

Gerontology Advisory Committee to collaborate on strategies to better help seniors who have served our country age with grace and dignity.

However, advocates for those living in State veterans homes and those who provide nursing home domiciliary and adult care for our veterans are left completely out of the conversation. That is unacceptable and harmful to the long-term health of our veterans.

That is why I am introducing the Representing Our Seniors at VA Act to reform the VA's advisory committee and ensure a representative from the National Association of State Veterans Homes is included.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in this effort so we can improve the quality of care for our Greatest Generation living in assisted living facilities.

#### ENSURING ALL ISRAELI HOSTAGES RETURN HOME

(Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, after more than a year in captivity, 15 months of pain, fear, and horror, Israeli hostages are finally coming home.

The first three to finally return to their families' arms are Romi Gonen, Emily Damari, and Doron Steinbrecher. Relatives worked tirelessly to get their loved ones home, and I have had the heart-wrenching privilege of meeting with many of them.

Just last month, I met with Yarden Gonen, Romi's sister, and Aviva Siegel for the third time since October 7.

Aviva was taken hostage with her husband, Keith. Aviva was released between the pauses of 2023, 51 days later, but Keith remains in Gaza. He is expected to be released in this phase of the ongoing cease-fire.

After 15 months too many, Romi, Emily, Doron, and, God willing, 30 others will return home and then the remaining 70.

We must see this bilateral cease-fire through. We must ensure all hostages return home. God bless the people of Israel. God bless the hostages, living and dead. May they all come home soon.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

#### AMERICA FIRST POLICIES

(Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BIGGS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the body for the first time to express appreciation and exhilaration with the opportunity that sits before us now.

Last week, former President Biden addressed the Nation for the last time

in a speech that was filled with blame-shifting and praise for his administration that left us with nothing but empty promises and lighter pockets.

President Trump is now at the helm, and I am confident that with his administration, in partnership with this House and our Senate colleagues, we will turn the page with policies that put America First, win the border war, protect tax dollars, keep our promises that were made to our veterans, and defend our sacred values.

That is what my constituents want from this Congress, and that is what I intend on helping deliver in my service to South Carolina's Third District.

#### MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFER AND MORE AFFORDABLE

(Ms. SALINAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SALINAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to President Trump's unlawful attempt to end birthright citizenship.

The 14th Amendment clearly states that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are citizens of the United States. This law has been the law of the land for over 150 years, and it is core to our identity as a nation. Any attempt to change that through executive order is both unconstitutional and un-American.

As the daughter of an immigrant, I know the vast majority of immigrants work hard, pay taxes, own businesses, and contribute so much to our country's success.

I also agree that we need to secure our borders and fix our broken immigration system, but we can't accomplish any of that by relying on fear tactics and failed, inhumane policies from the past.

Instead, President Trump must work with Congress on serious bipartisan solutions that will actually make our communities safer and more affordable for everyone.

I am happy to work with the new administration to achieve that goal. However, if the President continues to pursue dangerous and harmful policies, I am prepared to defend the rights of my constituents.

Oregon sent me here to fight for them, and that is exactly what I intend to do.

#### RECOGNIZING PETAL, MISSISSIPPI, ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Petal, Mississippi, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary.

For half a century, Petal has been a vibrant and thriving community known for its strong sense of pride,

deep-rooted history, and outstanding contributions to south Mississippi. From its rich heritage to its remarkable growth, Petal has become a shining example of what makes our region so special.

As their Representative, I have seen firsthand the hard work and dedication of Petal's residents, leaders, and businesses. They have built a city that not only honors its past but also embraces a bright future.

This milestone is a testament to the resilience, unity, and spirit of this great community.

I look forward to seeing Petal continue to grow, thrive, and inspire for many years to come.

I congratulate Petal on 50 incredible years, and here is to the next 50. Thank you for all you do for the Fourth District of Mississippi.

#### PARDONING THOSE WHO AT- TACKED OFFICER BRIAN SICKNICK IS DISGRACEFUL

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick was born in New Brunswick and raised in South River, and he died in D.C. on January 7, 2021.

He succumbed to two successive strokes just hours after being pepper-sprayed by violent criminals attempting to stop the peaceful transfer of power and undo our democracy.

The men who attacked him just hours before his death, who were charged, tried, and convicted of assaulting a police officer, were just able to walk free. They were pardoned by Donald Trump.

Officer Sicknick made the ultimate sacrifice. Pardoning his attackers is an assault to his memory, an affront to his family, and a disgrace to the Constitution that he swore to uphold and gave his life to defend.

January 6 was a violent insurrection. We have proof. We have videos, and nothing will change that history.

#### SUPPORT AMERICAN MANUFACTURING

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I represent one of the heaviest manufacturing districts in the country. In fact, my family employs Hoosiers who build and fabricate products for our great American economy.

In 2017, President Trump laid out his plan to add rocket fuel to the American manufacturing sector. He enacted major tax cuts, eliminated regulatory red tape, and increased pressure on countries like China that have been eating our lunch for decades.

During Trump's first term, we saw businesses return home at a record

rate, supplying our country with a surplus of employment. You couldn't leave the house without seeing a "help wanted" sign.

Trump knows how to make businesses successful, and following his lead, we will make America successful again.

We need to support his efforts to de-regulate. We need to use every tool available to level the playing field. We must create an appealing business environment so that our great manufacturing companies can feel confident to grow here rather than looking abroad.

It is time to take pride in our abilities, our people, and the words "made in America."

#### RECOGNIZING RICK CARDINAL AND WENDI DAMM

(Mrs. SYKES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Rick Cardinal and Wendi Damm as Ohio's 13th Congressional District Champions of the Week.

Rick and Wendi are chemistry teachers at Barberton High School, and this year, they each earned the Gene Easter Award, which recognizes science teachers who demonstrate in their classrooms the importance of science and chemistry. They earned this award for their dedication to the Explorers Post, a program designed to inspire students to explore careers in STEM fields.

Ohio's 13th Congressional District has long been known for its scientific innovation, and Rick and Wendi are ensuring this legacy for generations to come.

Congratulations once again to Rick Cardinal and Wendi Damm on this fantastic accomplishment. I thank them for all they do to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians.

#### CELEBRATING AKERS MILL RAMP OPENING

(Mrs. MCBATH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the opening of the Akers Mill ramp project.

During my first months in Congress in 2018, I gathered Federal officials to speak about the importance of the investment in our State's infrastructure. In July of that year, my team was able to announce a \$5 million grant, the final funding needed to complete the project.

I am so proud that, working together, we were finally able to secure the resources for our project that will serve more than 100,000 commuters in my community and benefit all of metropolitan Atlanta.

I thank the Cumberland Community Improvement District, our partners in

Cobb County, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and our State and Federal officials who had a hand in making this project a reality.

I congratulate the entire Cumberland community.

#### HONORING JUAN PABLO DUARTE

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Juan Pablo Duarte, the founding father of the Dominican Republic, where I was born.

Duarte was an instrumental person in the war for Dominican independence. He fought for the ideals of a liberal democracy after founding the nation.

January 26 marks Duarte's birthday, and it is celebrated by the Dominican Republic as a national holiday.

Each year, I have the pleasure of introducing a resolution that supports the ideals of Juan Pablo Duarte, and I look forward to doing it again. This is one of several bills that I will introduce to mark the beginning of Dominican Heritage Month.

We look forward to the February 11 event here at the Hill, Dominicans on the Hill.

In February, we will remember Juan Pablo Duarte for all of his sacrifices.

"God, Homeland, and Liberty,"  
"Dios, Patria, y Libertad."

□ 1615

#### PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, step right up, and prepare to be amazed.

This is an ordinary folder. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, no hidden compartments, and yet inside it is an invisible rabbit.

If you like that trick, Mr. Speaker, then you are going to love Donald Trump's national energy emergency. It is also totally imaginary, but as any good carnival barker will tell you, there is a sucker born every minute who falls for this shtick.

Let's review the numbers. Under the Biden administration, the U.S. created 16 million jobs, had the fastest growing economy in the OECD, held oil demand flat, drastically cut coal use, and embraced cleaner, cheaper renewables and efficiency. We decoupled economic growth from fossil fuel giving American people more heat, more light, more power, and more money.

That put downward pressure on domestic oil and gas prices which caused domestic fossil producers to export into less developed and more remunerative overseas markets.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before you say: There is no emergency here, consider

this from the perspective of our poor oil and gas producers. They are losing market share. They are making less money. However, they have got an ally in Donald Trump. After all, he is the guy who forced the Saudis to curtail production in 2020 to drive up oil prices and oil industry profits. That is right. He made sure U.S. consumers paid more for gasoline.

Ta-da.

Don't be a sucker, but if you are, Mr. Speaker, I am available for parties, and I can solve all your invisible rabbit problems. You can keep hopping, Mr. Speaker.

#### COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE ELISEO ALCON

(Ms. STANSBURY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today with a heavy heart as we remember and honor the life and legacy of my dear friend and mentor, State Representative Eliseo Lee Alcon.

Chairman Alcon's legacy and passing leaves a hole in our community, but his legacy will live on.

A veteran, a judge, a State representative, a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Representative Alcon dedicated his life to public service and was rooted in our community.

A fierce advocate for the people, the economy, the environment, and our government, all New Mexicans across the State will miss him as we grieve his loss. Our prayers are with his family and everyone who loved and learned from Representative Alcon.

We will work to carry his vision forward and continue his fight to lift up our veterans and our military, our children and our elders, and all New Mexicans whom he loved so deeply.

Rest in peace, dear friend. We will miss you.

#### WILDFIRE CRISIS

(Mr. HARDER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because tens of thousands of acres are on fire in my State of California.

More than 10,000 families have no home to go back to. Nearly 30 people have already lost their lives in this disaster, and the numbers keep climbing. Tens of thousands will have long-term health issues from the smoke, all because our government failed California.

These mega-fires could have been prevented if our government had done its job. We have been yelling from the rooftops for years that our communities are in danger. We have a massive firefighter shortage. Bureaucratic red tape holds everything up, and our lands aren't properly maintained.