

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I took my oath of office 3 years ago on the Bible that my father kept his poll tax receipt in that he paid when he turned old enough to vote in Tennessee.

In my office is a book written by my great-grandfather. He tells a story. My great-grandfather was born on the plantation where his parents were enslaved. He went to register to vote in 1902 in Alabama. He was given a literacy test. He got all the questions right. The registrar turned to his assistant and said: "I need more questions because this nigger got them all right." He was on a list of people not to register to vote because he organized Blacks in the community. Then he was told he had to find three White men to vouch for his character, and he did it.

Today, just like my great-grandfather, just like my father, I and the Congressional Black Caucus will fight any obstacle put in our way to ensure that we participate in this government by, of, and for the people.

We won't take this sitting down.

The Supreme Court may have dealt us a devastating blow, but we are going to get up, just like John Lewis got up after he was beaten in the head from marching across the bridge in Selma for the right to vote.

This is not the end of the war. This is only the beginning where we will ensure that liberty and justice for all means all; that a government by, of, and for the people includes all the people.

We will not be silenced.

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

NATIONAL JUBILEE OF PRAYER, PRAISE, AND THANKSGIVING

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. BRECHEEN of Oklahoma was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

(Mr. BRECHEEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, on May 17 in a few days it will be declared a National Day of Jubilee, Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving. President Donald Trump announced this Day of Jubilee at the National Prayer Breakfast when he invited "Americans from all across the country to come together on our National Mall to pray, to give thanks." And he went on to say: "We're going to rededicate America as one Nation under God."

It is historically significant that President Donald Trump would say this. It is historically important that leaders of our Nation are gathered behind me to begin to recognize the importance of calling our Nation back to God and rededicating America as a Nation devoted and dependent upon God.

In doing so, it is not only right, it is historically backed up by the 150 different calls to prayer, humiliation,

fasting, and thanksgiving that have been issued in our country's history by our Nation's leaders.

Of these 150-plus calls to prayer, 74 of them have been issued by U.S. Presidential proclamations with 36 of our 47 United States Presidents signing proclamations for national prayer.

Between 1775 and 1784 alone, at least 15 official proclamations for prayer, fasting, and humiliation—yes, humiliation. Someone asked me: Why are you using that word? That word is in the historic record. I think some don't realize you don't get humility unless you are humiliated. But times of prayer, fasting, and humiliation were issued by Congress.

Records also show that there have been over 1,500 State and Federal calls for national prayer since 1775. That is a truly remarkable number.

This coming Jubilee Day of Prayer was first established by the Continental Congress 250 years ago. This coming Sunday it will be exactly 250 years ago when on May 17, 1776, they set aside a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

This original proclamation stated that: In times of impending calamity and distress, it becomes the indispensable duty with true penitence, publicly to acknowledge the overruling providence of God; to confess and deplore our offenses against Him; and to supplicate His interposition for averting the threatened danger and prospering our strenuous efforts in the cause of freedom, virtue, and posterity.

This congressional dialogue continues that: The Congress, therefore, do earnestly recommend, that the 17th day of May next, be observed as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that we may confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, and, by a sincere repentance and amendment of life, appease His righteous displeasure, and, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness; humbly imploring His assistance to frustrate the cruel purposes of our unnatural enemies; and by inclining their hearts to justice and benevolence, prevent the further effusion of kindred blood.

□ 2040

These were the words of our Continental Congress almost exactly a few days away from now, 250 years ago this coming Sunday. They wrote that, declared that, only 7 weeks ahead of when the Declaration of Independence would come forth.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), the Speaker of the House, for his commentary.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear brother, Congressman JOSH BRECHEEN, for leading this Special Order. It is an important occasion and one that a number of my colleagues will be here to help mark tonight. It is appropriate for us to do that.

I want to reiterate what my friend here has explained. It is this weekend, on May 17th, that our country is going to mark the National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving. As he noted, that date marks exactly two and a half centuries since our Founders met in the Second Continental Congress and declared a day of, yes, humiliation, fasting, and prayer to ask for God's guidance in the cause of freedom.

I think it is an appropriate way to say it. We ought to begin with repentance, and they recognized it back then.

This Sunday, Americans across the country are going to gather once again to do that very same thing, and what an important time it is for us to do so.

Here, on The National Mall, we are going to have tens of thousands of Americans join in prayer to rededicate our lives and our Nation back to God.

For Americans of faith, this is an opportunity to help our Nation recommit to the foundations upon which this country was built, as every previous generation in our history has done before.

Since the very beginning, prayer is how this grand experiment in self-governance has endured and prospered for 250 years.

Indeed, when 56 patriots gathered in Philadelphia to pledge their lives and their fortunes and their sacred honor for the birth of this new Nation, they began in prayer.

To this day, we open every single legislative session in this House and in the Senate, the other Chamber, in prayer. That is an acknowledgment, in some small way, of the famous admonition that is inscribed prominently right there above the head of the Speaker. It says there above the rostrum: "In God We Trust."

If you look, by the way, in the visitor's guide to the House Chamber—I think it is somewhere about on page 14—it says that Congress voted in 1962 to put that motto there, to add it to the marble, it says in the guide, as a rebuke to the Soviets because of their philosophy. That was during the Cold War. The Soviet's philosophy is Marxism, communism, and socialism. They all begin with one common premise: that there is no God.

Our predecessors in this body wanted every single one of us to look right there and understand and acknowledge, every single day that we are here to work, that our Nation is built on the opposite idea. We are built on the self-evident truth that it is God who gives us our rights and not the government.

At this pivotal moment in our Nation's history, we have to remember all of that. We have to acknowledge that the miracle of our founding and the countless miracles that have followed have been the work of Almighty God, and it is indeed in Him whom we trust.

So as we approach the 250th anniversary, it is right that we gather formally, just as our Founders did, to beseech the firm protection of divine providence once again.

I hope Americans from all across this country will take part in this historic day of Scripture and worship and fellowship as we recommit to our faith and our foundations as one nation under God.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana, our Speaker, for taking time from his very busy schedule to do this.

I am going to further delay my remarks. I know that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) has got an appointment. I am going to ask him to share some remarks also.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Mr. JOSH BRECHEEN, from Oklahoma for having this Special Order tonight.

As we prepare to celebrate 250 years of the greatest Nation in the history of the world—and by great, I think we can mean good—it is fitting that we pause to remember something that our Founders understood clearly. America's strength has never come from government. It has come from Almighty God, from faithful people, and from a nation willing to humble itself in prayer and Thanksgiving.

God loves mercy more than he loves sacrifice. He tells us in Micah 6:8: What does the Lord require of you, O man, but to seek justice, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

In 1776, as the Continental Congress fought for the survival of this young Nation, they established what they called a National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving.

I want you to think about that just a moment. In the middle of war, uncertainty, and sacrifice, our Founders did not place their hope in military might or political power alone. They turned first to the Almighty God.

John Adams once wrote: It is "the duty of all men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God."

George Washington repeatedly reminded the Nation that freedom itself depends on morality, faith, and virtue.

From the very beginning, America understood that liberty is not self-sustaining. Freedom requires a moral people, and a moral people must remain grounded in the truth.

Today, 250 years later, we gather not only to celebrate our history but to recommit ourselves to those timeless principles.

Our country has endured wars, economic hardship, division, and tragedy. Yet, generation after generation, Americans have continued to seek God's guidance through it all.

That spirit is woven into the very fabric of our Nation, and that is why "In God We Trust" remains our national motto right above your head, Mr. Speaker.

It is why our Presidents place their hands on the Bible when taking the oath of office. It is why Americans still bow their heads in prayer during moments of both triumph and of trial.

As a veteran, a father, a grandfather, and now chairman of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I have had the very great privilege of seeing the very best of America.

I represent Houston, Space City, the hardworking men and women of Johnson Space Center, who continue pushing the boundaries of human achievement, as we saw a couple weeks ago with Artemis II pushing four astronauts farther from Earth than anybody has ever gone before.

Even as we reach farther into the heavens, we are reminded of just how small we are compared to the greatness of God's creation.

As we celebrate America 250, may we never take for granted the freedoms that we have inherited from our forefathers, and may we always remain one nation under God for generations to come.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have had the gentleman from Texas take his time to be here, along with the Speaker.

Given the rest of their schedules and the delay of my commentary, I am going to continue on with my commentary.

Some will ask: Show us in history. If you claim that our Founders were of this mindset, prove that to us.

In his 1796 farewell address, our very first President, George Washington, stated: "Of all of the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness."

He goes to say: "Both reason and experience forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles."

Most people don't realize that wasn't just George Washington who wrote that. That was prepared for him by James Madison and later Alexander Hamilton because he was going to release that in 1792 farewell address, and he decided the country needed him another 4 years. He waited until Alexander Hamilton could polish off the final copy in 1796.

Our second President, John Adams, also expressing devotion to Biblical principle, stated: "We have no government armed with power capable of continuing with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice"—which means extreme greed—"ambition, and revenge will break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through our net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate" to the government of any other.

He understood it is a linchpin, that in order to maintain the blessing of liberty, it is in tandem with virtue that this undergirding we are discussing today would provide.

Our third President, Thomas Jefferson, used to ride horses every Sunday

to attend church service in this very Capitol building yards from where we are now. Thomas Jefferson, the one that people claim so much about, every Sunday he was in service in a public building bringing praise and honor.

□ 2050

Our fourth President, the father of the Constitution, James Madison, signed into law a resolution declaring a day of public humiliation and prayer to be set apart for the devout purpose of rendering to the sovereign of the universe the public homage of acknowledging the transgressions which might justly provoke the manifestation of His divine displeasure seeking His merciful forgiveness.

Yet, our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, followed those before him, their footsteps, and also declared a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer.

Abraham Lincoln acknowledged in his address in 1863 that: "It is the duty of nations as well as men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Lincoln would go on to say: "But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us. . . we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

"It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended power, to confess our national sins and pray for clemency and forgiveness."

When pondering Lincoln's words, I was personally reminded of Deuteronomy 8:11, I will paraphrase, where Moses warns the people of God not to turn away from the Lord.

For those of us who are sitting in this Chamber, as a staff member reminded me and pointed out, Moses is the only image in this room that is looking directly at "In God We Trust" which presides above the Speaker's rostrum.

It is Moses in Deuteronomy chapter 8 who said: "Do not forget the Lord your God." He admonished them to keep His commandments and His ordinances. He goes on to say: "Which I am commanding you today; otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, then your heart will become proud, and you will forget your God."

It sounds like Abraham Lincoln's 1863 address.

He goes on to say, in Deuteronomy chapter 8: "But you shall remember

the Lord your God, for . . . if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God." That is Deuteronomy chapter 8 of the Bible.

Standing in this Chamber today, we have the opportunity to humble ourselves before God, seek His pardon individually for our Nation, His forgiveness. This mandate is not only a part of our biblical heritage, as we will continue to point out in this special hour, it is part of our congressional and our Nation's heritage.

As Moses from the back of this Chamber looks down over that doorway, His admonishment rings true today. If America continues down a path of immorality, pride, and turning to idolatry, we will see the demise of our Nation.

I will conclude with this. John Adams, the second President of the United States, said: "Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only law book and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited . . . what a utopia, what a paradise would this region be." For our country to survive the 250 years ahead so that peace and prosperity are passed down to our posterity. We must turn to the guiding hand of the Almighty, seek His forgiveness, and follow suit with that which He has asked of us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and the gentleman from Oklahoma, Representative BRECHEEN, for this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, the foundation of this Nation was not laid in silence, but in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

As we approach the 250th birthday of America, we reflect on the courageous actions of 56 men who came together in Philadelphia in 1776 to declare independence and to set in motion the birth of a new Nation grounded in liberty, justice, and faith in God.

These signers, as we already heard tonight, pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the cause of freedom. And as we remember their sacrifice, we are also called to reflect on the enduring principles they set forth and the responsibility we carry to preserve and strengthen them even today.

They knew their strength alone was not enough. Only God's guidance could actually sustain a nation and make our freedom possible. Psalm 33:12 declares: "Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord."

We express our gratitude to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for His providence over the United States and all nations. We are, indeed, one nation under God.

We must pray for our Nation. Praying for our Nation is part of a long-

standing American tradition. During the Revolutionary War, when the future of our Nation was far from guaranteed, the Continental Congress paused to designate a national day of thanksgiving and prayer to give thanks to the Lord, to seek His wisdom and His protection and to ask for the strengthening of the people's unity.

In 1777, the Continental Congress called Americans to come together "with one heart and one voice" in solemn thanksgiving and praise. You see, Mr. Speaker, that same spirit is reflected in today's National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving, a time to unite in gratitude, seek God's guidance, and renew our commitment to the values that strengthen this Nation.

George Washington prayed that God would hold this Nation in His holy protection and incline the hearts of its citizens toward brotherly affection and love for one another.

You see, Mr. Speaker, that prayer remains just as relevant today. I have the privilege of serving both as a Member of Congress for the Eighth District of North Carolina and as a pastor. I have witnessed firsthand the power of prayer, in my church, in families, and in moments when our Nation needed healing, wisdom, and revival.

Today, let us pray for an end to political violence in our Nation. No American should be targeted for their beliefs, their service, or their convictions. Let us pray for peace in the Middle East. Let us pray for our President and for my colleagues in the House and Senate regardless of political party. Let us pray for revival of prayer, thanksgiving, and praise across this Nation.

May the Lord continue to do His good work through this Nation, for without His guidance we are lost.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is a humbling moment for us to acknowledge that we are failed and fallen humans in the presence of God in service to our fellow man standing in the Chamber of the people's House. We have been reminded that there are 23 marble busts in relief that surround the walls of this Chamber above the gallery, one of which is facing you, Mr. Speaker, and that is Moses.

There are many men are up there, George Mason, William Blackstone, Thomas Jefferson, Solomon, but only Moses faces you, Mr. Speaker.

Only Moses faces the podium of the Chamber of the people's House in the land of the free. Our Founders were men anointed by God, and we are called upon to acknowledge that spiritual foundation, once again, in our country.

□ 2100

This is an acknowledgment that crosses the barriers of politics, Mr. Speaker, and joins us as one people. Regardless of where we stand upon economic strata, regardless of our color, creed, or heritage, and despite political affiliation or party, we are bonded as one man, under God, in service to our fellow man.

Yet, we struggle. We struggle to know what is right. We seek that as children of God, as men and women attempting to serve we the people. We struggle to know what is right, do we not, Mr. Speaker? Our Founders struggled, as well.

America was founded by imperfect men with a perfect vision. The preamble of our Constitution says: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union—in order to form a more perfect Union.

There is an old saying in the horse business: The way a horse leaves the gate is the way he is going to run.

The preamble, the document that established our laws, stated that they were humble men, imperfect men. They acknowledged the fact that we are human. We have failed and fallen since Adam. We seek to understand what Paul meant when he told us in Corinthians to place not your faith in the wisdom of man but in the spirit and power of God. This is the Chamber where we carry the responsibility to merge the wisdom of man within and beneath the spirit and power of God.

We all have a story, do we not, Mr. Speaker, of how our families came to be here? Many years ago, 200 years ago, a young Irishman born into indentured servitude far away heard whispers of a Nation born where a man could own the land that he worked. This was unheard of for a common Irish lad.

He risked everything, all he had, left the land of his heritage, and boarded a boat that was converted from carrying commercial goods to carrying human beings. According to a letter unearthed by my mother and my aunt many, many generations later, his sleeping berth measured 2 by 2 by 5.

Literally, by the way the winds blew, Mr. Speaker, that boat landed in the Port of New Orleans. That young Irishman was the beginning of my family. He came here seeking freedom. He knew that he would deliver work, ethics, principles, Christian faith, determination, and courage, but he knew he stood beneath God.

He landed in a Nation that was going to give him the opportunity to build something for the next generation, and indeed he did.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, are we worthy of the things that we have described tonight? All of us, on both sides of the aisle, the citizenry we serve that sit in the gallery, are we worthy of what it is to be an American citizen and a child of God?

We seek to prove that worth every day, yet we fall short of the glory of God. We arise again from bended knee

and struggle to be worthy of this service to our fellow man.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by saying that we shan't be judged by how we fall. A man's character should not be measured by how he falls, but it should be measured by how he stands back up. As a nation, this is where we are.

Our children's children will not measure us by the fact that our Nation has stumbled to the extent that it has, but this generation will be measured by how we stand back up.

Let me humbly deliver this message to the American people: Stand back up in the glory of God. Remember the words of Paul, place not your faith in the wisdom of man but in the spirit and power of God. Let us stand as a Nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God, beneath the glory of the flag that waves above us.

Mr. Speaker, God bless us one and all.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for his words. It is great to transition from the accent of Louisiana to the accent of Tennessee. I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER).

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in recognizing this year's national jubilee of prayer and praise and thanksgiving. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on something that is near and dear to my heart.

I come from east Tennessee. It is a place where faith isn't just something you practice on Sunday morning. It is woven into the fabric of who we are. It shapes how we raise our children, how we care for our neighbors, and, yes, how we govern.

If you look at the history of this great Nation, that is exactly how our Founders intended it to be. From the very beginning, America's leaders understood something that too many in Washington have forgotten: that we are not self-sufficient, that the blessings of liberty—the prosperity, the freedom, the strength of this Nation—do not come from us. They come from God.

When English settlers first landed at Cape Henry in 1607, they planted a cross and offered prayers, dedicating their endeavor to God. That spirit of faith was part of America's foundation.

When the First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in 1774—facing a crisis, facing uncertainty, facing the very real possibility of war—one of the very first things those delegates did was bow their heads in prayer. By all accounts, that prayer changed the room, and it brought divided men together. It gave them clarity, and it gave them courage.

When our Constitution was hanging by a thread at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, when tempers had flared, and delegates were walking out, Benjamin Franklin urged the delegates to seek divine guidance with humility and prayer before continuing their

work on what would become the greatest governing document in the history of the world.

I am proud to say that Tennessee has been part of this tradition. Three of this Nation's Presidents called Tennessee home, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Andrew Johnson. Each one of them understood the weight of the Presidency and that it demands more than human wisdom alone.

Andrew Jackson, in his inaugural address, called it the most fervent prayer that almighty God, the same God who had kept this Republic from its infancy, would overrule his intentions and actions for the good of the American people.

James K. Polk, in his own inaugural address in 1845, fervently invoked the aid of the almighty ruler of the universe to guard this Heaven-favored land against the mischiefs that arise from unwise policy.

Andrew Johnson, who assumed the Presidency under some of the most painful circumstances in American history following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, called the Nation to a special day of humiliation and prayer and later issued a Thanksgiving proclamation, calling Americans to give thanks to God for the perseverance of the United States.

□ 2110

Three Tennesseans, three Presidents. All of them, in their highest moments of responsibility, all turned to prayer.

George Washington, in his Circular Letter to the States, asked God to "incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another."

Abraham Lincoln, in the darkest days of the Civil War, called on the Nation to humble itself before God, not out of weakness, but out of wisdom. He recognized that we had forgotten God.

On June 6, 1944, as Allied troops stormed the beaches of Normandy, President Franklin Roosevelt didn't give a victory speech. He led the Nation in prayer.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence is overwhelming. This Nation was built on prayer. It has been sustained by prayer. If we want to see it restored, it will be through prayer.

I know it is not a popular thing to say in some circles in Washington these days, but faith has been pushed out of the public square. Prayer has been treated like something to be embarrassed about or hidden away. We are told to keep our beliefs private.

I refuse to accept that. As a matter of fact, I rebuke that. I don't think the American public accepts it either.

I have been a pharmacist for almost 40 years, and I have stood behind the counter when people were at the lowest points in their lives, when they were diagnosed with cancer or certain other ailments. The ones who leaned on their faith and the ones who prayed, they

had something to hold onto—something that no government program, no prescription, no piece of legislation could ever replace.

That is why I believe deeply that this National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving isn't just about a nice tradition. It is a necessity.

As we celebrate 250 years of American freedom this year, we have an extraordinary opportunity to do what our Founders did—to stop, to humble ourselves, to give thanks, and to ask for guidance, not because we are weak, but because we are wise enough to know that the blessings we enjoy are not of our own making.

Psalms 33:12 reminds us—and I think Mark said it a minute ago—"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." May that always be true of America.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee, very sincere.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for leading this great Special Order this evening, very timely.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate this year's National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving.

Since the founding of our Nation, the people in the spirit of this great country have been rooted in a firm belief in God—evidence that as Americans we are "One nation under God."

In 1607, when English settlers landed at Cape Henry before traveling inland to establish what would later become Jamestown, their first act was not to build a fort, but to kneel in prayer. This early act of worship on American soil confirmed that our country's original intent was not bound by political and economic construction, but in our dedication to faith.

Acts of worship continued to shape our Nation's early history and were central in the observance of Thanksgiving. This time unites all Americans to give thanks to God for his protection and wellness, cementing faith as a central pillar of our history.

Our Nation was forged upon the belief in absolute, God-given rights—a truth that reminds us that there is a higher authority than any government or any political figure.

In 1775, our Founding Fathers issued proclamations to recognize national days of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

From 1777 to 1784, more than 10 of these proclamations were observed, encouraging all Americans to express gratitude and reflect through worship.

Our Founders knew that liberty requires a spiritual anchor, and as Benjamin Franklin famously told the Constitutional Convention: "God governs in the affairs of men."

While our country has changed over the last 250 years, our steadfast reliance on faith remains constant.

Faith and prayer have played a central role in my life and as a foundation of my work in Congress.

For many Americans, our faith is what compels us to care for the vulnerable, to serve our communities with humility, and to see one another not as adversaries but brothers and sisters.

I hope that on this National Day of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving, Americans across our country can unite in our steadfast belief in God.

As a Nation, let's look ahead to the next 250 years with the same conviction in uniting under prayer, worship, and thanksgiving.

Mr. Speaker, I once again thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for hosting this.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman THOMPSON. I know he has a busy schedule and I thank him for joining us.

Next, I yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN), my neighbor to the north.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for hosting this Special Order hour and for his leadership on this very important time for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as our Nation prepares to celebrate 250 years of American independence. For nearly two-and-a-half centuries, America has been a nation not like any other, not because of the size of our economy, the strength of our military, or the power of our government, but because our founding was rooted in the simple and revolutionary truth that our rights are derived from God, not from government.

The Declaration of Independence says that we are endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights. That belief has guided our country through war, hardship, division, and uncertainty. It has reminded generations that freedom is a gift, and with that gift comes responsibility.

Kansas understands this well. Our State was born in the struggle over freedom. From the days of Bleeding Kansas to the farmers, ranchers, teachers, pastors, and families who built our communities, Kansans have always known that liberty must be defended and faith has an important place in public life.

Growing up as a western Kansas farm kid, I was taught the value of faith, family, hard work, and personal responsibility. Those values shaped my life. My faith is my foundation. It shaped how I serve and how I approach the work before us in this Chamber.

Throughout our Nation's history, leaders have turned to God in moments of hardship. Benjamin Franklin, as mentioned before, called for prayer during the Constitutional Convention.

President Lincoln called the Nation to prayer during the Civil War.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., prayed for justice, courage, and freedom as he led a movement that helped America live up to its founding promise.

Today, we face challenges of our own. We see the breakdown of the family, adrift from faith and personal responsibility, deep divisions in our politics, and confusion about right and wrong. Washington cannot solve these problems through legislation alone. A free country depends on the character of its people.

This is why this 250th anniversary should be more than a celebration. It should be a moment of reflection, humility, prayer, and renewal. We should thank God for the blessings of liberty, repent where we have fallen short, and ask for the courage to preserve this country for the next and future generations.

Like Solomon, I pray for a discerning heart to govern and to distinguish between right and wrong. I pray that our leaders seek wisdom, that our families be strengthened, that our communities be restored, and that our Nation turn back toward the values that have sustained America from its beginning.

May God bless our families, our communities, the great State of Kansas, and the United States of America.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Very well said. I thank Representative MANN.

I now yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD).

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and brother in Christ, JOSH BRECHEEN of Oklahoma, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as a little boy from Baytown, Texas, I never thought I would be here on the House floor talking about God Almighty. Yet, he has put me here today to do just that, and I am extremely humbled to do that.

Humiliation and humbleness are not common words you hear today, not a common concept, but in James 4:10, it says: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up." Above your head, Mr. Speaker, are the words: "In God We Trust."

This Sunday, Mr. Speaker, Americans across our great land will observe the National Jubilee of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving. I believe that it is fitting that we pause to remember this is not new to America.

From the very beginning, in times of war and uncertainty, division, and hardship, our leaders have called this Nation to its knees before God.

In 1775, as the fires of the Revolution were kindled, Massachusetts called her people to repentance, unity, and God's mercy.

In 1776, the Continental Congress summoned Americans to prayer and fasting, seeking divine wisdom and strength.

Through the Revolution, through epidemics, through the trials of the Civil War, generation after generation, Americans have humbled themselves before their creator and prayed for the future of this blessed land.

Mr. Speaker, even Abraham Lincoln in the crucible of that terrible war warned that America had grown too proud to pray for the God that made us.

My friends, I am here to tell you today that whether we are religious or not, there is timeless wisdom in gratitude, humility, and moral reflection, especially in times like these.

Missouri carries this tradition proudly. Last week, our Governor, Governor Mike Kehoe, proclaimed May 7, 2026, as a day of prayer in our State under the theme "Glorify God among the nations."

□ 2120

This year also marks the 75th annual observance of The National Day of Prayer in Missouri, a tradition that has united Missourians of every background for generations.

Across our State, our churches, and our communities, we are coming together in a "Jubilee of Hope," with pilgrimages, gatherings, and acts of service, living proof that prayer is still alive and still a force in America.

America has never been perfect, but one thing has carried this Nation through every dark valley: the willingness of her people to stop, to reflect, to seek forgiveness where it is needed, to give thanks for our countless blessings, and to ask for wisdom as we move forward.

As President Reagan reminded us: "Prayer has sustained our people in crisis, strengthened us in times of challenge, and guided us through our daily lives since the first settlers came to this continent."

He also declared with conviction: "God doesn't need America but America needs God. If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under."

Mr. Speaker, that spirit, that spirit of a people who place their trust in Providence, is worth preserving with all of our hearts.

So as this National Jubilee is observed, I urge every American, everyone in this room, in the gallery watching today, watching tonight, I urge every American to take a moment to thank God Almighty for the blessings that we have received, the sacred responsibilities that we all carry no matter if you are Democrat or Republican, and the kind of country, that shining city upon that hill, we want to pass on to our children and our grandchildren.

Some 40 years ago, President Reagan said something to this effect: The time has come for us to reassert our trust in God. The time has come for us to realize that we need Him more than He needs us. The time has come for us to turn to God for the healing of America.

Mr. Speaker, as I close tonight, I will tell everyone in this room, our Nation needs healing. This body needs healing. Let each of us here tonight and in this body pledge today to be a part of that healing, healing through prayer to God Almighty.

And with faith in God, confidence in our principles, and that unbreakable American optimism, I believe with all my heart that our greatest days are still ahead of us as a nation.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), a good friend and chairman of the Values Action Team to provide comments.

Before I do that, I will extend that I am truly grateful that he and I in talking about doing this said to me, I think this is bigger than even that. I know many will rarely see the Speaker of the House come on the floor, which he did tonight, and I thank the chairman for setting this up and for letting the Membership know about this.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my support for this Special Order that commemorates the 250th anniversary of what I like to refer to as the "semiquincentennial" of the founding of our Nation and the underpinning of faith and religious commitment that has sustained our Nation from those very first days.

I do appreciate Congressman BRECHEEN for organizing this and including me in this. Indeed, this is bigger than any issue that we face in Congress. This is the bedrock, and so taking a few minutes here this evening to recognize that is so important.

Mr. Speaker, the Founding Fathers who preceded us in the Continental Congress back in May 1776 made it a priority to acknowledge God. They passed a resolution calling for penitence, prayer, and thanksgiving, and they called it our indispensable duty to: publicly acknowledge God, confess our offenses against him, and to beg for his intervention.

I believe God answered those prayers in ways that would go far beyond what they even dreamed of. God has, indeed, prospered the United States of America over these past 250 years. But as a nation, we have sadly strayed, as has been mentioned here tonight, from the gratitude that we owe to that provision.

Today, as Members of Congress, we come together standing in front just under you, Mr. Speaker, the motto, "In God We Trust," and we feel the great privilege of blessing that we have inherited from the spiritual inheritance that we were given.

As we celebrate America's 250th anniversary and look toward the future, if we are to extend that heritage and see our country flourish in the future, we must rededicate ourselves to shoring up the foundation of faith has sustained us.

Obviously, it is a very good thing that we have the opportunity this Sunday to come together on The National Mall to spend a day of thanksgiving and prayer just as they did 250 years ago.

I know everyone can't come to The National Mall this Sunday, but you can take a moment and the opportunity to spend some time in prayer and reflect on this Nation, remembering that there are so many people in the world that don't have that privilege to meet together in prayer.

As a Member of Congress, I am reminded there are so many people in the world that don't have that privilege. As a young man who grew up in rural Alabama and as a young boy who decided to accept Christ as my Savior, I never imagined that there were people in the world that would be punished for expressing their faith, but it happened then and it is happening now.

We pray for them as well as we pray for our own Nation. May this Nation be one that we always are able to express our faith with confidence and without any fear of the government.

Mr. Speaker, I add my prayers to those of my colleagues here tonight. May God guide us and may God sustain us and our work here in the House, and may He continue to bless these United States of America.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, again, for his help in organizing this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I thank JOSH BRECHEEN for arranging this Special Order. We are speaking now on the 250th anniversary of the United States, the anniversary of this blessed Nation. We should thank God for all He has given to this country.

On this anniversary, we can't help but take stock of the condition of this country. While people back home are concerned about material concerns, that is true, but if I asked them what the real problems are in the country, they almost uniformly are concerned about a moral breakdown. This is not surprising.

□ 2130

John Adams warned that our country was made for a moral and religious nation and totally unfit for any other kind.

This is our problem. No one can doubt that in the last 50, 60, or 80 years in this country, our country has become less moral and less religious. This has become a particularly greater trend over the last couple of decades.

Our forefathers routinely prayed to a Christian God. All the way up through Abraham Lincoln, our Presidents called upon our Nation to fast as they prayed to God.

Today, by the way, you can't even get the clergy themselves to ask for a day of fasting.

Our forefathers, the most popular book they read in the Bible was the book of Deuteronomy, the book that has the Ten Commandments in it and a book that dealt a lot with the laws that Israel was founded in.

In any event, I should also point out that behind me here, we have the reliefs here in the U.S. Congress. The most prominent position is given to a relief of Moses, which is an indication that our forefathers wanted a very religious Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us one more time pray to God to rededicate this country

to Him. We must pray for faith to bring this country back to its God-fearing roots, and one more time not only call on prayer and fasting as we try to work our way back to what this country once was and what we must be again if we are going to continue to survive, because no matter what laws we pass in this body, if we are not a moral and religious nation, we are through.

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his words. I thank all of our speakers for their comments.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I don't take it lightly to stand on the floor of the United States Congress and talk about this subject. Most people who do not have a Biblical undergirding would watch this and wonder why I would take the time to do this on the floor of the House of Representatives.

It is because of the things that I pointed out in my commentary and many Members have pointed out, whether it be George Washington, who said in his farewell address that you can't even claim to be a patriot if you should seek to undermine the pillars of religion and morality.

It is the bended-knee Washington that is to my left here who we know not only believed that a nation was to call itself unto a place of a posture of humility but as individuals.

History is ripe with all the different things that Washington did and said. He even banned cursing in his Army because of his observance to his code of virtue, as derived from the reading of his Bible.

You have a man who claimed to be an enemy of vice and a friend of virtue, Benjamin Franklin. He was imperfect. History recounts that, but we see all through history imperfect people being used for great purposes.

It is Benjamin Franklin, you heard tonight, who stood in front of the confederacy at the time as they were trying to figure out what they were going to do about the tyranny of one of the States, and they had locked the doors and studied different things.

Before he utters to Elizabeth Powell that it is a republic if you can keep it, he said these words in front of the people as they were struggling. He was calling them to pray, trying to figure out what this form of government was going to look like.

He said: "The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that . . . if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?"

He then called them to give a chaplaincy of sorts, and that is what history recounts, change in a hopeless situation to where our Constitution came into fruition weeks later.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to land the plane with this. We have talked about the past. In the Pledge of Allegiance, "one Nation under God," Supreme Allied Commander Eisenhower—most people don't realize that as a young

man, Eisenhower, living on a farm ranch to the north of Oklahoma, suffered an infection. The doctor told his mother that because of how this infection set up in his leg, they needed to amputate. Young Eisenhower had his brother stand guard at the door and basically told him: Do not allow them to amputate my leg.

History recounts that the doctor stood at the door and said that it is murder, basically, if you don't amputate. They did an all-night prayer vigil. By that all-night prayer vigil, the Supreme Allied Commander, who would later become a commissioned officer to lead not only our country but the nations to overcome Hitler and the threat to a world that it was, what would have happened if he and his family did not believe in the power of prayer?

It is what led a young Eisenhower to become President Eisenhower, to do all the things that he did in terms of making sure that we had added "one Nation under God" as a part of our history, recent history. He believed that prayer was not just job preparation. It was the job, not only as President but as Supreme Allied Commander.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. JEFFRIES) for today on account of flight delays.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-3505. A letter from the Administrator, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) Stage 1 [Docket ID: FSA-2025-0007] (RIN: 0560-AI71) received April 10, 2026, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

EC-3506. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's Major final rule — Regulatory Capital Rule: Community Bank Leverage Ratio Framework [Docket No.: R-1876] (RIN: 7100-AH08) received May 7, 2026, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-3507. A letter from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protec-

tion Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's Major final rule — Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B) [Docket No.: CFPB-2025-0040] (RIN: 3170-AB40) received April 30, 2026, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-3508. A letter from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's Major final rule — Equal Credit Opportunity Act (Regulation B) [Docket No.: CFPB-2025-0039] (RIN: 3170-AB54) received April 25, 2026, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-3509. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's Major final rule — Five-Year Review of the Oil Pipeline Index [Docket No.: RM26-6-000] received April 30, 2026, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3510. A letter from the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's Fiscal Year 2025 No FEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, Sec. 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3241); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-3511. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Office of the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting two notifications of a nomination, and action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, Sec. 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

EC-3512. A letter from the Executive Director, U.S. Access Board, transmitting the Board's Fiscal Year 2025 No FEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, Sec. 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109-435, Sec. 604(f)); (120 Stat. 3241); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GUTHRIE: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 7305. A bill to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to reauthorize the Department of Energy's Energy Sector Operational Support for Cyberresilience Program to provide operational support for energy sector cybersecurity and resilience, with an amendment (Rept. 119-646). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mrs. FISCHBACH: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 1274. A resolution providing that section 11 of House Resolution 1224 shall have no force or effect (Rept. 119-647). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 1275. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5625) to direct the Attorney General to make publicly available a list of each State and unit of local government that permits cashless bail, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6260) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit fraud in connection with posting bail; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 8365) to provide for conditions on the appointment of monitors by courts, and for other purposes; pro-

viding for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 96) expressing support for law enforcement officers; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 8469) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2027, and for other purposes (Rept. 119-648). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 8735. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Lower Presidio Historic Park in Monterey, California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GROTHMAN (for himself, Mrs.

WAGNER, and Mr. OWENS):

H.R. 8736. A bill to amend the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to ensure workplace choice and opportunity for young adults with disabilities; to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

By Mr. PATRONIS (for himself, Mrs.

LUNA, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr.

DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr.

CISCOMANI, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr.

LAWLER, and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 8737. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand access to the Veterans Community Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to include certain veterans seeking mental health or substance-use services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MORELLE (for himself, Ms.

LEE of Florida, Mr. STEIL, and Ms.

SEWELL):

H.R. 8738. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require electronic report filing for persons making certain electioneering communications and to permit political committees to make disbursements other than by check; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 8739. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 with respect to brownfields revitalization funding, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ANSARI (for herself and Mr.

SUOZZI):

H.R. 8740. A bill to provide temporary protected status and employment authorization to certain Iranian nationals adversely affected by the adjudication pause of December 2025, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 8741. A bill to establish the Philadelphia Campaign Two Hundred and Fiftieth Commemoration Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas (for herself,

Mr. BACON, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ,

Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. RANDALL, and

Ms. STANSBURY):

H.R. 8742. A bill to require officers and employees of the Department of Homeland Security to receive training with respect to tribes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.