are here, and we don't have what we need to deal with them.

Do you know what I am waiting to hear? It is quiet here on the floor, but I am waiting to hear, "We in the State