EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING DAN HALL

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Dan Hall, as he prepares for retirement after more than 36 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Dan is the Chief Clerk of Committees for the Office of Official Reporters, who serves as the chief liaison between the Official Reporters and House committees, in the House Clerk's Office. Dan's office provides stenographic and transcription services to House committees, ensuring an accurate record of everything said and done during hearings and legislative markups.

Dan started working with the Clerk of the House in January 1990. Dan has served as Chief Committee Clerk since 2001 and has worked under eight different Clerks of the House and eight different Speakers of the House.

Early in his career, Dan oversaw the transition from typing transcripts from stenographic notes to the computer-aided translation software that is currently used. Some of his current responsibilities include managing the committee editors' team, managing the committee transcripts workflow, and assisting in the overall scheduling of committee assignments, including the coordination and liaison with reporting and transcription contractor services.

Dan has developed unmatched committee institutional knowledge. He has frequently been called upon to answer new committee clerk questions, he has provided reporting and transcription procedures presentations at Committee Clerk Briefing Seminars, and he has appeared before other groups that the Committee on House Administration has assembled to better explain the types of services that the Official Reporters provide to House committees. Dan has also been instrumental in facilitating the Office of Official Reporters' heavy workload when supporting the House's special investigations.

Dan's operational skillsets have been a critical asset to the success of the Clerk's office. Dan is extremely organized, a great multitasker, and adept at solving problems. Dan can also retrieve a nuanced committee procedural email from decades ago. In sum, Dan is the Clerk's Office chief "go-to" person when it comes to House committee questions.

In his spare time, Dan enjoys traveling, especially to the Caribbean and North Carolina's Outer Banks. He and his wife, Carolyn, have taken many trips to Aruba, which is one of their favorite destinations. He also enjoys crosswords—his longest streak of correctly solved New York Times crosswords was 1084 consecutive days.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I want to thank Dan Hall for his wonderful service to our great institution and to his country.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO NINA CASTRO

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Dallas native, Nina Castro. A 25-year veteran Southwest Airlines flight attendant who went above and beyond when answering the call of duty. On a standard flight from Omaha to Phoenix, Castro met 77-year old passenger, Patrick McGee, who called her "an angel". Later in the flight, McGee would suffer a medical emergency.

I thank Ms. Castro and her fellow flight attendant's swift action, as they were able to save Mr. McGee when he suffered a heart attack. Ms. Castro described that everybody was in the right place, at the right time.

She has since been able to connect with Mr. McGee, who, again, called her an angel, and they are looking forward to an in-person reunion. I thank Ms. Castro for showcasing the very best of North Texas.

HONORING GREATER PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church, a congregation whose origins date back to 1880 when the first spark of light ignited in the hearts of its organizers. Their motives were pure, their faith unwavering, and with steadfast commitment they established a house of worship open to all—rich, poor, and wayfarers alike. Though lacking material wealth, these pioneers possessed an abundance of devotion. Where there was no earthly light, the Word of God became their lamp, guiding their steps and illuminating their journey. From 1880 to the present, Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church has truly stood as 'a city set on a hill that cannot be hid,' coming this far by faith through God's grace, mercy, and the leadership of faithful shepherds.

Over the years, each pastor left an indelible mark on the life and history of this church. Reverend Harrison Barber served during its organization and initial construction in 1880. Reverend Mack Smith provided steady leadership, followed by Reverend Verge Hayes who guided the church through a fire and oversaw construction of a new frame building. Under Reverend Thomas Aites, the first stone structure was dedicated on October 18, 1942. After Reverend Aites became ill, Reverend Robert West, Sr. briefly served before Reverend Willie K. Brooks was elected pastor, leading the installation of a deep water well and baptismal pool. From 1954 to 1961, Reverend Dixie Major guided the church's chartering and incorporation and on July 24, 1958, the name became Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church. Reverend Major also secured two acres of land in 1959. Reverend Coleman Burrell, Sr. served from 1961 to 1964, overseeing construction of a new building in 1963.

Reverend Odell Tickles served faithfully for 46 years beginning in 1964, purchasing ten acres of property in 1990 and ordaining associate pastors. He later became Pastor Emeritus until his passing in 2011. Overseer Edward Pierce provided guidance during Reverend Tickles' illness, followed by Pastor Carl Maceo Bailey, Jr., who served from 2010 to 2015, first as acting pastor and later as the elected leader. Overseer Pierce returned from 2015 to 2016 until the election of Bishop Jonathan Everett, who served from 2016 to 2019 with great vision. In 2019, Bishop Winton R. Anderson was elected pastor and introduced the church's current motto: "Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church is a church that has been commissioned to REACH people with the Word of God, INSPIRE them to BUILD, and SERVE the Kingdom of God."

Mr. Speaker, under Bishop Anderson's tenure, the church has embraced growth and innovation—implementing virtual worship, launching the Grief Share program, establishing the J–14 Project, and adopting text-to-give technology. He founded the Greater Economic Empowerment Corporation, the church's nonprofit arm designed to expand community impact. Bishop Anderson has also ordained and installed Elder Hewitt Lee as Associate Pastor and seven additional ministers to serve the congregation. As Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church continues marching forward in faith, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this historic congregation for its enduring legacy of service, leadership, and devotion to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

AMERICA'S DEBT PROBLEM

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to include in the RECORD the following essay on behalf of Mr. Dave Jervis:

If a family making $60,000 a year spends $70,000 a year, they will first use up their savings, then max out their credit cards, and finally declare bankruptcy. Why should it be any different with nations? Our Official U.S. Debt is currently over $40 trillion and our actual U.S. Debt, which includes Unfunded Mandates like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.—is variously estimated at $100–$200 trillion. (Incidentally, $4.6 to $7 trillion of that $40T is reportedly linked to Covid-related expenses like the stimulus payments, lost production, compliance costs, vaccine costs, etc.)

So—How to judge the effect of even that lower number ($40T) on the Nation's economic health? Let's start by asking—how much or how big is a trillion dollars? Well, we can compare it to a million dollars, which is a thousand dollars a thousand times over. Let's assume that you have unlimited access to fresh, crispy new U.S. One-Hundred-dollar bills (Benjamins). How high a stack of fresh, crispy new U.S. Hundred-dollar bills does it take to make a million dollars? The answer is 43 inches, about the height of your kitchen countertop. OK—You continue to have access to unlimited fresh, crispy new US Hundred-dollar bills—How high a stack of fresh, crispy new US Hundred-dollar bills does it take to make a Trillion Dollars? Well, a billion is a thousand million and a trillion is a thousand billion, so a trillion is a million millions. That means our 43-inch stack of Hundred-dollar bills becomes 43 million inches high, which converts to 678.66 MILES high for a trillion US dollars! That's an inconceivable amount of money, so let me give you three ways to help wrap your head around that:

(1) If you take a cross-country commercial airline flight, you're flying about 6 or 7 miles up—so our trillion-dollar stack is 100 times higher than your airplane is flying! Inconceivable!

(2) Let's say you could hitch a ride with Elon, up to the International Space Station, which orbits the earth at an altitude of about 250 miles—that would still be only 37% of the way up our trillion-dollar stack! A little over a third of the way up . . . . Still inconceivable!

(3) Let's make one more try by going on up to the Hubble Space Telescope, which orbits the earth at an altitude of 340 miles. That's still only half the way up our stack of US hundred-dollar bills! So, there you have it, 43 inches versus nearly 379 miles high! A trillion dollars is an inconceivable amount of money—and hardly anyone understands that! It's an insane amount of debt to incur.

Let's next talk about what $39T in debt means in terms of the size of our US economy. The universally accepted way of measuring that is to express a nation's debt as a percentage of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is the total dollar value of all goods and services exchanged in a year's time in that economy—a fraction/ratio with Debt over GDP. It's currently 120%–124% in the US.

120% is also generally considered to be the level of national debt that, if exceeded over time, will lead to major problems like inflation and the failure of the currency. So, we here in the US are at an inflection point, where we're now consciously risking the future of the American Dollar. And one recent increase in our debt by $1 Trillion—I think it was from $37T to 38T—took only 71 days. Even the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) anticipates US National Debt growing by $2T/year. We are now the family making $60,000 and spending $70.000 a year; and neither Republicans nor Democrats seem interested in cutting spending to address the problem, with one exception—that President Trump and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent are seeking to stave off inflationary decline by expanding the denominator in that ratio of National Debt over GDP, by re-shoring and revitalizing industry in America—they deserve credit for that much.

America has been at or close to 120% in debt once before in my lifetime—At the end of World War II, the U.S. national debt-to-GDP ratio peaked at approximately 106% to 120% (depending on who's holding the yardstick) in 1946, up from 42% in 1941. That massive debt, resulting from over $4 trillion in war spending (in 2026 dollars), was ameliorated/resolved through a combination of high economic growth and inflation, which reduced the Debt-over-GDP ratio to 23% by 1974. President Johnson had created much or most of that 23% when confronted with a spending decision whether to pursue the Vietnam War or to fund his Great Society domestic spending programs—he chose Option 3, Doing Both, and federal spending got out of control again, so that by 1980 Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker (who is a genuine national hero), had to raise interest rates to 20% to break the back of inflation by inducing recession. But unlike today, Volker was able to do that (with President Reagan's support), in part because the Debt-to-GDP ratio he needed to address was relatively low—similar to the 1941 pre-war number of 42%. Here are some results of that—Mrs. J. and I got a just-under-12% mortgage in 1979. Local friends got a 15% mortgage in 1980; and our Ophthalmologist got an 18% mortgage that same year. And a local car dealer was paying 21.5% in interest, just to keep vehicles in inventory on his lot. We sure hated Paul Volcker at the time, but he gave the US 40 years of prosperity with his brave patriotic action.

So how have we gotten back up to a 120% debt level again, without an existential threat like WWII? The short answer is—again—government deficit-spending; but what facilitated that overspending? Let's look more closely at our currency itself, the US Dollar and its history. After the Revolutionary War, upon gaining our freedom from Great Britain, we certainly did NOT want to copy the British Pound as our currency, so we copied the Spanish Milled Dollar—a silver coin that was perforated (in slices like a pie) so as to be divisible into eight bits worth 12 cents each—the famous Pirate money Apieces of eight. (In fact, up through my childhood, a US quarter was still called two bits.) And the BIG thing was that our dollar was to be either composed of, or completely backed by, precious metals, specifically gold and silver.

Our US Founding Fathers understood the historically proven need for a national currency backed by something of Tangible Value, specifically precious metals; and in the US Constitution, as part of prohibiting State currencies and assuring a viable National currency, they specifically provided in Article 1, Section 10, that, No State shall . . . make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; . . . Then over time, an unfortunate series of court decisions that I don't pretend to understand, allowed President Richard Nixon to take the US Dollar off of what's called the Gold Standard, such that a paper dollar could no longer be taken to any bank and exchanged for gold or silver specie, meaning coins. So how did that happen?

My understanding (and again, I have only a partial understanding) is that our European WWII Allies had shipped much or most of their gold holdings (backing their currencies) to the US for safekeeping during the war, and that they were over time repatriating that gold to their custody after the war. But as that gold kept being withdrawn from our custody, we (the US) apparently became increasingly concerned (and this is what I don't understand), so that when French President Charles DeGaulle made a request/demand for repatriation of French gold, President Richard Nixon closed the gold window, declining the French request/demand, and in the process, taking the US Dollar off of the Gold Standard. Again, that meant that people could no longer take their US Dollar bills to a bank and redeem them for physical gold. Maybe it would have drawn down our reserves too much—I simply don't know. But I DO know what has happened since that time.

Up until the aftermath of WWII, our US Dollar had always been exchangeable for precious metals—and that tie to gold and silver had prevented the US from incurring debt that could not be repaid, because there had to be enough gold and/or silver in storage to back that amount of debt. Then on a Sunday evening, August 15, 1971, spurred by that French demand, President Nixon, in a televised speech, suspended the convertibility of the US Dollar for gold. At the time, it was called the Nixon Shock, and like many government edicts, it was said to be a temporary thing. But it still stands today, and August 15, 1971, is now correctly called the day the US Dollar died. The Dollar died because our government could then print and spend as many dollars as it wanted, with no need for it to be backed up by gold and/or silver. A greater number of dollars chasing the same or similar basket of goods and services is called inflation; and a national currency with no tangible backing is called a fiat currency. (As an aside—fiat dollars are also a major reason the family unit is struggling in the US, because two incomes were then needed, such that neither spouse could focus primarily on household matters and rearing children.)

Since 1850, 52 other nations have attempted to operate with an unbacked fiat currency, and 51 of the 52 have failed, thus throwing their populations into poverty. (The 52nd is Japan, which is a producer nation more than a consumer nation like the US; but it's just on a slower path to poverty—and we're even involved now in propping up the unbacked yen with our unbacked dollars.) The reason for all those currency failures is that the populace learns that it can vote for itself largesse (benefits) from the public treasury by simply pressuring their legislators, who find that their election or re-election can depend on promising more freebies than their opponent. That has been the case in the US, to the point where there is now little to no realistic chance of repaying our national debt in a normal way—or even a political appetite for doing so.

I mentioned earlier that the US inflation rate was greatly accelerated by the Covid debacle. And the US Government's Consumer Price Index (CPI) is now so completely corrupted and compromised, as to have no relation to the prices people actually pay. Up until 1986, the CPI did a reasonably good job of gauging inflation. But beginning that year, eight (8) significant changes have been made to the calculation formula, such that it now greatly understates the actual inflation rate; and in the last 6 years, especially, it has wildly underestimated inflation. Several others have developed alternative CPI indexes that are more accurate, with the latest being a website called realityindex.co. Using realityindex.co as a base, Jeffrey Tucker of the Brownstone Institute has found that we have experienced a 65% overall increase of consumer prices from 2019 to 2026 (with groceries at this writing [June 2026] running at an astounding 8.2% inflation rate). That 65% number is an incredible loss in purchasing power, compared to the government CPI, which shows only a 26% loss in purchasing power over the same time period. And other competent economic authorities have confirmed the validity of Tucker's work.

Dean Clancy of Americans for Prosperity reportedly posits that when we read the Ninth and Tenth Amendments plus the Obligation-of-Contracts clause (Article 1, sec. 10, cl. 1) of our US Constitution, we can identify five monetary policies that are constitutionally requisite in the US, two of which are pertinent to this discussion:

(1) Only gold and silver coins and currency (banknotes fully backed by and readily redeemable in specie [gold or silver coins]) may serve as legal tender; and

(2) Neither the states nor Congress may issue fiat money notes (bills of credit . . .). One can only hope that his position on the first item above would be tried in the courts and found to have merit—and to start the process of reclaiming our national economic sanity.

So—Back to consumer inflation to close this out—Other than cutting back on non-essential purchases and being a so-called smart shopper, what might you do with all this? What can help your family in a wider framework or sense? Further inflation/shrinking of the US Dollar is now baked-in (thanks to government deficit spending), and the result will be the continued hollowing out of our Middle Class. It's not trite to say that we must PRAY for America, for our politicians, and for our upcoming generations. And of course, to impress upon our elected officials the need for major cost-cutting action on their part—for openers, how about a Federal Balanced Budget? I believe that we must walk a deep valley of stagflation or recession/depression if we are to hand over this land, as we have known it, to our children and grandchildren.

And in a narrower financial sense, one other answer is to own Hard Assets—tangible things you can touch, like land, buildings, gold, silver, classic cars, some fine art, and some collectibles or other physical items that would hold their value through inflationary times. If you can swing the cost of buying and owning a house or apartment, don't rent one—a house or a condo is the most common and most-sought-after Hard Asset owned by Middle Class folks. I've also read that a top-gun financial expert recently recommended that we need to scale down from building 2200-to-2400-square-foot houses and go back to 1200–1400-square-foot houses. And there are people out there who are researching cheaper-per-square-foot (modular) housing that would be delivered in pieces by truck, to reduce the amount of required on-site labor. (Some of that is already happening.) So that's some of what I'm seeing and hearing lately, and I hope this has helped you with some of the background that produced the inflation we're seeing.

RECOGNIZING THE KERN AUTISM NETWORK

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Kern Autism Network on its 30th anniversary and to honor its longstanding commitment to supporting individuals with autism and their families in Kern County through education, advocacy, and community support.

Beginning in 1995, staff from the Kern Regional Center and HEARTS Connections brought together local families, educators, and other advocates in response to the limited public awareness and support available for individuals with autism. Soon after, Susan Houghton helped establish the first local chapter, which was chartered by the Autism Society of America on May 22, 1996. Under her leadership as the organization's first chair, the chapter began its mission of increasing autism awareness, providing support and education, and connecting individuals and their families with valuable resources.

For 30 years, the organization's dedicated volunteers have worked to build greater awareness and understanding of autism throughout Kern County. Among its many efforts is its annual autism conference, which brings together experts, service providers, and community partners to share knowledge and resources with local families and professionals.

Through support groups and community outreach, Kern Autism Network has continued to create meaningful connections and opportunities for individuals with autism and their families. Its commitment to advocacy and inclusion has also helped strengthen the network of support for the autism community throughout Kern County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Kern Autism Network, its leadership, and dedicated volunteers on 30 years of service to Kern County. Their commitment has made a lasting difference in the lives of individuals with autism, their families, and the greater Central Valley community.

HONORING SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT JAMESON J. STITT

HON. JOHN W. MANNION

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. MANNION. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Senior Master Sergeant Jameson J. Stitt, a distinguished airman from Syracuse, New York. Sergeant Stitt has served our country for nearly four decades from September 24, 1986, to July 17, 2026, in the United States Air Force and the New York Air National Guard. During his tenure, he earned numerous medals and awards. As Logistics Plans Superintendent at the 174th Attack Wing, he has played a vital role in organizing and supporting deployment operations.

Sergeant Stitt's career began in 1986, with assignments ranging from aircraft maintenance to logistics and deployment planning. He served in Operations DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, NORTHERN WATCH, and NOBLE EAGLE, adapting to new aircraft and mission challenges. He has managed major deployments, coordinated logistics for worldwide missions, and supported New York State operations, including COVID–19 response. As a member of the Base Honor Guard, Sergeant Stitt has participated in over 300 military funerals and many community events. His dedication extends beyond his service, training more than 50 guardsmen and honoring fallen first responders after 9/11.

Throughout his career, Sergeant Stitt has demonstrated integrity, commitment, and exceptional service. His decorations include the Meritorious Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster, the Air and Space Force Outstanding Unit Award with one Valor ''V'' device and four oakleaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with one service star; the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three campaign stars, and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal with one campaign star. He has also received several New York State military honors. Sergeant Stitt is a valued member of professional associations and has contributed to various committees over the years.

Mr. Speaker, Senior Master Sergeant Stitt has served our Nation with pride and loyalty. I congratulate him on his retirement and thank him for his dedication. I wish him, his wife Shari, and daughters, Julisan and Kira, all the best in the years ahead.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO ANQUINETTE HILL

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Arbor Creek Elementary School teacher, Anquinette Hill. Mrs. Hill was recently named Region 11 Elementary Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Hill has dedicated over 16 years to teaching, pouring into students and staff alike. She is known for always having a smile, and going above and beyond to provide new STEAM-based projects and opportunities to students.

Nominees submitted a professional portfolio that included a résumé, professional biography, and essays describing their instructional philosophy, contributions to school culture, community engagement, leadership experiences, and vision for the teaching profession. This award puts Mrs. Hill in the running for the State of Texas Teacher of the Year, which will be announced within the coming weeks.

I congratulate Mrs. Hill on her recognition and for serving students across North Texas.

HONORING SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Second Baptist Church, located on North Acadian Thruway West, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, for its faith and community strength since its founding in 1920. The origin of Second Baptist Church began under the leadership of the late Reverend William Hall. The church's original name was Hall's Chapel Baptist Church and was subsequently changed to Hall's Second Baptist Church, with its first location in the 600 block of Eureka Street, now known as North Acadian Thruway West. Though membership initially consisted of about thirty members and the church building was small, it quickly became known as ''the church with a lot of fire.''

After Reverend Hall was called home to glory in 1922, Reverend Edward Doyle (E.D.) Billoups was chosen as Pastor. Under his outstanding leadership, the church was remodeled at a cost of $3,030.00, which included land and building, and the debt was liquidated over nine years. Two more lots were purchased, and Hall's Second Baptist Church was built, along with an educational building