

pairing officers with mental health professionals.

Chief Bladel also helped to implement group violence intervention strategies that connected at-risk individuals with community resources to break cycles of violence.

Over the past 3 years, the city has seen a reduced number of crimes. Chief Bladel leaves behind a safer Davenport and a lasting legacy of service, leadership, and community partnership.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a very happy birthday today to Lola VanDeWalle, who happens to be the genesis behind the Quad City Veterans Outreach Center.

Happy birthday, Lola.

Mr. Speaker, I wish my daughter, Taylor, a very happy birthday.

Happy birthday, Taylor.

Mr. Speaker, I extend happy birthday greetings to Davenport's Vince Martinez, a soon-to-be 100-year-old on April 5 and World War II veteran. May he continue to live long and continue to help all of our veterans.

AMERICANS STRANDED IN MIDDLE EAST

(Mr. SUBRAMANYAM of Virginia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken here about how this administration did not adequately warn U.S. citizens in the Middle East before launching attacks against Iran. They left American citizens in the Middle East stranded and told them that they were on their own.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud them for correcting this mistake and working really hard to try to get people flights out and helping them to evacuate. Unfortunately, it looks like that was only a temporary response because this week, I am having constituents tell me that, once again, they are being told that they are on their own.

One family I am working with is in Kuwait right now and was told to take a commercial flight out and that the State Department couldn't help them. The problem is that Kuwaiti airspace is actually closed right now. The family was told that they would have to take a bus to Saudi Arabia and that the State Department wouldn't really help them with that. Even if they did get there, there are frequent restrictions on flights in Saudi Arabia due to continued missile and drone threats.

Again, I am left wondering why we are telling Americans that we have billions of dollars to spend on bombs, missiles, and warships, but we don't have the money to get American citizens who want to get out, out of the Middle East, particularly ones who are in dangerous areas where there are no commercial flights.

It is insulting to tell the American people to foot the bill to get out of the Middle East in a dangerous position when we didn't warn them in the first place.

Once again, I am calling on the administration to help Americans who need to get out, get out. The safety of the American people should come first.

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS AI STARTUPS

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, AI is massively reshaping our economy and our small businesses. When most people think of companies leading on AI, they think of the Big Tech companies, but there is more to this AI economy than those big companies. They are AI small businesses and startups that play a key role in innovation. They are the drivers of innovation, economic growth, and American technological supremacy.

They can often be more agile than bigger tech companies and create fantastic solutions and products, but they aren't always working on an even playing field.

That is why I am introducing this week the small AI innovators empowerment act. This bill would look at challenges that small AI businesses and startups face, including areas like access to funding, hiring and retention of talented employees, and the impact of regulatory uncertainty.

Supporting small-tech businesses helps us to stay ahead of international competition as our world becomes increasingly reliant on AI. I thank Congressman OBERNOLTE for sponsoring this bill with me.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting AI small businesses by supporting this small AI innovators empowerment act.

CONGRATULATING THE FLOWER GALLERY

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate The Flower Gallery of Virginia on its 50th anniversary. The Flower Gallery has contributed to the joy of residents in our community, including Manassas and Northern Virginia, since 1976, when Doug Burroughs first bought the shop from his employer.

Over that time, The Flower Gallery has helped our community celebrate life's milestones, including many birthdays, weddings, and anniversaries. It also provides local youth and civic organizations with flowers for fundraisers and community events.

I congratulate Doug for creating such a beloved institution and for 50 years of success. I am wishing Doug and The Flower Gallery many more years of prosperity.

OPPOSING ATTACK ON FEDERAL WORKERS

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, we know that this administration has been constantly attacking our Nation's Federal workers and contractors. They have chased out people with specialized skills and decades of experience, making our country less safe and less healthy, while also making our agencies either understaffed, or led by unqualified loyalists.

The latest attack might actually be one of the worst, and that is the creation of the Schedule P/C positions. We knew that there would be an attack on

Schedule F. This basically would make it easier for career civil servants to be fired and to be replaced with loyalists who are not qualified.

Federal workers would lose job protections, and it would make it incredibly difficult to attract people, retain them, and get the best talent in the country to come work in the Federal Government. We have been working on this across many administrations, and this is undoing a lot of that work.

The reality is that Federal workers and contractors pledge allegiance to our country and not to a President or an ideology. This rule would hurt our country for many years to come, and it would do irreparable damage to our institutions and to the people who rely on them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this rule. It is not well thought out, and it is going to hurt us in the long run.

WELCOMING AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION TO NATION'S CAPITAL

(Ms. FOXX of North Carolina was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome the American Optometric Association to our Nation's Capital for the 2026 Federal Keyperson Summit.

Since 1898, the AOA has distinguished itself among medical specialists and policymakers for its outstanding leadership, reliability, and advocacy for optometric professionals and students.

From years of standing at the forefront of innovation and high quality in healthcare, we understand that steadfast leadership is essential for positive outcomes in public health policy and a patient's health.

The advocates of the AOA are a model of just that, providing insight on pertinent issues so that optometric doctors, professionals, and students are primed to deliver the critical, high-quality care that patients deserve.

□ 1230

I am confident that this year's summit will prove to be a valuable experience, and I commend the advocates and members of the AOA for their dedication to their profession and patients.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. FOXX) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Most Holy Lord, we stand in the need of prayer. Too often we claim to be without sin, though our sin is ever before us, and so we pray: Forgive us our debt to Your marvelous mercy in our lives, to the bounty of grace You have shown us that we could never repay. Pardon us and help us to receive Your unmerited favor with contrite hearts and humble spirits.

Forgive us our trespasses, the way we overstep the boundaries You, in Your love for us, have established to protect us from the dangers our own choices could bring upon us. Bring us back from the consequences of our own decisions and receive us into Your parental embrace.

Forgive us our sins, the countless ways we have offended You, even as we have offended one another. Forgive us the many times we have separated ourselves from Your love, even as we have failed to show Your love to those around us.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your unfailing love. According to Your compassion, blot out our transgressions. Wash away all our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin.

In your merciful name, we pray.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. LATIMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LATIMER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNIZING BRUCE FRANKEL

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

Mr. LATIMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bruce Frankel, a longtime youth baseball coach and active member of his community in Larchmont, as he celebrates his 73rd birthday this month.

Bruce has been deeply involved in the village he has called home for more than two decades. He currently serves on the village's zoning board, co-chairs the Larchmont Traffic Commission, and is an active member of the Larchmont Temple.

He is best known by Larchmont families for his time coaching in the

Larchmont-Mamaroneck Little League and the town's travel baseball program.

Through this program, he has taught hundreds of kids not only the fundamentals of baseball but also the values of hard work, determination, adaptability, and perseverance.

Mr. Speaker, from the floor of the House of Representatives, I wish a happy birthday to Bruce Frankel and thank him for all he has done for our community.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO) at 3 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 6644. An act to increase the supply of housing in America, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 327. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny any foreign tax credit or deduction with respect to taxes paid or accrued to the Russian Federation.

S. 836. An act to amend the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 to Strengthen protections relating to the online collection, use, and disclosure of personal information of children and teens, and for other purposes.

S. 2074. An act to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to expand the definition of an active duty military consumer for purposes of certain credit monitoring requirements, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 118-49, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, and in consultation with the Chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate and the Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) Reform Commission:
The Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

John Demers of Virginia.
Stewart Baker of Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9355(a), as amended by Public Law 118-159, the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following Senators to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy:

The Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS).

The Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3971) to extend the SBIR and STTR programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3971

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act".

SEC. 2. BOLSTERING RESEARCH SECURITY OF SBIR AND STTR AWARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638) is amended—

(1) in subsection (g)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (15), (16), and (17) as paragraphs (16), (18), and (19), respectively;

(B) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following:

“(15) evaluate whether a small business concern presents a security risk for any reason, through measures including—

“(A) the due diligence process required under subsection (vv);

“(B) disclosures submitted under this subsection; or

“(C) coordination with the intelligence community, as defined in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003), Federal law enforcement, and other counterintelligence capabilities of the Federal Government;”;

(C) in paragraph (16), as so redesignated—

(i) by striking subparagraph (B);

(ii) by striking “that—” and all that follows through “the small business concern submitting” and inserting “that the small business concern submitting”;

(iii) by redesignating clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(iv) in subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, by striking “or” at the end;

(v) in subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, by striking “and” at the end; and

(vi) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) has a security risk connecting the small business concern to an entity, including any affiliates of the entity, or individual on—

“(i) the UFLPA Entity List maintained by the Department of Homeland Security;