

Her unwavering advocacy as a legislator and her dedicated care as a physician have changed the trajectory of many people's lives.

Dr. Mann is a dear friend to many, a devoted wife to her husband, Elliot, and a caring mother to Maxwell, Alexander, and Marcelo.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Minnesota, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Mann for her care of patients and her contributions to our State.

#### HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

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

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, roughly 16,000 young adults age out of the child welfare system annually, and far too many of them face significant challenges in reaching their full potential.

Tragically, nearly 35 percent, a full third of these young adults, also experience homelessness by age 21.

To address these challenges and to improve outcomes for children and young adults across America, this week the House passed H.R. 7432, the Fostering the Future Act.

This bipartisan legislation equips young adults with the tools to succeed and the skills for in-demand jobs.

By expanding education and training vouchers to include short-term workforce training and apprenticeships, we increase both opportunity and educational support for at-risk members of our society.

Additionally, this bill better aligns Federal housing programs so that we can reduce homelessness among those exiting the foster care system.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see the House take this bipartisan action for the first time in more than 25 years to help our young people build a brighter future.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF SARAH GHIORSE

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of an extraordinary woman from my beautiful New Mexico, Sarah Ghiorse.

Her family and all who knew her were touched by her life and grieve her passing from cancer at the untimely age of 52.

Sarah was rooted in love, love of her family, her colleagues, her communities, and our beautiful State.

She led the amazing organization NewMexicoWomen.org with her fierce advocacy for justice. Sarah believed that the work for women and girls in these difficult political times must be rooted in and convey connection to love, that in building together in com-

munity, we all have a role and belong to this ecosystem.

Sarah was the heart of her organization, moving with ease, grace, and integrity between multiple worlds, all connected by her commitment.

She was as comfortable in staff and donor meetings as she was at ceremonies or in the streets for marches, parades, or protests.

At the same time, she was a dedicated mother, a daughter, a sister, a partner, and a friend. Her light, love, and powerful legacy will continue and live on in those who loved and cared for her.

Rest in power, Sarah.

#### HONORING CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY INFRASTRUCTURE COALITION

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

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two young leaders from the Chattahoochee Valley: Frank Lumpkin IV of Columbus, Georgia, and Justus Armstrong of nearby Phenix City, Alabama, whose work over the last 9 years has advanced the effort to expand Interstate 14, more commonly known as I-14, from Texas to my home State of Georgia.

Known as the Forts to Ports Highway, I-14 will connect military communities from Fort Hood in Texas to Fort Benning in Georgia and spur economic growth across the Southeast.

In 2017, at just 19 years old, after graduation from Columbus High School, Frank founded the Chattahoochee Valley Infrastructure Coalition, recognizing the need to build support across the community for the expansion of Interstate 14.

Today, Frank is an attorney and serves our country as a captain and a Judge Advocate General in the United States Army Reserve.

Frank's relentless advocacy has led to congressionally authorized studies and I-14's designation as a congressionally authorized future interstate.

Strong bipartisan support exists at all levels for dedicated Federal investment and congressionally authorized future interstates, including I-14. These high-priority corridors have received further congressional authorization underscoring their national significance.

Because of this groundwork, Columbus, Georgia, a city I represent, has the opportunity to receive the first piece of I-14 outside of Texas. I-14's expansion to Georgia will provide interstate access to impoverished communities and create high-quality, blue-color jobs across the Southeast.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of Frank Lumpkin's work, and I look forward to supporting his coalition's inspiring advocacy.

□ 1110

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1041, VETERANS 2ND AMENDMENT PROTECTION ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6047, SHARRI BRILEY AND ERIC EDMUNDSON VETERANS BENEFITS EXPANSION ACT OF 2026; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1329, SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM ACT; AND WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1300 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1300

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1041) to amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from transmitting certain information to the Department of Justice for use by the national instant criminal background check system. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommend.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 6047) to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the dollar amounts for the payment of certain disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommend.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1329) to permit the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum to be located within the Reserve of the National

Mall, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on House Administration now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 4. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of May 24, 2026, relating to a measure providing for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 33.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Committee on Rules met and granted a rule providing for consideration of a few measures.

First, the rule provides for consideration of H.R. 1041, the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, under a closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, or their respective designees, and provides one motion to recommit.

Additionally, the rule provides for consideration of H.R. 6047, the Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act of 2026, under a closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, or their respective designees, and provides one motion to recommit.

The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 1329, the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum Act, under a closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and

ranking member of the Committee on House Administration, or their respective designees, and provides one motion to recommit.

Finally, the rule provides for the flexibility to consider a rule related to reconciliation on the same day it is reported from the Committee on Rules in order to expeditiously consider such legislation if it is received from the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, passage of my resolution today allows us to take important action this week. My resolution allows us to consider legislation affecting veterans, military families, and future generations.

This week, the House has an opportunity to take action on behalf of those who answered our country's call to serve, the families who stand beside them, and the stories that help define who we are as Americans.

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us also provides consideration of H.R. 1041, the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, introduced by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), my friend and colleague.

Chairman BOST has long been a strong advocate for veterans and military families. Yesterday, during discussion of this legislation, we spent time talking through the practical consequences of an issue affecting veterans across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I thought Chairman BOST helped paint an important picture, and I believe it is worth sharing with the House today, while certainly to address the 250,000 veterans who have been affected by this issue, but sometimes understanding legislation begins by thinking about just one person and sharing their story. Picture for a moment a veteran navigating the lasting effects of military service. Maybe they are balancing appointments, recovery, family responsibilities, and challenges associated with service-connected injuries. They are not a danger to themselves. They are not a danger to anyone else, but they simply reach a point where they recognize something many Americans recognize from time to time: I just need a little help. Maybe they speak with fellow veterans at The American Legion, a local VFW Post, or another veterans service association. Maybe they visit Veteran Affairs seeking support, and maybe they are having difficulty managing finances while focusing on their recovery.

The VA then determines a fiduciary may help manage their benefits. This isn't uncommon. A fiduciary is exactly that—someone assigned to help oversee financial matters.

Under the current framework, assignment of a fiduciary results in veterans being reported by VA bureaucrats to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, otherwise known as the NICS list, despite never being determined to be a danger to themselves or anyone else.

Once entered into that system, veterans can lose their Second Amend-

ment constitutional rights, despite never receiving the same process or legal findings applied to nonveterans.

Mr. Speaker, that is the issue before us.

Earlier this year, President Trump's Department of Veterans Affairs, led by a great Georgian, the Secretary of Veteran Affairs, Doug Collins, took important steps to restore fairness for veterans. The Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act builds on that progress by establishing lasting protections under law.

□ 1120

Simply put, this legislation ensures veterans seeking support through the VA are not subjected to different treatment solely because they sought assistance while navigating the lasting effects of military service.

The Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act consists of several important provisions.

Section 2 restores due process protections and ensures that the assignment of a fiduciary alone cannot automatically result in placement onto the NICS list, which prohibits firearm access. If you are a veteran at home seeking assistance from the VA, this means asking for help no longer creates uncertainty surrounding your constitutional rights that you defended in uniform. You can seek support. You can focus on recovery. You can continue moving forward with the benefits the Constitution affords you.

Section 3 ensures that veterans previously affected have their records corrected and updated. It rights a wrong and corrects an injustice. If this issue affected you or your family, this legislation creates a path to address concerns that may have followed you for years.

Section 4 clarifies that assistance in managing financial matters alone cannot serve as the basis for different treatment. Seeking support should never result in different treatment.

I applaud the many organizations that have stepped up to help us consider this legislation and advocated for its passage, including the National Rifle Association, the Gun Owners of America, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Their leadership and partnership throughout the consideration of this legislation will yield success today. Their advocacy helped elevate this issue and move it forward, beyond just a concept and a debate, for families and military families across the country.

Mr. Speaker, the rule before us also provides for consideration of H.R. 6047, the Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act of 2026. While military service may come to an end, for many veterans and families, the responsibilities and challenges associated with that service can continue for years.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House to think back to the veteran we were just discussing. Now, imagine that

same veteran returned home from catastrophic service-connected injuries. Recovery did not end after leaving the battlefield. Instead, recovery became a part of everyday life. Medical appointments became routine. In-home care became necessary. Family members stepped into caregiver roles, and financial responsibilities continued arriving every month.

For veterans and families, that reality continues for many years after military service ends. That is exactly why Congress must act.

Mr. Speaker, legislation receives a name for a reason. This legislation before us bears the names of Sharri Briley and Sergeant Eric Edmundson because their experiences help explain why stronger support matters.

After losing her husband, Army Chief Warrant Officer Donovan “Bull” Briley, during the battle of Mogadishu, Sharri Briley experienced responsibilities no military family should have to navigate alone. At just 24 years old, while serving our country near the Iraq-Syria border, Sergeant Edmundson’s vehicle struck an improvised explosive device, an IED. The blast caused catastrophic injuries that fundamentally changed the course of his life. By the grace of God, Sergeant Edmundson survived.

Today, years later, Sergeant Edmundson and his family continue navigating the lasting effects of injuries sustained in service to our country. Their experiences remind us of an important reality: Military service often creates responsibilities carried not only by veterans but by entire families.

Simply put, H.R. 6047 strengthens support for catastrophically injured veterans, caregivers, surviving spouses, and military families. The Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act consists of several important provisions.

Section 2 increases compensation for catastrophically injured veterans requiring regular in-home care. If you are that veteran at home, navigating daily care, appointments, adaptive equipment, and financial strain associated with severe service-connected injuries, this legislation provides approximately \$10,000 annually in additional support. That support helps offset costs that families experiencing such burdens carry every day.

Section 3 strengthens support available to caregivers and military families. If your spouse, parent, child, or loved one helps care for you each day, this legislation recognizes an important reality: Military service often affects entire families.

Section 4 ensures these reforms are implemented effectively.

Section 5 expands eligibility requirements for Guard and Reserve servicemembers by reducing qualifying Active-Duty requirements for VA home loan eligibility. If you are a Guard or Reserve servicemember at home, this legislation expands opportunities for

homeownership and helps more military families achieve the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, finally, the rule before us provides consideration of the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Act, introduced by my colleague, NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS of New York, one of the most respected members of the House Republican Conference.

The vision for the Smithsonian American women’s history museum is straightforward but important: to preserve, research, and share the stories, experiences, and contributions of women whose leadership, sacrifice, and service built our country.

On December 27, 2020, President Trump signed legislation into law, taking an important step toward making that vision a reality. That reflected something many Americans already understand: The story of our country cannot be fully told without the stories of the women who shaped it.

While Congress and President Trump established a path forward for the museum, the project stalled because one important piece remained unfinished: The museum still does not have a permanent home on The National Mall because the original law prohibited it from being located within the Reserve. The Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Act helps complete that work.

Mr. Speaker, all of us can think of women whose strength, sacrifice, and example led us to who we are today: a mother, grandmother, teacher, mentor, leader, or someone whose example shaped our own story.

In many ways, these stories became part of our country’s story, too. For generations, American women shaped our country through military service, public service, education, science, innovation, leadership, and sacrifice. That is why Congress must act.

Mr. Speaker, simply put, the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Act moves this project from authorization toward reality by providing a path for the museum to be built alongside other Smithsonian museums at a place of historic and national prominence.

The Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Act consists of several important provisions.

Section 2 removes restrictions preventing the museum from being located within the Reserve on The National Mall, designates the south monument site, and allows the Smithsonian to move forward with planning and construction.

Section 2 also facilitates transfer of the land to the Smithsonian Institution and establishes planning and reporting requirements to ensure transparency and accountability as the project moves forward.

If your family visits our Nation’s Capital years from now, a child walking through those exhibits may learn about a scientist, teacher, servicemember, entrepreneur, or national leader,

and even be inspired to change our country, too.

I applaud Representative MALLIOTAKIS for her leadership on this effort.

Mr. Speaker, this week, the House has an opportunity to act on behalf of veterans seeking fairness, military families carrying lasting responsibilities, and future generations who deserve to understand the stories that helped shape our country. These measures address different issues, but they are connected by a simple principle: We should honor service; we should support families; and we should preserve the stories and values that continue shaping our country.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support my resolution, which is provided for consideration in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

President Trump has not used his first 18 months in office to reduce costs or end foreign wars like he promised—quite the opposite. Last week, he said he doesn’t “think about Americans’ financial situation.”

His priorities have never been the American people. His administration’s priorities are the Trump name, his wealth, his war, and his profits. Everything he does costs Americans more money and more pain.

Let’s recap the administration’s actions in just the last few days. They created a \$1.8 billion slush fund to pay off January 6 insurrectionists, who beat law enforcement officers in this very building. Taxpayers will foot that bill. Trump toured his dream ballroom that will cost taxpayers at least \$1 billion. He traded stocks worth up to \$750 million and then promoted the companies he bought.

We are in the 82nd day of Trump’s war that is costing Americans over a billion dollars a day. Because of his war, gas prices have skyrocketed to \$4.55 a gallon. Farmers are going bankrupt, and Americans can’t afford groceries.

Trump gets away with all of this because House Republicans stand hip to hip with him. House Republicans’ bills this week are proof, once again, that Trump calls the shots in this House.

Some of these bills had bipartisan promise, but Republicans poisoned them. For instance, for more than a decade, a bipartisan group of our colleagues fought to establish the women’s history museum and put it on The National Mall. Women led this fight. We worked across the aisle because of our shared belief that women’s history is integral to our Nation’s story. Then, after decades of working together on building both a women’s history museum and a Latino history museum on The National Mall, Republicans suddenly changed the bill.

The White House directed Republicans to amend the bill, so Trump and

his ballroom committee could determine what the museum looks like, where it should be placed, and even what we can talk about in the women's museum.

□ 1130

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, I asked the Republican chair of the House Administration Committee why he gave Trump this control. He refused to answer my questions because there is no good reason.

Before they hijacked the museum, 127 Democrats proudly cosponsored that bill. Now 146 Members of Congress have signed a letter opposing it until it is restored to its original version. These Members—these Members want us to tell a story of how women marched, protested, and were jailed so that they could vote and the story of women who fought in our Revolutionary War and continue to defend our country today.

Women deserve to be the ones to tell our story, not Trump and his ballroom buddies.

My colleagues should reject this partisan bill and return to the original, bipartisan version that honors the diverse contributions that women made to this country. One man should not dictate what women's history looks like.

This rule also makes in order two bills from the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Democrats and Republicans agree that we should increase benefits for disabled veterans and their surviving family members. These soldiers gave their limbs, vision, and mobility for our Nation. We owe veterans the benefits that truly reflect their sacrifice. But we should reject Republicans' choice to pay for those benefits by making it more expensive for veterans to stay in their homes.

That is what the Republicans' Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act does. It pays for the needed increases in disability benefits by making housing more expensive for veterans. Republicans' choices are all wrong.

Now is not the time to make housing harder to get when, thanks to Trump's war, tariffs and inflation, mortgage rates are averaging at 6.75 percent, the highest rate since last July; when gas and utility bills are skyrocketing; and when more than 10,000 veterans have lost their homes since Trump's administration shut down a VA program that helped veterans avoid foreclosure. There are another 90,000 veterans currently behind on their mortgages or in the foreclosure process who, thanks to Trump's administration, won't be able to use that program.

Now more than ever, we should make it easier for veterans to keep their homes. Yet, instead of pushing back against Trump's attacks on veterans' housing, Republicans chose to make housing more expensive.

Republicans have the money for tax breaks for billionaires but not veterans' housing, money for a White

House ballroom but not veterans' housing, money for a \$1.8 billion slush fund but not veterans' housing. Those are Republicans' priorities, and they are all wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure everybody at home knows what is before us. I find it notable, and I am sure we will debate H.R. 1041, the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act, but just to comment on H.R. 6047, the Sharri Briley and Eric Edmundson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act, this bill has meaningful, meaningful reform, and it enables veterans to live a much better life.

It significantly increases the monthly benefits rate for catastrophically, service-connected disabled veterans with a traumatic brain injury or other service disabilities that require regular, around-the-clock, in-home medical care, offering an additional \$10,000 annually. It raises survivors' VA benefits by an extra 1.5 percent over 2 years, providing an extra couple hundred dollars to over 500,000 survivors.

Since 1993, Congress has not adjusted DIC aside from inflation. This is meaningful, and it has a great impact on veterans across the country, notwithstanding the fact that it also expands the eligibility requirement for National Guard and reservists from 90 days of Active Duty service to 14 days of Active Duty service with a 1 percent fee. This would allow more Members of the Guard and Reserves, generally younger members, to be able to live the American Dream by owning their first home.

Over 500,000 survivors, National Guard and reservists, and thousands of catastrophically disabled veterans and their families will be positively impacted by this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we think that we should do all of these. We think we should increase the disability benefits for veterans. We agree on that.

Yet, what we are taking issue with is just the additional disability compensation, if you look at the score, what do they cost? It is \$1 billion.

What else costs \$1 billion? It is that ballroom. What else costs \$1 billion? Actually, more than \$1 billion—\$1.8 billion. It is their slush fund. That is where we have a disagreement. We think we should do this, but we don't think we should cut veterans' housing to pay for it.

They are willing to pay for ballrooms and slush funds, but they want to cut veterans' housing in order to provide these needed benefits. We agree that these are needed increases in benefits.

Mr. Speaker, to address this issue more fully, I suggest that if we defeat

the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to adopt an amendment to H.R. 6047, authored by Ranking Member TAKANO, which would strike the sections of the bill that would raise fees on veterans who want to refinance their homes and replace these fees with a reduction in the estate tax exemption from \$15 million to \$14.5 million.

There is an easy question: How do we pay for this? How about asking the millionaires to help out a teeny bit for our veterans. Yet, under this Republican-controlled government, there is always money for the tax cuts to the rich, funding illegal wars, forking over \$1 billion for Trump's ballroom, or the latest insanity of creating that \$1.8 billion slush fund to pay out to January 6 insurrections and other Trump allies.

Yet, none of that spending by Republicans is paid for. It is on the backs of American taxpayers. It is on the backs of our children and grandchildren. Yet, when it comes to veterans, Republicans say that we have to offset the bill's cost by jacking up their home loan fees.

Scaling back the estate tax exemption by \$500,000 after Republicans tripled it in their big, ugly bill isn't going to make a big difference to the heirs of all of those wealthy parents, but that alone would fund the benefit increases for disabled veterans and survivors in this bill without penalizing veterans who are just trying to stay in their homes and afford their mortgages.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment into the RECORD, along with any extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEAN of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, to discuss our proposal, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the sponsor of this important amendment and the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate that if we move forward with this bill without my amendment, 100 percent of the very much-needed money, the \$1 billion to help our catastrophically disabled veterans who deserve our help—it is long overdue, but we are paying for it 100 percent with other veterans' money. Let me say it again: 100 percent of this bill is being paid for off of the backs of other veterans.

Let me explain.

Veterans are experiencing record foreclosures. Unfortunately, it is not hard to explain why: the Trump administration's assault on VA loan assistance options. Just months into the Trump administration's second term,

President Trump and Secretary Collins, at the urging from Chairman BOST and Chairman VAN ORDEN, ended the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase program, otherwise known as VASP.

The VASP program was a lifeline offered to veterans by President Biden that served as the last-resort option for veterans before foreclosure. It is no surprise that foreclosures for veterans have doubled since that action.

Mr. Speaker, 10,000 veterans have lost their homes in the last year, and tens of thousands more are set to be foreclosed on in this Trump economy. The last option for these veterans is to refinance their loans.

This legislation puts that relief further away. Refinances will be more expensive, which makes them no longer a viable option for some veterans and servicemembers.

□ 1140

Veterans have fewer options than they did a year ago, and this bill will reduce those options even more. Therefore, we must find a better way to pay for this bill that doesn't raise costs on struggling veteran and Active-Duty homeowners.

As I have said before, and I will say it again, spending by Congress is a statement of our collective priorities. However, in a majority rule system like ours, the reality is that the work of Congress isn't a true reflection of shared goals, as the Founders intended. Rather, it is often simply a reflection of what the majority chooses to force on everybody else.

Case in point: I very much disagree with the majority's choice to include billions of dollars' worth of tax cuts for millionaires in the big, ugly bill. I especially disagree with the majority's decision to triple the exemption from paying estate tax from \$5 million to \$15 million. That is not my priority nor is it the priority of most Americans who are struggling to get by.

I, and Americans in my estimation, would much rather see that money spent on those who are in more dire need than millionaires and billionaires. I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that we may consider my amendment, which would direct just a fraction of that wealth to pay for benefits for the catastrophically injured veterans, their caregivers, and the survivors we are discussing today.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, no one in this Congress can say with a straight face that there is a material difference in someone inheriting \$14.5 million in property tax-free and \$15 million tax-free. The change contemplated in this amendment would not appreciably affect the quality of life of a single individual and is only a temporary change, but using that money instead to achieve the benefits increases in H.R.

6047 most definitely will, in a very positive way.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the defeat of the previous question.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to list some of the organizations that stand with us, hoping this bill is considered for debate and final passage later today.

It is helpful for the RECORD to note that The American Legion endorses this legislation. The Wounded Warrior Project endorses this legislation. Paralyzed Veterans of America endorses the legislation. Vietnam Veterans of America endorses this legislation.

AMVETS, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Gold Star Spouses of America, Inc., the Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, The Independence Fund, Quality of Life Foundation, Veterans Multiple Sclerosis Alliance, and National Military Family Association all support this legislation, which to me illustrates why its passage is so important. Again, I stand with those groups, as do many of my colleagues.

I suspect this will receive wide bipartisan support. What we are doing today is debating the rule, the resolution that enables us to consider that legislation. We can have that debate, but we can't do it unless we pass the rule, which is why our side feels so fervently responsible for helping move this issue forward to solve these issues for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD the April 6, 2026, NPR article, "Trump's VA killed a home loan program. Vets are now losing their homes because of it."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

[From NPR, April 6, 2026]

TRUMP'S VA KILLED A HOME LOAN PROGRAM. VETS ARE NOW LOSING THEIR HOMES BECAUSE OF IT

(By Chris Arnold and Quil Lawrence)

More than 10,000 veterans lost their homes to foreclosure since May of last year, when the Trump administration shut down a key safety net in the VA home loan program, according to the latest industry data. That is the highest pace of foreclosures for VA loans in a decade.

Another 90,000 vets are heading toward foreclosure. This comes after a years-long debacle inside the Department of Veterans Affairs has whiplashed thousands of vets between various enacted and canceled programs and left many of them on the brink of losing their homes—often through no fault of their own.

A loan backed by the VA is considered one of the most valuable benefits for military service members and has helped millions achieve homeownership. But for nearly a year now, vets have had worse protections and options than most other homeowners if they fall behind.

"We should have something in place to try to stem people from losing their homes," said Steve Sharpe, an attorney with the non-profit National Consumer Law Center.

The Trump administration was warned this would happen.

The roots of the crisis go back to a mistake made during the Biden administration, when the VA abruptly shut down a pandemic assistance program while thousands of vets were still in the middle of it. Struggling homeowners who used the program to skip some mortgage payments suddenly had to pay those payments back all at once—an unaffordable burden for many of them. After an NPR investigation exposed the problem, the VA halted foreclosures for a year while it rolled out a fix.

Republicans in Congress, citing costs, wanted to kill that fix and replace it with something else. But last spring, the mortgage industry warned that shutting down the program without first replacing it would be a disaster.

"Foreclosure. Period. That's really where it's gonna come to," warned Elizabeth Balce, representing the Mortgage Bankers Association, at a hearing in March of 2025 before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Less than two months later, the Trump administration shut down the rescue program anyway.

Since then, more than 10,000 veterans have lost their homes through foreclosure sales, according to ICE Mortgage Technology, which tracks such data.

It's unclear how many of those veterans could have avoided foreclosure through the rescue plan, called VASP, or the VA Servicing Purchase program. But mortgage industry insiders told NPR it's clear that some of those vets had enough disability pay or other income and would have been able to keep their homes had VA not shut down VASP with virtually no warning.

VA officials did not respond to NPR's questions about why the agency shut down VASP without first replacing it with anything else.

Meanwhile, 90,000 more veterans are currently behind on their mortgages or in the foreclosure process. The VA now says it's coming out with a new program that could help many of those vets, but it still won't be up and running for months.

Housing and industry groups warn that the new program, when it is finally operational, could still leave those vets with worse options than other homeowners, and push their monthly payments up by hundreds of dollars a month.

#### BUYING A HOUSE BROUGHT STABILITY

For Leann Ledford, one of the hardest things right now is that she's been here before and fought her way out. "When you lose your home, your house, nothing else matters," she said.

Ledford's husband is a Marine who was hurt in Afghanistan. He has PTSD and a brain injury. It took a long time to get through the VA's red tape to approve his disability pay, and in the meantime, his condition got so bad he couldn't work.

"At first, we didn't know whether it was a stroke or a seizure or what was going on," Ledford remembers.

She had to stop working to care for her husband, and then they couldn't afford rent. The couple ended up living out of a trailer hitched to their truck, with their young son, for six months while they waited for his disability paperwork to go through.

But then they got back on their feet. They even bought a house in January 2021 with a loan backed by the VA.

That's just what the VA loan is supposed to be—a life-changing benefit to give veterans a leg up into the middle class and homeownership.

The house is right across the street from the neighborhood's public school. "So our son started at the elementary school," which, Ledford said, has been a "huge relief."

"Since my husband hasn't been able to drive, you know, I have to manage everything," she said.

As both she and her husband's stress levels fell, his symptoms improved. And their son has had a stable home. "He's been able to live over half his life in our house now, and he doesn't remember all the bad years 'cause he was too little," Ledford said.

But just a year after they bought their house, a cascade of actions by the Department of Veterans Affairs entangled them, and thousands of others, in a years-long ordeal where they weren't permitted to pay their mortgage. That's now pushed them into foreclosure and the brink of eviction.

"We didn't know that the foreclosure sale went through until somebody knocked on the front door," Ledford said.

#### BAIT AND SWITCHED BY THE VA

For the Ledfords, this all started back in 2022 after they had to replace their furnace and were hit with other costly home repairs. Their lender, Freedom Mortgage, told them they could get help from what was called a mortgage forbearance. The COVID-era program would let them pause making payments.

"They told us it was for a year, and they would check in after six months," Ledford said. "And then we would just pick up our payments at the end of the year . . . It felt like such a relief for us."

She says Freedom told her the skipped payments would then be moved to the back of her loan term, to be paid later when they refinanced or sold the house.

In the wake of the pandemic, millions of Americans with other types of federally backed mortgages took advantage of such forbearance programs.

But then, in October of 2022, the Biden administration shut down a key part of the VA's forbearance program that had enabled the skipped payments to be deferred.

As a result, tens of thousands of veterans like the Ledfords were told they suddenly needed to pay that year's worth of payments in a lump sum.

"And we're like, wait a minute, what?" Leann Ledford recalled.

That would have been tens of thousands of dollars, which they, and most veterans in the program, couldn't afford. Or, they would have to accept a refinanced loan at the current, much higher interest rates. Rates had sharply risen from around 3% to 7%, and that new loan would have raised the Ledfords' payment by about \$1,000 a month. They couldn't afford either option.

After NPR reported in late 2023 that 40,000 vets like the Ledfords had been trapped this way, with no affordable way to get current on their loans, the VA halted foreclosures across the country for a year while it rolled out a rescue program.

#### TRUMP'S VA KILLS BIDEN-ERA FIX

Once it was finally up and running by early 2025, the VA's rescue program, VASP, was starting to save large numbers of vets and their families from foreclosure. It gave more than 33,000 veterans who were behind on their payments new, low-cost mortgages with an interest rate of 2.5%.

But only months after VASP was fully functional and helping vets on that scale, the Trump administration had taken office and killed it. On May 1, 2025, amid fear of the potential cost, the VA abruptly did away with this safety net, giving mortgage servicers and even its own VA staff just one-week's notice. Vets who were already en-

rolled would keep those low-cost, affordable loans. But the door was slammed shut for any more veterans.

The Ledfords and other vets who needed the help hadn't managed to get enrolled yet.

"I found out that [VASP] was ending and I called the VA loan technician and they didn't even know yet," said Ledford. "They had to go figure out what was going on."

Mortgage companies told NPR back then that they were scrambling to enroll as many vets as they could, but the abrupt closure of the program caught them off guard.

#### "WHAT THE HELL?"

Many veterans were hurt in a different way, too. After VASP was shut down, vets who didn't get enrolled in time felt they had no choice but to accept the offer of a loan modification, even though the higher interest rate meant punishingly higher payments.

Army vet Jon Henry, from Kansas City, Mo., wound up in a modified loan with monthly payments that are \$380 higher than his original mortgage.

"It's a struggle," said Henry, who served in Iraq during the first Gulf War in a unit meant to counter chemical warfare attacks. "Especially with everything else being inflated in the country, you know, with groceries, gas . . . I'm like, what the hell?"

Henry, who lives outside Kansas City, Mo., fell behind on his mortgage after losing his job managing a manufacturing plant. He's working again now and just needed to catch up on his payments.

#### THE VA LOAN CALAMITY

Veterans who've fallen behind on their loans are in a worse position than most non-veteran homeowners. Mortgages backed by the government through Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac or FHA all have emergency options for delinquent borrowers that don't raise their interest rate or monthly payment. But that's not true anymore for veterans with loans backed by the VA.

Mortgage rates have been between 6% and 7% over the past 10 months since VASP shut down. That means the other option for a VA loan, a loan modification, often sharply raises the monthly payment because many vets originally got their loans when rates were lower. Many veterans have to choose between selling their house, getting foreclosed on, or accepting a much higher-cost mortgage.

"It hurts paying \$3,200 a month," Shante Benfatto told NPR. She served in Afghanistan and is rated 100% disabled by the VA. She and her husband fell behind on payments when he was between jobs. They say they tried for months to get into the VASP program but that their lender didn't get all their paperwork together before the VA suddenly shut it down. After receiving letters threatening foreclosure, the Benfattos reluctantly accepted a new modified mortgage with payments about \$300 a month higher than their original loan.

"We're paying late because we can't afford to pay the extra money until the end of the month, until she gets her disability," said her husband, Mark. The late fees add an additional \$105 to their monthly mortgage bill.

Some vets have seen their payments go up by a lot more.

Jerome Thomas, an Air Force vet in Port Charlotte, Fla., got hit with a payment that's \$800 higher every month. His interest rate more than doubled to 6.8%. He said his lender told him he either had to agree to that or get foreclosed on, so he says he felt forced into the higher-cost loan.

"I told them I can't afford to pay it," Thomas, who's lived in his house for 10 years, told NPR. And as he predicted, he's now behind on that modified loan and is receiving letters warning he's headed into foreclosure.

"I got my three kids in here, I've got the wife, she's a teacher . . . it's bad."

Even when the Trump administration's new loan program is up and running, it won't help vets like Thomas, Benfatto, or Henry who were already forced to accept loans with higher interest rates. It won't lower their payments back down to where they were before. In theory, some vets could refinance if mortgage rates drop sharply, but rates have been rising again.

#### THE VA'S NEW FIX

The Trump administration's new program, when it's up and running, will work by allowing vets to take their missed payments and move them to the back of their loan term. So they'll get to keep their current mortgage and interest rate. That should be a big help to vets who have a relatively low rate.

There's a qualifier in the current draft. The way it's written, the VA is telling mortgage companies that if a new, modified loan at a higher interest rate only raises a veteran's monthly payment by up to 15%, they must place vets into that more costly loan.

So a veteran with a \$2,000 monthly mortgage payment could still be pushed into a modified loan that raises their payment by up to \$300 a month. And they wouldn't be given the option of moving their missed payments to the back of their loan and keeping their original, lower-cost mortgage.

The mortgage industry is telling the VA that that doesn't make any sense.

"As drafted, Veterans will continue to have worse options than similarly situated non-Veterans," Pete Mills, an executive with the Mortgage Bankers Association, wrote in a letter to the VA.

"Payment reduction is the most important driver of modification performance, and the current policy will lead to higher redefault rates," Mills said. The association, along with housing groups, is recommending that the VA put a loan with a higher payment at the very bottom of its so-called waterfall of options for homeowners who are behind on payments.

"The VA should restructure the waterfall to only allow increased monthly payments as a last resort," Mills said.

Housing advocates are also pushing the VA to ask the mortgage industry to hold off foreclosing on vets until its new program gets up and running in a few months. That would buy time for the tens of thousands of vets who are already behind on their loans or in the foreclosure process.

"We're talking about a heck of a lot of folks," said Sharpe, with the National Consumer Law Center.

#### EVICTION LOOMS

It's already too late for Leann Ledford, her combat-disabled husband and their 10-year-old son in Spokane, Wash. Freedom Mortgage sold their house in a foreclosure sale, and it's now owned by the VA and they're being told they need to leave.

Ledford's husband has spiraled. He's having seizures again, and the issue made him so stressed that he didn't want to be interviewed for this story. "It has really impacted him, and he is really struggling," she said.

The VA said in a statement that it has helped thousands of vets to avoid foreclosure, but didn't offer specifics. VA press secretary Pete Kasperowicz wrote, "Per federal law, VA's home loan program is based on the premise that while Veterans may need some assistance, they must generally be able to make their mortgage payments."

The Ledfords, who receive \$3,971 a month in Ledford's husband's disability pay, say they could have afforded mortgage payments under the VASP program. And they could have afforded their original mortgage with its \$1,447 monthly payment, had VA's new

program been up and running and allowed them to move their missed payments to the back of their loan term. But because VA killed VASP before standing up the new program, they were stranded without either option.

“VA worked tirelessly with the Ledford family to help keep them in their home. However, they were nearly four years behind on their mortgage payment, and the decision to foreclose on their mortgage was made by Freedom Mortgage,” Kasperowicz said. Freedom Mortgage declined repeated requests for an interview or statement.

That VA statement ignores the fact that the Ledfords, like many other vets, were in a bureaucratic quagmire resulting from the VA’s own missteps. Because their lender now considered them far enough behind on their mortgage, it would not let them resume monthly payments—a standard industry practice. So, they were told to just keep applying for help through a loss mitigation process that dragged on for years and in the end, never offered them any actual assistance.

The VA did not respond to questions about whether it could do anything to save the Ledfords from losing their home, since the VA now owns it following the foreclosure sale. The only offer from VA so far was \$3,500 to vacate the house in what’s known as “cash for keys.”

The Ledfords have been told that to get even that much help, they need to vacate their home by April 3.

In its written statement, the VA said it stands ready to assist the Ledfords with health care services as needed.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, this is exactly the issue we have. We are supportive of increasing disability benefits. We started out with that. We believe this is long overdue. Our problems are with the choices Republicans make. Now, at a time when veterans are losing their homes—90,000 veterans are headed toward foreclosure—is not when you should actually make it more expensive for them. This comes after a yearlong debacle inside the Department of Veterans Affairs has whiplashed thousands of vets between various enacted and canceled programs.

Trump’s VA is really beating up our veterans as they have tried to stay in their homes. These are the choices they are making: Let’s make it harder on them. We shouldn’t be doing that. We should make it easier on our veterans to stay in their homes. What happens? Are we going to kick them out? Are they going to be shivering? Are they going to have to be moving in with others? That is not the answer.

The answer is what we propose. There are other ways to pay for this, but Republicans won’t go there because they are always protecting the wealthy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LANDSMAN).

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I came down today to talk about the trans bill that the majority is pursuing this week. This is one of a ton of trans-obsessed bills.

I am struggling, Mr. Speaker, because this is another bill where the Federal Government is going to tell schools what they can and can’t do.

They are worried about bathrooms and pronouns. I just don’t get it because, as a kid, when I was growing up, I remember thinking when I learned about this, that Democrats were for the little guy and for empathy, but I liked that Republicans were for local control. They didn’t want a big Federal Government being intrusive in our lives. That is just not the case anymore.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is focused on bathrooms and pronouns, and it is a crazy turn of events for the party to be telling local communities what they can and can’t do, and it is one of 126 trans-obsessed bills introduced in this Congress. That is an insane number. The majority has already passed nine. If this bill passes, it will be the tenth trans-obsessed bill that the majority has passed.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the majority put a few bills on the floor to expand childcare, to expand preschool, to improve reading and math scores, to improve graduation rates, to improve enrollment in college and career training. That would really help schools.

Leave these trans kids alone. Stop going after schools because of their bathroom and pronoun policies. It is mean. It is expensive, and it is a distraction from the work of improving our schools and improving our economy.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I don’t know what the Representative is referring to with respect to trans-obsessed bills. This resolution has nothing whatsoever regarding that legislation. That was passed 2 weeks ago. I assume the Representative is just 2 weeks too late.

That having been said, I do want to spend a little bit more time talking about H.R. 1041, Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act. I think this is owed a lot of contemplation, deliberation by people watching at home. As I mentioned before, 250,000 veterans, a quarter of a million people, who served our country in uniform, have been subjected to an injustice. We have the ability to correct that today.

I walked you through, the viewer at home, but just picture a veteran who is navigating those lasting effects of military service, and they may be having a hard time trying to pay for their bills or trying to figure out a way to make ends meet. So they reach out to The American Legion, the VFW, many of the organizations, by the way, who endorse the other veterans legislation that we discussed and the other side so passionately opposes.

However, nonetheless, take yourself into this picture. The veteran is going into The American Legion hall, having a conversation, and they say: Hey, why don’t you reach out to the VA?

They do so, and the VA says: Okay, let’s see what we can do.

They end up appointing a fiduciary to help them manage their benefits. For over 30 years—I should say, 28 years, but nearly 30 years, that veteran

has then been subjected to an unconstitutional process that we can correct today because when that happens and when someone is appointed a fiduciary to help them manage their benefits, they have been sent to the NICS list, which is administered by the Department of Justice, the FBI, which prohibits the owning and ownership of a firearm. To me, that is a grave injustice. The people who put on the uniform of our country and served our country to defend our constitutional rights should be afforded the exact same constitutional rights that we have.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to encourage everyone to remember reading this resolution, there are three bills we are just looking to have a vote on today. The other side is trying to block consideration of this legislation. I hope some will cross the aisle and help us achieve this later. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Rules Committee, Republicans voted down Ranking Member MCGOVERN’s amendment, which was intended to stop what might be the most dangerous corruption scheme in modern American politics, the abuse of the Judgment Fund, the little known government account that is now being turned into a political slush fund.

□ 1150

Yes, I am talking about the \$1.8 billion, you know, almost twice as much as we need to pay for the disability benefits. It is a \$1.8 billion slush fund.

Before yesterday, most Americans might never have heard of the judgment fund. It is something that was created that is funded by the taxpayer, so I want Americans to know a little bit more about this.

It is intended to fund legitimate legal settlements, but Republicans are now blessing a system where a President and his own Justice Department, his Attorney General, his private lawyer, can create a law, make a deal, settle that lawsuit, and then send Americans’ money wherever they want without congressional oversight.

That is what we were saying yesterday. It is like, no, Congress, under our Constitution, controls the purse. We are the ones who decide where America’s money goes because we have to stand up in front of them every 2 years and explain ourselves. Well, Republicans never have townhalls, so they never stand in front of their constituents, but we do.

What they have just done is say: No, we are going to bypass that, and we are going to send \$1.8 billion to Trump’s allies. We control the money. You don’t have a say, and we are going to make all of those men and a couple of women who came in here, who beat our law enforcement officers, the same people you walk before every day—those Capitol Police were beaten, and 140 of them

went to the hospital. Now, we are giving them money because we created the system.

I think it is important that Americans know what they are blessing. They are blessing a slush fund that any President can just make up a lawsuit, enter a settlement, and have collusion. This is how the Mafia works. You hand out money. The problem is that the Mafia, in this sense, is getting their money from your taxpayer dollars.

Let's sound the alarm. This is corruption of the most egregious manner. We should not operate like a Mafia in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to debate this resolution before us today, but I will comment briefly. With respect to President Trump, first and foremost, over the 4 years of his first Presidency, he was subjected to persecution unlike any President before, which probably led to the now at least three assassination attempts.

I welcome the other side joining us in not just condemning those but helping us ensure that he is not subjected to that type of threat going forward.

What I will say, with respect to the ballroom, is that there was a bipartisan group of individuals who came down and said this was necessary. Presidents from both parties have extolled the virtue of having a safe space not just to host functions but to ensure that the President and members of our country, who serve our country, are protected in those environments.

We saw that, unfortunately, on full display just a month ago when a shooter tried to rush a dinner, at which the President and many other Republicans and Democrats were congregating, with the explicit purpose of assassinating members of President Trump's administration. I welcome the calls of condemnation from the other side and look forward to hearing them in the gentlewoman's rebuttal.

What I would say is the issue before us today, just a good reminder, there are three bills on which we are seeking to have a vote. We are seeking to have a voice and an opportunity to vote on this legislation today. You can vote however you want. This rule allows us to have that opportunity.

As I mentioned before, this gives us a chance to help veterans who have suffered catastrophic injuries. That is one of the pieces of legislation we are voting on today. This has the ability to restore the constitutional rights of 250,000 veterans who have had their rights stripped from them because of legislation that was passed 28 years ago that has been interpreted in a certain way ever since. This legislation enables us to build a museum honoring America's women and all the contributions

they have made to this incredible country that we all enjoy today.

I just remind folks that that is what we are debating, and that is what we are voting on. I welcome conversations about each, but that is the question before us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are debating today what Republicans' priorities are and what we are going to be voting on this week in the House.

That is the question I ask: Where are Republicans' priorities? Their bills highlight where their priorities are, and what is coming up this week highlights where their priorities are.

We have already talked about how they are going to be taking from Peter to pay Paul, except Peter and Paul are veterans who deserve both their housing and their disability benefits.

They are also going to be bringing to the House floor this week—not through this rule, but probably another one—maybe \$72 billion worth of spending that is not paid for.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget's May 5, 2026, article: "CBO Scores FY 2026 Reconciliation at \$72 Billion."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

#### CBO SCORES FY 2026 RECONCILIATION AT \$72 BILLION

The Senate Judiciary and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (HSGAC) Committees released draft reconciliation legislation for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 late last night. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the bill would add \$72 billion to the deficit over the next decade—or about \$94 billion with interest.

The reconciliation bill would appropriate \$72 billion for various functions in FY 2026, allowing the funding to be obligated at any point through 2029. Although the stated goal is to replace ordinary appropriations over that time period, the lack of guardrails on when the money is appropriated could lead the money to be spent more quickly, creating the need or demand for future additional appropriations.

Of further concern, at least \$7.5 billion of the total—\$5 billion available at the Homeland Security Secretary's discretion, \$1.5 billion available at the Attorney General's discretion, and \$1 billion available for the U.S. Secret Service for the East Wing Modernization Project—appears to be above and beyond normal appropriations.

#### FUNDING PROVIDED IN FY 2026 RECONCILIATION BILL

Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee, \$32.5 billion:

Customs and Border Protection, \$22.3 billion.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, \$7.5 billion.

Homeland Security Department, \$2.5 billion.

Judiciary Committee, \$39.2 billion:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, \$30.7 billion.

Customs and Border Protection, \$3.5 billion.

Homeland Security Department, \$2.5 billion.

Justice Department, \$1.5 billion.

U.S. Secret Service, \$1.0 billion.

Total, \$71.7 billion.

Memo: Deficit Increase with Interest (2026–2035), \$94.1 billion.

Memo: Deficit Increase with Interest, assuming appropriations offset (2026–2035), \$9.3 billion.

In total, we estimate the bill would add \$94 billion to deficits over the next decade with interest.

To avoid potential increases in the debt and put a down payment on deficit reduction, policymakers should remove extraneous provisions from the bill and fully offset the funding in this bill. They should also put in place discretionary spending caps that account for this mandatory spending and work to further reduce deficits.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the article details that the Congressional Budget Office—they are the ones that tell us how much everything costs—estimates the bill would add \$72 billion to the deficit over the next decade—actually, about \$94 billion with interest.

Part of that is the ballroom, so I think it is important to say where they are willing to spend the money. Are they willing to spend the money on disability benefits or on a ballroom? They have just told us they are willing to spend money on a ballroom, with interest, that is not paid for, but not on disability benefits.

These are where we get to where the issues are that we are addressing and what we are going to take up on the House floor. They are not taking up the issues that Americans are facing, which are the economic failures of this administration and of these Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD a May 17 TIME magazine article titled: "Americans Sour on Trump Over Inflation and the Iran War."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

[From TIME, May 17, 2026]

#### AMERICANS SOUR ON TRUMP OVER INFLATION AND THE IRAN WAR

(By Rebecca Schneid)

Two new polls show President Donald Trump's approval ratings sliding as Americans sour on the war in Iran and grow increasingly worried about inflation and the economy.

The figures increase the likelihood that Republican candidates will be dragged down by Trump in the upcoming midterm elections, which could grant Democrats control of Congress.

Nearly a year and a half into Trump's second term, a new New York Times/Siena poll of 1,507 registered voters released Monday found that 50% would vote for the Democratic candidate in their district if an election occurred today—up from 48% in January and 47% in September of last year.

The Times poll showed that Trump's approval rating has hit a second-term low of 37%, as a conclusive end to the deeply unpopular war with Iran continues to elude him.

Meanwhile, a CBS poll released Sunday found that 63% of 2,064 voters disapprove of

Trump—with 52% strongly disapprove of his performance in office.

The drop in approval is particularly stark with certain voting groups who helped deliver his 2024 victory—including Latino voters, independents, and young voters who swung significantly towards Republicans. Yet, the Times poll shows that 71% of Hispanic respondents, 70% of independents and 76% of voters ages 18-29 disapprove of Trump's job. In the 2024 election, Trump won 48% of the Hispanic vote, 48% of the independent vote, and 39% of the 18-29 vote.

Gas prices surged and inflation has accelerated in the months since the war began on Feb. 28, with consumer prices reaching three-year high of 3.8% by the end of April, according to the Consumer Price Index on May 12. Average U.S. gas prices have risen to around \$4.50 per gallon.

Americans in the survey report being hit hard by inflation and deeply worried about the economy.

Both polls were conducted last week as Trump came under fire for telling reporters that Americans' economic pain is not his concern when it comes to the war with Iran—"not even a little bit."

"I don't think about anybody. I think about one thing: We cannot let Iran have a nuclear weapon. That's all," he told reporters on May 13.

In 2024, Trump ran—and won—on his affordability policies and his promise that a vote for him would mean lower grocery bills.

While presidential approval ratings are usually an indicator of how well the party will do in midterms, the polls showed frustration with Democrats too—only 26% of the Times poll's respondents said they were satisfied with the party.

Here are the issues most affecting Trump's support among voters.

#### THE WAR IN IRAN IS DEEPLY UNPOPULAR

The CBS poll found that 66% of respondents disapprove of the way Trump is handling the situation with Iran, and 61% disapprove of all military action against it.

Sixty-eight percent say that the Trump Administration has not clearly stated its goals in Iran, and the majority of respondents don't seem to believe that the war has helped U.S. economic interests. More respondents believe it has helped the U.S.'s military and strategic interests.

Republicans approve of Trump's handling of the war with a whopping 79%, but 96% of Democrats disapprove.

Congress came closer than it had previously to passing a congressional War Powers Resolution last week that would rein in Trump's ability to continue the war with Iran, with three Republican senators breaking with their party to vote for the measure.

Similarly, the New York Times poll found that 63% of voters—including 27% of Republicans—believe the president should not be able to use military force unless it is approved by Congress.

Only 40% of respondents in the Times poll believe that the war will be either somewhat or very successful at eliminating Iran's nuclear program, while 50% believe it will be unsuccessful. If the U.S. cannot soon reach a deal to eliminate the country's nuclear program, 52% say that the U.S. should not resume military action.

Months after Trump authorized the U.S. military to capture and remove Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in a military raid, 70% of Times respondents also said it was not justified to use military force to overthrow hostile governments unless they pose an "immediate threat."

#### TRUMP IS FACING HIS WORST APPROVAL RATINGS ON THE ECONOMY IN HIS SECOND TERM

Both polls reflect Americans' growing economic anxiety as gas prices and grocery

prices continue to surge. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the Trump Administration's tariff regime, and fragile supply chains have raised prices across the board.

According to the CBS poll, 73% of respondents disapprove of the way Trump is handling inflation, and the majority have a deteriorating view of the American economy: 65% characterize the economy as "uncertain" and 63% as "struggling." Around half of respondents said Trump's policies will likely make the U.S. economy worse in the long term—and 65% believe it will be worse in the short term.

The numbers represent Trump's worst approval rating on the economy in his second term, a significant shift given it is an issue long seen as his political bedrock.

In the Times poll, the number of Americans who describe the U.S. economy as "poor" has risen by 11 percentage points since the start of the year, and while a majority of Republicans—63%—still approve of Trump's handling of inflation, that number is well down from a 74% approval in March.

In their personal finances, 57% said Donald Trump's policies are making them financially worse off, and 77% say their income is not keeping up with inflation. In the New York Times poll, 44% of voters said his policies had hurt them personally, up from 36% last fall.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the new polling data and the story show that Americans have caught on. Republicans promised to lower costs on day one. Where are costs? Up.

Gas is up. Groceries are up. Inflation is up. Look at the numbers. America is hungrier and sicker, deeper in debt, and deeper in war than the day Donald Trump took office.

The nationwide average for gas is \$4.55 a gallon. That is \$1.35 higher than last year. For families in Santa Fe, Farmington, or Roswell, in my district, that means filling up your pickup truck costs \$147.

Do you know how many times we have to fill up our trucks to be able to get around our district to check on the cattle, to deliver feed, to actually just maybe even take the trash to the dump? We use our trucks, and they are costing us so much money just to fill up, let alone how much it takes when we get to that grocery store and buy those groceries that cost so much. From meat to poultry to everything else in between, it is more expensive because of the policies of the Trump administration.

Are we addressing that? No.

I think I can quote Donald Trump. His quote was: "I don't think about Americans' financial situation. I don't think about anybody."

Clearly. The 57 percent of the people who now say his economic policies have made their families worse off, who is thinking about them?

Millions of American families have been kicked off their health plans. Healthcare premiums have risen constantly because of decisions that Republicans have made that have been signed into law by President Trump that he trumpeted.

Mr. Speaker, 88 percent of the largest corporations, including Tesla, paid zero, nada, in Federal income tax last

year, thanks to Trump and Republicans' tax giveaway in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Their billionaire-first policies are driving up costs for American families at the fastest rate in years, and it is affecting everybody, including our veterans.

Republicans said they would lower costs. Instead, they raised them through the roof. Now, our families are paying for their incompetence and greed.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1200

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Representative mentioned, or rather alleged, that the legislation before us this week is not an American priority, so I think we should just dissect the three bills under consideration.

First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, is it not a priority for us to ensure that the constitutional rights our veterans fought to defend are conferred on to them?

Is that not a priority for us to correct an injustice inflicted upon our veterans?

Is it not a priority for us to pass legislation that will help strengthen benefits and help catastrophically injured veterans that is broadly supported across the veterans community including veterans service organizations like The American Legion, Wounded Warrior Project, and Paralyzed Veterans of America?

Those groups and those associations support our legislation.

How is that not a priority?

Lastly, how is it not a priority to ensure that we honor America's women by building the museum that has rightly deserved to be built for many years?

We are going to take action to do that today.

I will just note, too, the Representative mentioned many things about President Trump. But, yet, I still wait to hear from the other side the broad condemnation of the relentless persecution that has led to attack after attack, after attack on President Trump and his family. It is unfair to him, and it is one of the reasons why, as the Representative noted, later this week we may be considering—we will see what happens in the Senate—but we may be considering legislation that is going to help pay our law enforcement officers in the Federal Government. That is a priority for us and always has been for us.

Again, Mr. Speaker, when you look at what we are debating this week, we are trying to help veterans get their constitutional rights back. We are trying to help veterans through bills that are endorsed by every veteran service organization that serves our Nation's veterans, and we are trying to build a museum that we have been trying to build for 6 years. I think all three are priorities for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let's go through sort of where we have Trump's name.

Trump's name is now on the Kennedy Center without congressional approval. Trump's name is now on the United States Institute of Peace, and Trump has destroyed part of the White House without congressional approval, and he is putting up his ballroom.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker?

These places don't belong to Trump or any President. They belong to the American people. As Judge Leon said when he ruled against the White House ballroom construction: "The White House does not belong to any one man—not even a President."

I think that the women's history museum does not belong to Trump. It belongs to the American people and the women whose blood, sweat, and tears paint the picture of America, and to the Haudenosaunee Clan mothers who controlled decisions over war and the economy.

Mr. Speaker, for those of you who don't know who those are, that was the Iroquois Federation. They were the inspiration for our Constitution. The only thing that was different was our Constitution didn't include and recognize women the way that the Haudenosaunee Clan mothers were recognized.

I want to have a museum where Deborah Sampson, a woman who disguised herself as a man to fight in the Revolutionary War, is discussed, not divided, but discussed about this was the fervor of those women during the Revolution who served as spies, who served as soldiers, and who served to actually win our Revolutionary War.

I want to honor Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first woman to serve in Congress who served before women were even allowed to vote.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker?

She was a Republican. Let's honor her.

Their stories deserve to be told, but they deserve to be told in a museum that is designed, that is built, that is located, and that talks about issues that the women of America have decided, not any one President.

That is why we are rejecting their partisan proposal and we are urging a return to the original bipartisan bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS), who is one of the most respected voices in the House Republican Conference.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a moment to talk about this bipartisan effort to build the women's history museum. The reality is this was a museum that was first authorized in 2020 with bipartisan support

and signed into law by President Donald Trump.

Now, this measure that I am proud to be a cosponsor of had 232 sponsors, an overwhelming number of Republicans and Democrats who support this legislation, and it had the support of President Donald Trump.

It is set up in a way where there is an advisory council which is already appointed, people can go see who those members are. It is basically evenly split, Republicans and Democrats, who advise on the content and the exhibits that will be in this museum.

So for anybody to stand up and say that somehow this legislation would allow the President to dictate the content and what will be displayed in this museum is simply untrue.

Now, there was an amendment that was made in the House Administration Committee that added one simple thing regarding content, and the simple thing is simply to add a sentence that said that this was a museum dedicated to biological women. That came out of a concern from people out in the community, women's organizations. Yes, the White House agrees with us that it should be restricted to biological women and many Members who brought up questions during the hearing of that bill when it was in the Natural Resources Committee.

Now, simply adding the word "biological" to this museum should not make it a deal-breaker for my colleagues on the other side. I don't understand why they are all refusing to now support a bill when we had, again, well over 100 sponsors from the Democratic Party. They can't say that that is not the reason that they are not supporting this. I mean, the Democratic Women's Caucus put out a memo. In there they said that it "Adds a discriminatory provision intended to dictate what the museum can and cannot say about women's history, for example, language about biological women."

That is the reason. They have said it. I think that is a disgrace that the Democrats will stand in the way of a national women's history museum being built by the Smithsonian, a reputable institution, simply because that sentence was added to the legislation.

This certainly can be a bipartisan, and should be, a bipartisan effort moving forward.

As I said, it is the advisory council that is evenly split Republicans and Democrats that will come up with the content when this museum is built. By the way, it will be a long time before it is built, and it will be longer if this bill fails because you guys decide to stop a women's history museum from coming to the floor.

The bill simply transfers land. So let's get that land transferred. Let's get the process going, and let's honor the women of America who have contributed so much and deserve to be recognized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOORE of Utah). Members are reminded to direct their comments to the Chair.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this morning we heard my colleague talk about the fact that Republicans seem to be trans-obsessed. He said they had 126 bills, trans-obsessed bills, and this is one of them.

The women's history museum bill was a simple bill that said: Let's make sure that the museum is placed on The Mall. You all amended it, not just to address your trans-obsession, but then to also give the authority to President Trump's committee to decide where it should go and what it should look like. We do not agree with that. We do not agree with that, which is why you have 146 Members who have signed a letter in opposition to the amendment.

It was a simple bill. You kind of ruined it with your trans-obsession and your culture wars.

Why don't we go back to the simplicity of what the bill was: Put the women's museum on The Mall, and let's move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, first, I would say the colleague to whom my colleague from New Mexico referenced was speaking about a bill that already passed 2 weeks ago, so I think he was 2 weeks too late for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS).

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, perhaps the party that is opposing a women's history museum on The National Mall because they want to have transgender exhibits, maybe they are the ones who are trans-obsessed. That is the reality.

This bill does nothing other than simply make clear that it is biological women who are in a women's museum. I don't understand that.

□ 1210

In terms of location, there is no committee. There is no Presidential committee that is set up to possibly change the site. In fact, the amendment clarified the location. Before, we did not have the specific South Monument site location, which is bordered by 14th Street Southwest, Jefferson Drive Southwest, and Independence Avenue Southwest specifically listed in the bill.

Now, it is specifically listed. Yes, the President may designate an alternative site within 180 days if there is an issue for some reason with that particular land. If we find out there is a particular issue and you can't build on that land, wouldn't you want to have the option not to have to do this all over again and pass another bill but instead allow for an alternative location to be set?

This bill further clarified that location as the chosen location, which the advisory council—made up of bipartisan women, not President Donald Trump or his commission—established.

I just think it is ridiculous that we are arguing over this when this is clearly something that was authorized by Republicans and Democrats under President Trump in 2020, and now the land should be transferred so it can be built with bipartisan support and President Trump, once again, here we are in 2026.

By the way, you had 4 years under the last President to do something about it. This was authorized by President Trump in 2020, and for 4 years you guys did nothing to move it along and get the Biden administration—which I had repeatedly lent my support to that effort to try to help.

So here we are. President Donald Trump is the President. He will be the one who will break ground on this museum, and I know that bothers you that it is going to be President Trump that delivers the women's history museum, but that is the reality because your President did nothing for 4 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, again, that is one of the reasons why my colleague is one of the most respected voices in the House Republican Conference, one of the best debaters we have.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this week has been about what Republicans value and who they are willing to hurt to give Trump more power and more money.

In July, Republicans found money for billionaire tax breaks when they passed the big, beautiful bill. They found money for another war in the Middle East. Now, they want us to vote for a billion dollars for Trump's ballroom and more money for ICE's terror campaign, but when we need to increase benefits for disabled veterans, Republicans say veterans have to pay for it themselves.

When women want a museum that tells their own story, Republicans hand control to Donald Trump. When families struggle with groceries, rent, gas, and utility bills, Trump says he doesn't even think about their financial situation.

That is the Republican agenda: everything for Trump, everybody else on their own.

Republicans in Congress refuse to stand up to Trump. They refuse to stand up for their constituents. They have no courage.

Now, Republicans want to give Donald Trump power over where the Women's History Museum should be located, what it looks like, and what we talk about.

A museum dedicated to the story of American women should not be controlled by a man who is mentioned more than 38,000 times in the Epstein files. It should not be controlled by a man who was found guilty of sexual abuse.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, the rule I have presented today, House Resolution 1300, enables this House of Representatives to carry out its responsibilities and consider legislation affecting veterans, military families, and future generations.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to think one more time about that veteran we discussed today. Think about the veteran who walks into the VA simply looking for support. Think about that veteran navigating recovery, appointments, and the lasting effects of military service. Think about the spouse, the parent, or the loved one who quietly stepped forward and carried responsibilities that military service brought home. Think about the families who continue showing up every day with strength, perseverance, and grace because for many military families, service does not simply end when the uniform comes off.

Mr. Speaker, throughout this debate, we discussed different bills addressing different issues, but each measure before us reflects a simple principle: When the brave men and women of our country answered the call to serve, they did so without hesitation. When they return home, they should know their country will stand beside them with that same commitment.

That means protecting constitutional freedoms. That means strengthening support for veterans and military families, and that means preserving the stories and experiences that help tell the story of our country.

To the veterans and military families watching today, these issues are not abstract. They are your lives. These are your experiences, and these are the responsibilities Congress has an obligation to take seriously.

Mr. Speaker, this rule allows this House of Representatives to move forward and continue delivering on those responsibilities. For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to support the rule.

The material previously referred to by Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1300 OFFERED BY  
MS. LEGER FERNANDEZ OF NEW MEXICO

In section 2, insert "and the amendment specified in section 5 of this resolution" after "accompanying this resolution".

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

"Sec. 5. The amendment referred to in section 2 of this resolution is as follows:

Page 5, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 6, line 10 and insert the following: (and redesignate accordingly):

**SEC. 3. REDUCTION OF ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION.**

In the case of estates of decedents dying or gifts made during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on December 31, 2031, section 2010(c)(3)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of

1986 shall be applied by substituting '\$14,500,000' for '\$15,000,000'."

Mr. JACK. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

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.

LULU'S LAW

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1003) to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue an order providing that a shark attack is an event for which a wireless emergency alert may be transmitted, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1003

*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 "Lulu's Law".

**SEC. 2. WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS.**

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "Alert Message" has the meaning given the term in section 10.10(a) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall issue an order to provide that a shark attack is an event for which an Alert Message may be transmitted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?