

economic gains for both of our countries—and to bring new hope to those who have suffered so terribly. With us tonight is Alejandra Gonzalez. She grew up in a tightknit Venezuelan family, and was especially close to her beloved uncle Enrique. But after Enrique ran for office and opposed Maduro, her uncle was kidnapped by Maduro's security forces—and thrown into the regime's infamous prison in Caracas. Alejandra feared she would never see her uncle again. But since the raid, we have worked with the new leadership, and they have ordered the closure of that vile prison, and released hundreds of political prisoners with the rest to soon come. Alejandra, I am pleased to inform you that not only has your uncle been released, but he is here tonight to celebrate his freedom with you in person. Enrique, please come down. Thank you, Enrique.

There were many heroes on that January raid to capture Maduro—but the deeds of one warrior that night will live forever in the eternal chronicles of Military Valor. Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Slover planned the mission and was the "flightlead" in the cockpit of the first helicopter in the raid, a massive Chinook carrying many American Warfighters. Wearing the dog tags his wife Amy had blessed with holy water before he left, Eric steered the Chinook under the cover of night, and descended swiftly upon Maduro's heavily protected military fortress, protected by thousands of soldiers, guarded by Russian and Chinese military technology. While preparing to land, enemy machine-guns fired from every angle, and Eric was hit, very badly, in the leg and hip, one bullet after another. He absorbed four agonizing shots, shredding his leg to pieces. And yet, despite the fact that the use of his legs was vital to successful helicopter flight, he kept that helicopter flying, to deliver the many commandos who would capture and detain Maduro. Then, even as he was gushing blood, he maneuvered his helicopter to face the enemy and let his gunners eliminate the threat, saving the lives of his fellow warriors from what could have been a catastrophic crash deep in enemy territory. Only after safely landing the helicopter with all warriors aboard, in the exact right spot which was vital to the mission, Eric told his copilot, also wounded, but not as gravely, to take over—he was passing out.

The success of the entire mission—and the lives of his fellow warriors—hinged on Eric's ability to take the searing pain of the bullets and keep on flying. Chief Warrant Officer Slover is still recovering from his serious wounds, but I am thrilled to say that he is here tonight with his wife Amy. Eric and Amy, come on in. In recognition of Eric's actions above and beyond the call of duty, I would now like to ask General Jonathan Braga to present Chief Warrant Officer Slover with our nation's highest military award—the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Thank you, Eric and Amy. And 10 of Eric's fellow warriors from that night will also be receiving medals at a private ceremony at the White House.

Tonight, we have celebrated many truly extraordinary American patriots, but there is one last living legend to honor before we go. He is one more heroic American Aviator. Navy Fighter Pilot Royce Williams served in World War Two, Korea, and Vietnam, flying more than 220 missions. In the skies over Korea in 1952, Royce was in the dogfight of a lifetime. Flying through blizzard conditions, his squadron was ambushed by 7 Soviet fighter planes. It was his first aerial combat of the war, and despite being massively outnumbered and outgunned, Royce led the take-down of four enemy jets, vanquishing his adversaries while taking 263 bullets to his own plane. His story was secret for over 50 years—he didn't even tell his wife. But tonight, at 100 years old, this brave Navy Captain is finally getting the recognition he deserves. He was a legend long before this evening. Royce, please stand up. I now ask the First Lady of the United States to present Captain Royce Williams with his Congressional Medal of Honor.

250 years is a long time in the life of a nation, but in another sense, it is a mere moment in the eye of history. Two of the gentlemen we met in the gallery this evening took their first breaths one century ago. One hundred years before that, on July 4th, 1826, the author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, drew his last breath. Just a single long human lifespan separates the giants who declared and won our Independence, from the heroes who stand among us tonight.

Everything our nation has done, everything we have achieved, has been the work of those few great lifetimes. In those brief chapters, Americans built this nation from 13 humble colonies, into the pinnacle of human civilization and human freedom—the strongest, wealthiest, most powerful, most successful nation in all of history.

Americans ventured out across a daunting and dangerous continent, we carved paths through an unforgiving wilderness, settled a boundless frontier, and tamed the beautiful but very dangerous wild west. From empty marshes and wide-open plains, we raised up the world's greatest cities. Together, we mastered the world's mightiest industries, we shattered history's monstrous tyrannies, and we liberated millions from the chains of fascism, communism, oppression, and terror. Americans lifted humanity into the skies on wings of aluminum and steel—and then we launched mankind into the stars on rockets powered by sheer American will and unyielding American pride. We wired the globe with our ingenuity, we captivated the planet with American culture, and now, we are pioneering the next great American breakthroughs that will change the entire world.

All of this, and so much more, is the enduring legacy and unmatched glory

of the hardworking patriots who built and defended this country, and who still carry the hopes and freedoms of all humanity on their backs.

For years, they were forgotten, betrayed, and cast aside—but that great betrayal is over, and they will never be forgotten again.

Because when the world needs courage, daring, vision, and inspiration, it still turns to America—and when God needs a nation to work His miracles, He knows exactly who to ask. There is no challenge Americans cannot overcome, no frontier too vast for us to conquer, no dream too bold for us to chase, no horizon too distant for us to claim.

For our Destiny is written by the hand of Providence—and these first 250 years were just the beginning.

From the rugged border towns of Texas to the heartland villages of Michigan, from the sun-kissed shores of Florida to the endless fields of the Dakotas, and from the historic streets of Philadelphia, to right here in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C.—the Golden Age of America is now Upon Us. The Revolution that began in 1776 has not ended—it still continues, because the flame of Liberty and Independence still burns in the hearts of every American Patriot. And our future will be bigger, better, brighter, bolder, and more glorious than ever before.

Thank you, God Bless You, and God Bless the United States of America.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 24, 2026.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:10 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 390. An act to utilize the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response to Operations project of NASA to improve aerial responses to wildfires, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2189. An act to modernize Federal firearms laws to account for advancements in technology and less-than-lethal weapons, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2600. An act to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish a program to identify, evaluate, acquire, and disseminate commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific, operational, and educational requirements of the Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3679. An act to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to develop resources for small businesses in utilizing artificial intelligence, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5235. An act to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit minimum educational requirements for proposed contractor personnel in certain contract solicitations, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 390. An act to utilize the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response to Operations project of NASA to improve aerial responses to wildfires, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3679. An act to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to develop resources for small businesses in utilizing artificial intelligence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 5235. An act to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit minimum educational requirements for proposed contractor personnel in certain contract solicitations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

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

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2600. An act to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish a program to identify, evaluate, acquire, and disseminate commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific, operational, and educational requirements of the Administration, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2778. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2779. A communication from the Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Conforming Change to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR)" (RIN0694-AK41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 17, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2780. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Syria-Related Sanctions Regulations" (31 CFR Part 569) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2781. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "International Criminal Court-Related Sanctions Regulations" (31 CFR Part 528) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2782. A communication from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting,

pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Delaying the Effective Date of the Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism Program and Suspicious Activity Report Filing Requirements for Registered Investment Advisers and Exempt Reporting Advisers" (RIN1506-AB58) (RIN1506-AB69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2783. A communication from the Acting Chief Privacy and Civil Liberties Officer, United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Privacy Act of 1974; Implementation" (28 CFR Part 16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2026; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2784. A communication from the Senior Counsel, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removing an Obsolete, One-Time Reporting Requirement from the Regulations Governing the Use of Supplies in Emergency Relief Work" (RIN0625-AB31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 13, 2026; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2785. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, with respect to Libya; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2786. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Implementation of Refund Procedures for Craft Beverage Modernization Act Federal Excise Tax Benefits Applicable to Imported Alcohol" (RIN1513-AC89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 30, 2026; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2787. A communication from the Director of Regulatory Oversight and Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Home Visits in Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers During COVID-19 National Emergency" (RIN2900-AQ96) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 19, 2026; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-2788. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Grant Program Fiscal Year 2024"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2789. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2024 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MORAN, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1441. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to award grants to non-profit entities to assist such entities in car-

rying out programs to provide service dogs to eligible veterans, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 119-113).

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 3023. A bill to limit liability for certain entities storing child sexual abuse material for law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 3895. A bill to require rulemaking by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to address considerations in evaluating the need for public and individual disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 3896. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the Department of Veterans Affairs procurement hierarchy of small business preferences, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 3897. A bill to revise administrative procedures relating to public safety officers' death benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 3898. A bill to amend the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act to extend burial benefits for certain veterans who die at home while in receipt of hospice care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SHEEHY (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 3899. A bill to authorize the transfer by the Secretary of the Navy to the U.S. Space and Rocket Center Commission in Huntsville, Alabama, of certain F-14 Tomcat aircraft; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MCCORMICK (for himself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 3900. A bill to promote human rights, internet freedom and accountability in Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BUDD:

S. 3901. A bill to expand the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3902. A bill to provide for auditable financial statements for the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HUSTED (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. SCHMITT, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MORENO, and Mr. FETTERMAN):

S. 3903. A bill to enhance safety requirements for trains transporting hazardous materials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr.