

Audrey and I mourn with the Hays community, and I continue to pray for them as they come to terms with this tragedy. We especially pray for Scott's wife, Beth; his beautiful children, Victoria and Patrick; and all his loved ones who he left behind.

The Bible tells us in Psalm 34 that the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. As the reality of Scott's untimely passing sets in, I ask that the Lord be close to his family, wrap His arms around this grieving community, and provide comfort.

I say well done to Sergeant Heimann. May he rest in peace. I thank him for his service and for giving the ultimate sacrifice.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH MONTH

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, this Thursday, America will celebrate National Rural Health Day. As a Representative of 60 primarily rural counties and the congressional district with the most critical access hospitals than any other district in the country, I understand full well the importance of adequate, quality healthcare for all communities.

Earlier this year, I proudly supported the working families tax cut, which established the Rural Health Transformation Program. This legislation made the single largest investment into rural healthcare in nearly two decades and will be life-changing for the men and women who call rural communities like the ones I represent home.

The \$50 billion in the Rural Health Transformation Program will better position rural healthcare facilities to embrace innovative technologies while improving the way healthcare is delivered, strengthening health outcomes, and ensuring the health of rural Americans reaches its full potential. The quality of care that Americans receive should not and cannot depend on their ZIP Code.

By investing in the Rural Health Transformation Program and putting safeguards around the Medicaid program to guarantee it serves the vulnerable patients it was intended to serve, this Republican majority has taken historic strides to strengthen rural healthcare. Rural communities are the backbone of America, and I am proud that I have supported this legislation to ensure that they have access to the highest quality care.

This National Rural Health Month, I recognize and thank the dedicated rural healthcare providers, hospitals, service providers, clinics, and community health centers that serve as pillars in providing health services and lifesaving care to Kansans in rural America and work to ensure that they receive the care that they deserve.

I ask that they keep up the hard work, and I thank them again for all that they do for their neighbors in rural America. Happy National Rural Health Month.

DEFENDING THE ARCTIC REFUGE

(Mr. VASQUEZ of New Mexico was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in defense of the frontier spirit that is core to the American identity.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote "no" on S.J. Res. 80 and H.J. Res. 131, two proposals that would forever alter the Coastal Plain of the Arctic refuge and the special areas of the western Arctic in the great State of Alaska.

Let me tell you a little bit about this special place, a place in which I have had the privilege to spend time. The Arctic refuge, the homeland of Gwich'in and the Inupiat people, offers unmatched, truly wild fishing and hunting opportunities for all Americans.

It is the only national wildlife refuge that protects an entire Arctic ecosystem, and it stands as a profound source of pride for this Nation.

These lands, the birthing and calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, have been at the center of national debate for more than a century, ever since Republican President Theodore Roosevelt established the National Wildlife Refuge System and dedicated himself to protecting wild places and the wildlife that depend on them.

These lands are where Americans hunt caribou, grizzly bear, and Dall sheep, where Americans trap wolverines, and where anglers can catch their first Arctic char.

Most importantly, these lands have provided sustenance to the Gwich'in and Inupiat peoples since time immemorial.

For the last century, bipartisan lawmakers, including both Republican and Democratic Presidents, have agreed to protect this place, safeguarding it from destructive development with a firm resolve and a desire to leave something behind for the next generation.

That same commitment to conservation has been carried on by bipartisan leaders in Congress for generations. Today, this tradition of conservation is being threatened by a careless proposal to roll back established protections for our wildlife, our waters, and our public lands, threatening indigenous livelihoods and sovereignty, the recreational and scientific value of these lands, and an iconic symbol of American wilderness.

I believe that, in this body, we must preach hope and possibility and that we must defend our values and the American way of life that has been meticulously built over centuries, and both parties must work together to protect the things we love.

These two proposals before you are misguided. This Chamber should not deepen the chaos it has already created. Instead, we should be working together to pass legislation that resolves land management conflicts and restores stability to our public lands planning system. We should also ade-

quately fund our land management agencies.

That is why, as a hunter, an angler, and someone who cares deeply about our Nation's incomparable system of public lands and wildlife habitat, I can't support the reckless destruction of the Arctic tundra and the Coastal Plain.

For the many private interests that have sought to exploit these sacred lands, it would be much easier if these species and Tribes never existed. It would be much easier for them if the last remaining musk ox hadn't survived the Ice Age or if the Porcupine caribou herd simply went extinct, just to add a few dollars to their pockets today without giving a damn about tomorrow.

The truth is, in my district back home in New Mexico, the Permian Basin is a domestic energy powerhouse, fueling America's energy independence and bolstering New Mexico's economy, but there are some places that ought to be left alone because their quality, history, and identity to us as Americans is far too valuable to be measured on a balance sheet.

Now, much to my dismay, this administration has already issued an executive order to rescind the Coastal Plain leasing program, and the Department of the Interior has already done just that.

Given that the administration has already taken action to overturn responsible management plans, these bills only make it more challenging to manage these special lands. It will also expose any future decisions related to oil and gas in the refuge to significant legal uncertainty.

This is a losing proposal. Simply put, it is bad legislation, no matter what side of the issue you stand on.

If, like me, you still believe in bipartisanship and revere the greats like Teddy Roosevelt, who fought to protect special places like America's Arctic, and you dream that someday you or one of your children can hunt wild ptarmigan on the Coastal Plain, catch an Arctic char on the Canning River, or harvest caribou in the Brooks Range, you should vote against these bills and honor the voices of the indigenous communities and American citizens who depend on this land for survival.

From New Mexico to the Arctic, people who live in small communities take care of themselves, and they want to keep it that way. Surely, anyone who represents a rural district in this Congress can appreciate that.

I encourage my colleagues to look at this landscape and examine these bills and their impacts before voting, to see the value of the Arctic and its worth to all Americans, not to simply brush this off as a party-line vote.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.J. Res. 131.

HONORING BRADLEY DAVID SCHENCK

(Mrs. FISCHBACH of Minnesota was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize and honor the life and legacy of Bradley Schenck, a devoted husband, father, marine, master sergeant in the Air National Guard, and law enforcement officer.

Brad served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps and the Air National Guard and dedicated 16 years to law enforcement, including a decade on the Red River Valley SWAT Team. His colleagues knew him for his courage, integrity, and commitment to keeping his community safe.

Nine years ago, Brad faced brain cancer with extraordinary resilience. He turned his struggle into inspiration, sharing his journey in his memoir "No Easy Way Out."

Above all, Brad was a family man. He leaves behind his wife, Sara; their three children, Colby, Bentley, and Mackenzie; his parents and siblings; and his entire military and law enforcement families who carry on his legacy of strength and hope.

Brad's life was defined by service, resilience, and joy. I honor his memory today and extend my deepest condolences to his family, friends, and community.

HONORING ED DE LA HUNT

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ed De La Hunt, a pioneering broadcaster whose voice and vision shaped northern Minnesota for nearly seven decades.

Ed and his wife, Carol, founded KPRM Radio in Park Rapids in 1962. His familiar voice on the program "Coffee Time" and his Sunday night music shows became part of daily life for countless listeners.

Beyond the microphone, Ed was an engineer, mentor, and builder. He trained and inspired generations of broadcasters. His dedication to local radio, his commitment to technical excellence, and his belief in the power of community storytelling left an incredible mark on Minnesota broadcasting. Ed leaves behind a legacy of service through the airways and through his family.

Today, I honor his career and the joy he brought to listeners across Minnesota.

CONGRATULATING HAWLEY NUGGETS GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Hawley girls' volleyball team on being the 2025 AA State champions.

The Nuggets came back from a two-set deficit to win 3-2. This year's win sealed back-to-back championships for this team.

On behalf of the Seventh District of Minnesota, I congratulate them and am very proud of this team.

RECOGNIZING MARSHALL GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Marshall

girls' volleyball team on being the 2025 AAA State champions.

This is Marshall's 10th championship, the most in State history, and the first program in Minnesota to win double-digit championships.

I congratulate the players and coaches on this huge accomplishment.

□ 1100

STANDING WITH TRUTH AND JUSTICE

(Ms. STANSBURY of New Mexico was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand with truth and justice, to stand with every survivor of sexual assault, and to demand the release of the Epstein files now. I say to the one man on planet Earth who has the power to do so, Mr. President, it is time to release the files.

Today, we vote on a resolution to release these files, but we have already subpoenaed them, and the President has refused to comply, engaged in a monthslong coverup right before our very eyes, threatening and pressuring Members of Congress, and even calling his own allies traitors, and this legislation a hostile act.

Well, Mr. President, the irony is not lost on us that such desperate attempts to evade accountability are at the heart of the matter itself, as the Epstein case is, at its core—its dirty, rotten core—about rich and powerful men who abuse the system to avoid accountability and who engaged in unspeakable crimes and believed that they could do anything to any woman or any little girl and get away with it because they knew their friends in powerful places would protect them or they could simply buy their way out of the justice system.

Well, we are here today to stand up with the survivors and say: Time is up. We demand accountability.

Now, it is also not lost on me that I am standing in this Chamber, in this seat of power from which wars have been launched and the fates of millions have hung, a Chamber where in the nearly 250 years of this great Nation, only 3 percent of the people who have ever stood here on this floor have been women. That is why we must stand up, why we must demand accountability, why we are not saying "pretty please." We are engaged in a criminal investigation of criminal behavior in a justice system that has failed women and girls who were raped and who were abused and of the powerful people who never were held to account.

We are not, Mr. President, as you have asked us, just going to move on. We will continue to pursue justice to the end.

Let me tell you about this investigation, about the evidence that has come in just in the last week from documents produced by the Epstein estate, including over 1,600 mentions of you,

Mr. President. There are emails, court documents, and statements about a lawsuit by a woman accusing Donald Trump of rape at Jeffrey Epstein's house, whether it happened or not. There is a sexual assault suit against Epstein in which Donald Trump appears to have been subpoenaed, served, and deposed. There are sworn statements and court documents from a 16-year-old who was recruited at Mar-a-Lago and then raped and groomed, not only by Jeffrey Epstein, but his rich and powerful friends.

There were statements from Epstein himself, who said Trump knew about the girls. In fact, Trump, by his own admission, knew that Epstein and Maxwell were recruiting young girls from Mar-a-Lago. There were also statements that Trump was at Epstein's house, including with girls, in which Epstein bragged about having pictures and passing a woman to Trump, and noted that Trump spent hours with one of the victims and was the "dog that hasn't barked."

These files also include financial transactions between Epstein and Trump. There are discussions of financial affairs, potential money laundering, including in real estate deals. There was also an admission by Jeffrey Epstein himself that he was facing a mandatory minimum of 10 years in Federal prison, yet the DOJ failed to prosecute him. There are statements by Epstein that he believes that Donald Trump was involved in the case.

I say to the American people: There is a mountain of evidence in front of your very eyes. Believe your eyes. It is right there in front of us.

Mr. President, let me say this to you: You can run, but you cannot hide because the survivors know what happened.

To every woman and little girl who has wept or felt shame or believed that you were alone or that the system had failed you, to every parent who has feared the absolute worst, and to every survivor who believed the system was rigged against them, know that you are not alone. We see you. We are fighting for you, and we will not stop.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair rather than a perceived viewing audience and to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 4 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MORAN) at noon.